

PUBLIC MEETING

Minutes of a public meeting held Monday, July 29, 2002 at 8:15 p.m. in the Council Chambers to consider an official plan amendment.

Present: Mayor Tony DiBartolomeo
Deputy-Mayor Robert Pillon
Councillor Mickey Bezaire
Councillor Rosa White
Councillor Frank Gorham
Councillor Lynne Fox
Councillor Anthony Leardi

Also present: Hilary Payne, Administrator
Lory Bratt, Planning Coordinator
Jean Monteith, Planning Consultant

A record of those members of the public in attendance is attached as a schedule and forms part of these minutes.

DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Councillor Fox indicated she would not participate in discussion and/or voting on this matter and vacated her chair.

Chairman Leardi welcomed all those in attendance stating the purpose was to consider Amendment #4 to the Official Plan. He then asked Jean Monteith, Planning Consultant to summarize the proposed amendment.

Jean Monteith

After reviewing the commercial policies of the Town's Official Plan, Council deemed it appropriate to amend the Official Plan by increasing the land area to be designated General Commercial. The proposed amendment to the Official Plan is for the property located on the east side of Sandwich Street, south of Alma Street and north of the recently approved General Commercial lands (OPA #1) north of Fort Street. The proposed designation for these lands is a dual designation of General Commercial and Office Residential on the front portion of the lands and General Commercial and High Density Residential on the rear portion of the lands.

Ms. Monteith then explained the current designations of the property: Office Residential on the front portion and High Density Residential on part of the rear portion. The General Commercial Designation is being added to the current designations. No amendment to the Zoning By-law is proposed until such time as a suitable site specific application is received.

Chairman Leardi then asked for any questions and/or comments from members of the public.

Paul Renaud, 41 Sandwich Street South - expressed his support for the amendment. He and his wife currently own a building which consists of a professional office, upholstery shop and apartments. He felt the proposed amendment to be consistent with other portions of Sandwich Street and agreed with the Commercial designation. Mr. Renaud stated that his amendment is progressive and assists the Town in moving forward. He is in favour of the proposed Amendment #4.

Bob Smith indicated that in his opinion continuing with the commercial designation is the right thing to do. He did note, however, that he would prefer that his entire property be High Density Residential rather than just the rear portion.

It was explained that the current High Density Residential Designation on his property was not being changed, however, a Commercial Designation was being added to the existing designation of his property.

Deputy-Mayor Pillon asked if both an official plan amendment and zoning by-law amendment would be required if Mr. Smith wished to develop his entire property as High Density Residential.

Ms. Monteith stated there is some flexibility built into the official plan, however, we would have to see an application and site plan for any proposal in order to determine if an official plan amendment is required. For example if a large portion of the front of the property is proposed for landscaping this would be a factor v.s. if the proposed high rise was proposed for the front of the property then an official plan amendment may be necessary.

Eric Bryan, 31 Laird - noted that the High Density Designation appears to be an island and asked how it would be accessed.

Ms. Monteith explained it could be accessed through Sandwich Street or if lands were assembled from the south through the old railway property. The Town doesn't know this until a plan is received.

Ms. Monteith then stated that there are height limitations and further that 7-8 stories is considered a mid-rise.

Mr. Bryan expressed concern that this is facing a premier part of Town. In Mr. Bryan's opinion High Density development brings its own set of problems. He objected to the High Density Designation.

Ms. Monteith clarified that the Town is not adding High Density to the site. This is the current designation of the rear portion of the site and the proposed amendment will add Commercial General.

Bob McLean expressed opposition to the proposed Commercial designation without also changing the designation on the west side. He felt the Town should look to the whole area. He noted that in many Town's the entry way is a passive area (residential). Mr. McLean also noted that although he is within the area proposed for redesignation he does not feel the value of his property will increase due to his intention to retain it as a residential use. Mr. McLean stated that the planning documents should protect the people who use the land.

Barb Butler, 42 Sandwich Street South - stated that it does not make sense to have each side of the street designated differently. She noted the changes in the last official plan which redesignated and rezoned her property from Residential Office to Residential. She prefers that the existing designation on the east side of Sandwich remain. Ms. Butler provided a written submission of her concerns and comments.

Phil Kasurak, 59 Laird Avenue South - asked if there were any areas outside of the boundaries shown on the map that will come forward later.

page 3 - July 29, 2002 Public Meeting

He was advised that would be a Council decision.

Mr. Kasurak asked if there were any private enterprise that had come forward as part of the application.

He was advised there were none.

Mr. Kasurak asked the total land component of the proposed designation.

He was advised there were 5.35 acres +/- involved.

Mr. Kasurak asked why Mr. Smith's request to have all of his property designated High Density Residential could not be accommodated.

Chairman Leardi asked if a further public notice would be required in this regard.

Ms. Monteith stated it depended how dramatic the change was. If it was minor in nature and affected parties were in attendance at this meeting possibly not, however, if it was a major change, notice should be given. Notice would definitely be required for a zoning change.

Mr. Kasurak stated that when Sobey's proposal came forward they were required to do certain studies. What will happen with new proposals in this area?

Ms. Monteith stated that it depended on the magnitude of the proposal. If it's for a shopping centre, studies will be required and referenced the debate this caused with the Sobey's proposal.

Mr. Kasurak referenced the Commercial Policy review and noted that it stated the White Woods Mall was underutilized. If this is the case why are more lands required for commercial use?

Chairman Leardi noted that the mall is under one ownership and the study recommended that further commercial lands were needed.

Mr. Kasurak stated that, in his opinion, there will be impact on the neighbours and Council appears to be intent on moving forward without vision for the street scape. He felt that there was no comfort level for the property owners. There is potential for many Ontario Municipal Board Hearings if each property is to be rezoned on a site specific basis. He did not feel the proposal to be fair and felt more thought and consultation should be given to this matter.

Deputy-Mayor Pillon noted that Council has been considering this matter for 9 months. There is support within the community for this and also cited support from the Chamber of Commerce. He referenced the public meeting consultation process to hear concerns and comments from the public. He also expressed concern with continued appeals to the OMB and felt that many people supported the proposed amendment.

David Fox, 24 Sandwich Street South - opposed the proposed amendment stating in his opinion it will destroy the look of the street and the entrance to the Town. He does not feel it will enhance tourism in the Town and will not be appealing to visitors. He expressed concern that the historical significance of the Town is being taken away. Mr. Fox felt the commercial designation would be better served in a

page 4 - July 29, 2002 Public Meeting

different area and that residents would travel through Town to get to the commercial area. If the Town proceeds with this proposal Mr. Fox felt it should be considered for both sides of Sandwich Street or none at all. He expressed his concern and supports the heritage aspects of the Town.

Mayor DiBartolomeo asked for the Planner to clarify the minutes of settlement for OPA #1 regarding Sandwich Street.

Ms. Monteith stated the west side of Sandwich Street was taken out of the amendment.

There were no further questions and/or comments on the proposed amendment.

Adjournment

Chairman


Planning Coordinator

