

TOWN OF SMITHERS

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1027 ALDOUS STREET, SMITHERS, B.C. ON WEDNESDAY, MAY 25, 2011, AT 6:00 PM.

Council Present:

Cress Farrow, Mayor
Mark Bandstra, Councillor
Lorne Benson, Councillor
Jo Ann Groves, Councillor
Charlie Northrup, Councillor.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Mark Allen, Director of Development Services
Alison Walker, Planner
Penny Goodacre, Recording Secretary.

Council Excused:

Norm Adomeit, Councillor
Frank Wray, Councillor.

Staff Excused:

Susan Bassett, Director of Corporate Services
Leslie Ford, Director of Finance
Andrew Hillaby, Director of Recreation, Parks and Culture
Keith Stecko, Fire Chief
Rob Blackburn, Airport Manager
Wilf Taekema, Director of Works and Operations.

Media Present: J. Muldoon, The Interior News.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Farrow called the meeting to order (6:00 p.m.). Introductions were made around the room.

2. CORRESPONDENCE/REPORTS

2.1 and DOWNTOWN PARKING and PARKING REGULATIONS
2.2 Northrup/

THAT the following reports be received for information:

- 2.1 Report DEV 11-48 dated April 18, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, regarding draft changes to Section 2.9 of the Zoning Bylaw in regards to Downtown Parking Regulations (5480-01).
- 2.2 Report DEV 11-54 dated May 24, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, presenting the proposed changes to the Parking Regulations (5480-01).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion:

Mayor Farrow thanked everyone for participating in tonight's meeting regarding parking in Smithers' downtown core. The Town of Smithers currently owns and maintains a parking lot on Second Avenue, between Queen Street and Main Street. A future town-owned parking area is located on Second Avenue, between King Street and Main Street. On-street parking is provided throughout the downtown core. There is a one (1) hour parking maximum on Main Street (extending to the lanes) and a two (2) hour parking maximum on the side streets (extending to King Street and Queen Street).

Some challenges with the existing parking regulations include: 1) having two standards of design for parking areas with 4 or more spaces requiring paving and for parking areas requiring less than 4 spaces gravel is permitted; 2) there is a high proportion of non-conforming properties on Main Street and the required off-street parking makes these sites expensive to redevelop; and 3) covenanted parking areas are not required to be developed to full standard nor designated by signage;

There are currently twenty parcels of property in the downtown core that have parking covenants on them; which ties up the land and prevents future development of the land, as the land is designated for parking.

Council requested assistance from the public on ideas on how to proceed in removing the covenants to encourage more development. Should the "cash-in-lieu" fee to purchase one parking space be increased, decreased, or remain the same? Currently the "cash-in-lieu" option is \$5,500. Council is looking at increasing that figure up to \$11,000 in order to recover the costs of developing that parking space. There are not enough funds in the cash-in-lieu parking reserve to develop another Town owned parking lot. The Town is considering purchasing land for parking lots be developed at a later date.

Members of the Public raised the following points: 1) Is there a Parking Plan and a need to develop parking lots; 2) Has a study been conducted to determine the future amount of growth in the downtown core to estimate the required number of parking spaces; 3) What is the current level of occupancy for the Town owned parking lots, what time of day are the parking lots being used and for how long; 4) If the Town wants to purchase available land for future parking, how many parking spaces does the Town need to develop; 5) Businesses purchasing cash-in-lieu parking spots does not alleviate the parking pressures experienced around that business; 6) Leave the parking to the public and it will sort itself out. If people are parking in someone's space,

it will be privately addressed, no need for the Town to get involved. How parking is distributed is a different strategy than how to develop parking spaces. If the Town is not careful, we could end up with many unused parking spaces; 7) There was consensus that parking spaces in Smithers are not seen as being valuable; 8) For business owned parking lots, is it necessary to have the amount of landscaping that is currently regulated? On a fifty foot parking lot, landscaping takes away two parking spaces; 9) Concern about water runoff from paved parking lots; 10) Could there be a sliding scale of requirements between small developments versus large developments; 11) Perhaps the Downtown core could use a green space instead of another parking lot. Encourage the public to walk and ride their bikes; 12) Local Area Services Projects versus Development Permit Area requirements; 13) Downtown Revitalization Areas and Business Improvement Areas; and 14) How do existing non-conforming businesses fit into the parking requirements, at one time they conformed as time progressed the regulations changed around them.

Council thanked the Public for their input tonight.

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Bandstra/

THAT the meeting be adjourned (8:18 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Cress Farrow
Mayor

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

Certified a True and Correct Copy of the minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting of Council held Wednesday, May 25, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO