

TOWN OF SMITHERS

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, 1027 ALDOUS STREET, SMITHERS, B.C. ON TUESDAY, AUGUST 16, 2011, AT 6:00 P.M.

Council Present:

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

Council Excused:

Frank Wray, Councillor.

Staff Present:

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

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: M. Dekkema, The Peak.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Farrow called the meeting to order (6:05 p.m.).

2. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS

2.1 SECONDARY SUITES

Northrup/

THAT Report DEV 11-78 dated August 11, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, recommending Council provide direction to staff on the draft Secondary Suites Policy and proposed bylaw amendments, be received (3760-20).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion:

A. Walker provided a summary of Report DEV 11-78, which addresses direction provided to staff at the Committee of the Whole Meeting held March 30, 2011, and survey findings.

The following points were discussed: a) three parking spaces are required for homes with secondary suites; b) the proposed policy provides incentives to encourage legal suites, such as the focus on life-safety standards for existing suites and the reduced inspection fee; c) the Town cannot regulate people, only uses; d) a complaint must be received from a member of the public to initiate enforcement; e) a Council decision is required before a Section 57 Notice on Title can be completed and the person has an opportunity to speak to Council;

f) existing suites can be decommissioned by removing cooking facilities; g) liability in case of a fire in a home with a non-complaint secondary suite; h) the *Community Charter* allows Council the discretion to consider a full removal order in circumstances where conditions are unsafe; i) utility fees would be charged for both legal and non-compliant suites; j) the Town would allow a second garbage cart for a non-compliant suite as long as the permit process to legalize the suite is underway; k) the potential exists for more problems to neighbours, if the home owner is not required to live in the house; l) people investing a lot of money into making a suite compliant, would probably increase the rent; m) a public hearing would be held for the proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments; and n) the Official Community Plan supports increasing the density in the R-2 Zone, as a longer range plan.

Northrup/

THAT staff proceed with the proposed amendments to the draft Secondary Suites Policy, the Zoning Bylaw, and the Water, Sewer, and Garbage Collection User Fees bylaws, as summarized on Page 2 of Report DEV 11-78, dated August 11, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, that would: a) permit secondary suites in the R-1 Single-Family Dwelling zone; b) remove the requirement for owner occupancy; c) charge 40% additional fees for water and sewer, and 100% additional garbage fees only if a second cart is required; d) incorporate basic life-safety standards to legalize or develop suites in an existing home (to be outlined in a Guide); e) reduce the inspection fee to \$200 with a 5-year amnesty period over which time the fee would be waived; and f) create an enforcement process that begins with receipt of a written complaint from a member of the public, allows a Section 57 Notice on Title option for non-compliant suites, and allows Council discretion to consider a removal order where there are health and safety concerns.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Northrup/

THAT Council not increase the density in the R-2 Zone, so that duplexes cannot be converted into fourplexes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2.2

SECONDARY SUITES SURVEY

Northrup/

THAT Report DEV 11-59 dated June 6, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, presenting secondary suites survey results and recommending Council direct staff to prepare a draft secondary suites policy and zoning bylaw amendment, be received (3760-20).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

2.3 SHIPPING CONTAINERS

Benson/

THAT the information package, providing Council's previous decisions regarding shipping containers, be received as background information for discussion purposes.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Discussion:

Council discussed amending the Zoning Bylaw to allow shipping containers for storage purposes in the C-3 Highway Commercial Zone, with the condition that appropriate screening from street view is guaranteed, and parking is not impacted. Comments in favour of the amendment included: a) containers are more affordable than constructing a new building; b) containers could be an effective solution for tidying up a property and preventing theft and vandalism from enclosed compounds; and c) containers are moveable, unlike a storage building, which is an asset if a business wishes to re-arrange the design of its property and placement of its structures. It was suggested that a C-3 business could apply for a rezoning to M-1. It was also suggested that a process, less stringent than the Development Permit process, but still requiring a security deposit, could be implemented to ensure that screening is completed to Council's satisfaction.

D. Sargent pointed out to Council that in the "Alternatives" section of Staff Report DEV 09-42, presented to Council on July 9, 2009, is "Permit shipping containers in Commercial and Public Use/Utility zones", which reflects ideas expressed by Council at tonight's meeting.

The consensus was that Council would wait to see if there is an appetite from C-3 businesses to have the Zoning Bylaw amended to allow shipping containers in that zone.

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Northrup/

THAT the meeting be adjourned (7:31 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole Meeting
held on Tuesday, August 16, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.

Cress Farrow
Mayor

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

Certified a True and Correct Copy of the minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting held Tuesday, August 16, 2011, at 6:00 p.m. in Council Chambers, 1027 Aldous Street, Smithers, B.C.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO