



Tiny

TOWNSHIP OF / CANTON DE

CLERK'S REPORT CR-051-15



TO: Mayor Cornell and Members of Council
FROM: Sue Walton, Deputy Clerk
DATE: November 30, 2015
RE: Town Hall Meeting – November 14, 2015 – Follow Up Report

RECOMMENDATION:

That Clerk's Report CR-051-15 regarding the Town Hall Meeting Follow Up be received as information.

BACKGROUND:

The Township of Tiny Council hosted a Town Hall Meeting on November 14, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Wyebridge Community Centre in which approximately 160 members of the public attended. The topic of the Town Hall meeting was a strategic plan update with a focus on public beach usage, maintenance and access/parking. Mrs. Karen Wianecki of Planning Solutions Inc. facilitated the meeting.

Thirty citizens addressed Council on various issues related to beach usage, maintenance and access/parking. The comments are summarized in Mrs. Wianecki's report and attached as Appendix 1.

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES: N/A

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: N/A

RELATIONSHIP TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Municipal Administration – Committed to excellence in municipal management with a focus on accountability, transparency, communication and customer service.

CONCLUSION:

The Town Hall meeting on November 14, 2015, provided an excellent opportunity for members of the public to provide their input on this particular issue.

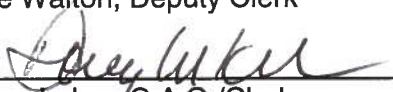
Respectfully Submitted,

Report Submitted by:



Sue Walton, Deputy Clerk

Report Approved by:



Doug Luker, C.A.O./Clerk

Attachment: Appendix 1

Township of Tiny Town Hall
Saturday, November 14th, 2015
9:00 – 12:00
Proceedings

As prepared by Karen Wianecki, Facilitator

1.0 Welcome – Mayor George Cornell

On behalf of Township Council, Mayor Cornell welcomed all in attendance to the Town Hall meeting. He expressed his pleasure at the turnout and noted that the Town Hall had been convened to share information with community members about the work that has been unfolding to develop a new Strategic Plan for the Township and to allow members of the community to share their concerns with respect to beach access, maintenance and enjoyment as it pertains to the five public beaches in the Township. Mayor Cornell introduced members of Council in attendance and turned the meeting over to Karen Wianecki, Facilitator.

2.0 Meeting Purpose & Objectives – Karen Wianecki, Facilitator

Karen Wianecki, Facilitator provided an overview of the meeting purpose and objectives noting that the meeting had been convened to:

- Provide an update on the status of the Township of Tiny Strategic Plan;
- To allow members of the community to identify issues/concerns relating to their enjoyment of the Township of Tiny public beaches (e.g. usage, maintenance and access/parking);
- To collectively identify an agreed-upon Go Forward Strategy to address concerns relating to public beach usage, maintenance and access/parking.

3.0 Overview of the Strategic Plan

Work on a new Strategic Plan for the Township of Tiny has been underway since the end of May. Two consulting teams (Planning Solutions Inc. and MHBC Planning) were retained by the Township and since May, considerable outreach and engagement has been carried out. A Steering Committee has been guiding the strategic planning process and workshops have been held with Council and Senior Management, Township staff and members of the community. One-on-one interviews have been convened with thirty (30) key partners including representatives from government, industry and community organizations. A web-based survey has been live since early June and input has been secured from interested parties. A children's art contest was also held and 34 entries were received from Township children who shared their vision for their community. Two newsletters have been developed to provide community members and interested parties with regular updates on progress and several draft documents have been developed and posted on the website. A high level overview of the goal areas and key actions was provided and hard copies were made available to those interested in seeing the document. Comments on the draft Strategic Plan will be welcome until November 20th. The intention moving forward is that a further revised Strategic Plan will be prepared post-November 20th and forwarded to the Steering Committee for final review before proceeding to Council on December 7th.

4.0 Public Beach Issues & Concerns – Summary of Key Learnings

Karen took the opportunity to summarize the key issues and concerns that had been shared by those in attendance. In particular, she noted the following:

