



The Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee (BDAPAC) Meeting

Virtual Meeting – E-invite
Monday March 8th, 2021- 9:00- 11:00 am

Present: Phil Hauser (Chair), Mike Lessard (Vice-Chair), Tauri Caputo, John Edelman, Adam Peet, Kellie Stephan, John Vanderzanden

Staff: Mike Evers, General Manager of Community & Development Services, Lidy Romanuk, Manager of Economic Development & Tourism, Ashley Taylor, Planner, Benjamin Kissner, Planner and Breanna Beauchamp, Division Support.

Regrets: Mayor Hewitt, Councillor Rob Shirton, Trudy Parsons, Chris Hibbs, Art Bluhm.

1.0 Welcome and Introduction

Meeting is called to order by Manager of Economic Development and Tourism at 9:01 a.m.

2.0 Chair and Vice Chair Update

P. Hauser and M. Lessard provided an update, key highlights included:

- **BDAPAC Council Report-** A report will be given to Council before the summer adjournment to provide an update on initiatives and projects of the committee and will include recommendations for Council's consideration moving forward.
- **May 10th Meeting Homework-** Bring forward three infrastructure projects that would help economic development/growth for Haldimand County. Example- is there a need more bridges, more water capacity, more towers etc.?

A discussion then ensued.

3.0 Approval of January 13th, 2021 Minutes

Moved by J. Edelman and seconded by K. Stephan that the minutes of Business Development and Planning Advisory Committee Meeting dated January 13th, 2021 be approved as presented at 9:13 a.m.

4.0 Planning Introduction Presentation

B. Kissner and A. Taylor from Haldimand County's Planning and Development division delivered an 'Introduction to Planning' presentation to the committee. Key highlights included the importance of a planner's role, planning framework including the Official plan, Urban Design Guidelines, zoning by-laws, engineering, and the development process of planning and best practices with local examples.

B. Kissner and A. Taylor opened the floor for questions/ comments from the committee.

Development and Administrative costs- The committee proposed the possibility of the County absorbing administrative costs, as a incentive for large scale developments.

M. Evers provided feedback that absorbing costs could be problematic and in some cases can be considered 'bonusing' under the Municipal Act which is illegal. County application fees are set at 100% cost recovery such that the taxpayer is not subsidizing development projects. The County's application fees are in line with the cost and value of the work that is put into the applications from staff, the fee schedule gets redistributed each calendar year and has been reviewed to ensure accuracy. Also noted, was that the County has one of the lowest development charge rates in the larger region.

Auxiliary Units and Affordable Housing- The committee also expressed interest in the potential of auxiliary units on properties in Haldimand County, and the benefits it could have on the affordable housing issues in the community.

M. Evers echoed this comment on the auxiliary units, as affordable housing in the community is an ongoing issue, and conversation on these suites is critical moving forward. It was noted that these units are now permitted 'as of right' in the new County zoning bylaw. A. Taylor added that these units are subject to different provisions to ensure there is not a significant impact to the community and surrounding residential units.

Increased Communication with City View - T. Caputo commented that the tracking progress in the new Cityview program will be crucial in customer service and transparency, there is an immense benefit to both the user and the applicant.

M. Evers added there needs to be more proactive communications, and onboarding programs do focus on this. Also, the County's Cityview Portal initiative will address this by giving applicants the ability to review progress of their application in 'real time'. The aim is to have Portal in place for Building Division late 2021 and in Planning in late 2022.

Provincial Communication and Policies- The committee also inquired how Haldimand County interacts with the province, and the various provincial legislations and policies.

M. Evers provided that there are regular meetings with provincial representatives, and ongoing communications to ensure the province is on track with Haldimand County's Official Plan.

A discussion then ensued.

4.0 Fed Dev Ontario Tourism Marketing Grant

L. Romanuk delivered a presentation on the FedDev Ontario Tourism Marketing Grant. In 2020, Haldimand Economic Development & Tourism received a grant totaling \$166,952 to promote tourism and support the tourism sector locally. Key highlights included:

- New Tourism website with guided experiences, blogs, and addition of the 'Real Local' online Marketplace.
- New Tourism Haldimand Instagram account was created to promote the Haldimand County Tourism Brand and build a following on Instagram.
- Virtual Videography Workshop hosted by award- winning filmmaker Graeme Bachiu from Windecker Road Films to lead this 3 part webinar series, plus one-on-one personal coaching to help local business owners develop filmmaking and storytelling skills. This course was offered at no cost to the business owners, and was valued at over \$1,500.
- Tourism Gift Cards were purchased at 31 local tourism focused businesses that responded to the open call for future contesting, spending \$200.00 at each businesses that registered.
- Acquisition of 73 photography assets that were purchased from 6 local photographers to utilize on the new tourism website, and seasonal and social media campaigns.
- Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporations Conference Registrations were purchased to cover the full conference fees for registered business owners in the tourism industry, 19 businesses attended the two day conference.

- Real Taste of Haldimand Guide was created to highlight local restaurants offering takeout and curbside options, with 40 restaurants participating. This was delivered to every household in Haldimand County
- Real Local Marketing Kit was created which includes consistent branding for local businesses at no cost to them including social media templates, window decals, stickers and signage.
- Window Decals were installed throughout the downtowns of Haldimand County, staff worked with owners to beautify the front windows with large decals, promoting the County and it's tourism assets, and to encourage traffic to the new tourism website
- Geocaching Experience is currently in development with 20 geocache containers to be installed (when weather permits) throughout Haldimand County to encourage visitors to explore natural areas.
- Art Installation and Tour is currently in development, with installation of public art celebrating the significance of Grand Erie & Lake Erie to Haldimand County. Local artists are designing 25 wooden paddles which will be installed throughout the County.

A discussion then ensued.

5.0 BDAPAC Homework Discussion

The committee began a discussion on their homework item: Each committee member is to choose one business within their business network- one located in Haldimand County and one located outside of Haldimand County that have plans to expand in the next year – what are the obstacles/barriers and why is Haldimand not their first choice? Key highlights and common challenges from the committee included:

- Shared office spaces are will be integral in the success of supporting small business owners and attracting young entrepreneurs to the area;
- Highways and transportation options are a concern for developers and businesses looking to relocate or expand;
- Workforce issues, and finding skilled labour is an ongoing concern, could be beneficial to partner with the school board and look at adding additional co-op programs;

- Finding suitable locations for the needs of their business is also an obstacle many businesses face that are looking to expand, additional commercial locations would be beneficial for growth in Haldimand County;
- The development process, and applying for minor variances also seemed to be a challenge, business owners found the process complicated. The newly launched Development Liaison team should help simplify the development process; and
- A focus on small scale processors is important, and the ability to provide flexibility with on farm processing options.

A discussion then ensued.

6.0 Adjourned at 11:18 am