

TOWN OF SMITHERS

MINUTES OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD AT INNOVATION FOODS, 3439 FULTON AVENUE ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2011, AT NOON.

Council Present:

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

Council Excused:

Lorne Benson, Councillor
Frank Wray, Councillor.

Innovation Foods

Earnie Harding
Dana Gorbahn
Brett Laing.

Staff Present:

Deborah Sargent, Chief Administrative Officer
Roye Lovgren, Building Inspector
Alison Walker, Planner
Janice McKay, Recording Secretary.

Staff Excused:

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Farrow called the meeting to order (12:21 p.m.).

2. CORRESPONDENCE / REPORTS

2.1 3439 FULTON AVENUE

Adomeit/

THAT Report DEV 11-94 dated October 3, 2011, from A. Walker, Planner, regarding zoning for 3439 Fulton Avenue (Innovation Foods), be received (3020-20/TU10-01).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

A. Walker provided an overview of Report DEV 11-94. She reminded Council that two attempts to amend zoning for 3439 Fulton Avenue were made in the past, but neither of the bylaws proceeded to adoption. Both would have increased retail space for manufacturing activities. The applicant was granted a 3-year Temporary Use Permit in August 2010, which can only be renewed one time.

A. Walker advised that Report DEV 11-94 presents an alternative option to the previous two attempts to amend zoning. The new option would amend text for the M-1 zone and be narrower in scope and tailored to the activities of Innovation Foods. The amendment would include the term "food exchange" which is a term used for food systems planning, and includes food manufacturing and food bank services. She read out the

definition of "Food Exchange" as "the receiving, storage, processing and redistribution of food received by donation for non-profit and charitable purposes and includes, as an accessory use, retail sales" and further suggested that Council may wish to specify a maximum for the degree of retail sales based on gross floor area or gross leasable area.

D. Gorbahn clarified that Innovation Foods purchases some food at a discounted price. He explained that the original business model will not maintain infrastructure costs and that they have had to look at other ways to achieve sustainability, such as the manufacturing of organic grains into value-added goods for purchase by clients and the general public, on a two-tiered cost basis. Other initiatives include making waffles and vacuum packaging them and producing pet food. Innovation Foods has entered into partnerships with a number of organizations, including the Groundbreakers Collective and First Nations fisheries, where goods and services are exchanged for mutual benefit.

In response to questions and comments from Council, D. Gorbahn advised that: a) the criteria to be a member is to earn less than \$24,000 per family household income; b) some clients are in a low-income situation temporarily; c) other social agencies and churches also have access; d) sales is not a driver in what Innovation Foods is trying to achieve; and e) Innovation Foods is not a typical retail atmosphere and is mostly about social causes and services.

Council and staff were given a tour of the building and an overview of activities and services. Client programs include skills development, various workshops, computer access, newspaper production, cooking, laundry, and drop-in and structured activities. The tour included employee offices, supported employment facilities office, community workers station, wheelchair accessible washrooms, bulk bin area for organic grains, retail area of freezers/shelves stocked with basic necessities, storage area, processing area where items are repackaged into smaller quantities, meat processing area for animals that cannot be shipped, cooler and freezer space currently occupied by the Sausage Factory, area where Groundbreakers Collective assemble "local food" baskets, area where salmon can be smoked and prepared to send out to local stores, and where foods can be dehydrated. During the tour, D. Gorbahn advised that Innovation Foods experienced a net loss of \$40,000 last year, due to restructuring, and annual sales amounted to under \$4,000 per month.

The meeting resumed in the Board Room for further discussion. Council expressed that: a) the permanent solution for Innovation Foods must be fair, easy to enforce, and for the good of all; b) other businesses may consider relocating from commercial zones to industrial zones; c) shifting the business plan to include use by non-members is a concern; and d) the interpretation that manufacturing is the primary use is inaccurate.

Points made by staff included: a) zoning evolves with new uses over time; b) "Food Exchange" pushes the envelope, much like the mixed uses in the downtown core; c) the primary uses for Innovations Foods are training and manufacturing, while retail is an end product; d) Innovation Foods presents a very different combination of uses and provides services for a growing need in the community; e) Innovation Foods is a hybrid of existing zones which happens from time to time with land use; and f) Innovation Foods does not fit into any other zone, including public institutional. Staff explained the amount of retail space permitted according to the Temporary Use Permit compared to the bylaw. It was agreed that the only non-compliance area, for Innovation Foods, is the slightly increased square footage of retail space.

Mayor Farrow encouraged Council to make a decision regarding permanent zoning, stating his belief that Innovation Foods offers valuable services and does not take business away from Main Street stores. D. Sargent advised that a zoning amendment requires that a Public Hearing be held. The actual square footage of the retail area was measured and found to be 998 square feet. Council was concerned that this is double that allowed in the bylaw, when considering the space for manufacturing is equal to 3,000 square feet. It was advised that the area could be shrunk to fit a smaller footprint.

Mayor Farrow stated that the minutes of today's meeting, and Report DEV 11-94, will be addressed at a Regular Meeting of Council.

3. OTHER BUSINESS / NEW BUSINESS

None.

4. ADJOURNMENT

Northrup/
THAT the meeting be adjourned (1:20 p.m.).

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Minutes of the Committee of the Whole meeting
held on Wednesday, October 12, 2011 at noon.

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator/CAO

Cress Farrow
Mayor

Certified a True and Correct Copy of the
minutes of the Committee of the Whole
meeting held Wednesday, October 12, 2011,
at 12:00 p.m. at Innovation Foods, 3439
Fulton Avenue

Deborah Sargent
Corporate Administrator