1. This is an important issue for all of us – elected officials, staff, residents both seasonal and permanent and visitors.
2. We need to ensure that there is respect for property owners – seasonal and permanent – those who are using and enjoying the beaches.
3. We need to find a solution to the issue of beach access and enjoyment that is of benefit to all of us.
4. There are different perspectives about who the beaches are for. Some are of the view that public beaches should be for Township residents only. Others are of the view that public beaches should be for all to enjoy. There are different perspectives about the issues. Some are of the view that the issues focus on day trippers and visitors. Others are of the view that there are no issues, having not experienced disrespectful behavior and beach overcrowding personally. There are different perspectives about the solution. Some feel the number of parking spaces should be limited; others feel that in areas like Balm Beach, access from the day tripping population will be critical to sustain the businesses in the area; others feel that parking should be by permit and that the permits should be for residents only; others feel the beaches should be open to all.
5. There are significant concerns related to beach access, use and enjoyment. These concerns include overpopulation and carrying capacity of the beach, noise, pollution, disrespectful behavior, lack of consideration for private property owners, trespassing on to private property, safety and emergency vehicular access, environmental impacts (we have a number of unique landscapes in the Township including dune beaches) and concerns with water quality to name a few. The issue of beach accessibility for disabled persons was also raised.
6. We need to develop an approach that will allow us to manage the risks. Whether that plan involves more parking, more parking lots or the adoption of best practices from other jurisdictions to address similar issues. We need to be certain the solution addresses the concerns and that the solution is an appropriate one that will be effective for the long term.
7. Despite our different perspectives, we share a number of common interests. We all want to be able to and we deserve to be able to enjoy our beaches and our properties. We do not want negative impacts on our beaches as this is a critically important resource for all of us.
8. There are a number of initiatives identified in existing management plans that need to be implemented including signage.
9. There are a number of concerns with respect to beach carrying capacity and the impact of over-capacity on the quality of the water, health of the water and the beaches. There are a number of important studies that reflect capacity concerns.
10. There is a need to collectively define who the beaches are for.
11. We need to look at the beach issue systemically – we can't look at solutions that are singular-beach focused. What occurs in one area affects other parts of the Township's geography. We need to think about the beaches of the Township as a complete system and develop an approach to address the issues comprehensively.
12. Finally, this is an issue with a long-standing history. We need to recognize that a lot of work has been done to explore the issues and the solutions. The history needs to be reviewed and the studies that have been compiled need to be revisited.

5.0 Beach Issues – The Solutions

Based on the concerns identified, Karen invited attendees to identify the solutions that may allow these issues to be addressed. Several ideas were shared, as follows:

1. Focus on greater enforcement.
2. Convene a Round Table/Advisory Committee with interested community members to explore the issues and the solutions. Some additional specifics in relation to a Round Table or Advisory Committee include the following suggestions made by attendees:
 - Committee should have representatives with all views on the issue.
 - There should be a fair process to allow any interested person to participate. One person suggested that the Committee representation should be decided on the basis of 'representation by population' (e.g. beach associations represent many – they should be given additional 'seats at the table.')
 - The work of the Round Table/Advisory Committee needs to be guided by a Terms of Reference to define scope of responsibilities, timeframe and approach, how decisions will be made (e.g. by consensus) and how the broader community will be engaged (e.g. the Advisory Committee/Round Table will assess the situation and the issues and develop recommendations that would be presented to the broader community at a Town Hall).
 - Some collective decisions will need to be made to define who the public beaches are for. Also need a definition of rural. One participant suggested representation should be taken into account (greater number of voices, greater representation on the Committee – i.e. cottage association representatives).
3. Develop a survey and invite anyone with an interest to share their ideas and to indicate whether they would want to participate on the Advisory Committee/Round Table.

Karen suggested that on the basis of the suggestions, there appeared to be a Go Forward Strategy that had been developed:

1. Develop a Community Survey and post to the Township website. Survey to allow participants to identify issues and solutions pertaining to the public beaches in the Township. Anyone interested in participating on the Round Table be invited to self-identify.
2. Council to select Advisory Committee members ensuring diverse representation and all the right people are at the table.
3. Terms of Reference for the Round Table/Advisory Committee to be developed.
4. Timing to be identified. (Need a solution before next summer season begins.)
5. Recommendations to be developed by the Advisory Committee/Round Table.
6. Advisory Committee/Round Table to present findings and recommendations to the broader community at a future Town Hall meeting.

6.0 Closing Remarks

Mayor Cornell thanked all in attendance. He provided an opportunity for each member of Council to make some final closing remarks. General comments included the importance of respecting private property rights and landowners in the Township, the importance of serving Township residents first, the value of working together to find a solution that meets all of our needs, the issues that could result if we create a 'club' with exclusive rights and privileges for some and not others and the overriding importance of protecting public safety and ensuring that emergency access is provided to our beaches and to our residents.

Any additional comments and thoughts with respect to the Strategic Plan to be provided on or before November 20th. The public survey remains open until that time. Karen to prepare a summary of the proceedings. Proceedings to be forwarded to the Township.

Meeting adjourned: 12:10 pm.