

TOWNSHIP OF WELLINGTON NORTH

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 30, 2011

The Public Meeting was held Monday, May 30, 2011, 7:00 p.m. at the at the Township of Wellington North Council Chambers, Kenilworth to consider amendments to the Development Charge By-law for the Township of Wellington North.

Present:

Mayor: Raymond Tout
Councillors: Sherry Burke
Mark Goetz
Andy Lennox
Dan Yake

Also Present: **Chief Administrative Officer./ Clerk: Lorraine Heinbuch**
Treasurer: John Jeffery
Director of Public Works: Barry Trood
Executive Assistant: Cathy Conrad

(A) CALLING THE MEETING TO ORDER

Mayor Tout called the meeting to order.

(B) DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

- None reported

(C) OPENING REMARKS/PURPOSE OF PUBLIC MEETING

The purpose of this public meeting is to consider amendments to the Development Charge By-law for the Township of Wellington North.

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(D) PRESENTATION OF BACKGROUND STUDY - PROPOSED POLICIES AND DEVELOPMENT CHARGE

- Opening Remarks
- Presentation of Proposed Amendments to the Development Charge By-law

Mayor Tout explained that developers had voiced concerns about development in Wellington North. Four Building/Property Committee meetings were held to discuss the effect of Development Charges. Given the current economic situation Council felt they wanted to stimulate the economy. The draft by-law would be effective 1st year from January 2, 2011 to March 31, 2012.

- Questions from Members of Council

Councillor Yake commented that there had been good discussion at the four well attended meetings. He hopes to see some progress with increased development in the next year. Council will review the Development Charges after March 31, 2012.

- Deputations and Questions from the Public

Ross Chaulk stated that he is opposed to the amendments. Development charges are an attempt to bring fairness to tax payers. Reducing charges for urban area services is unfair to the rural residents. They pay a lot more for water and sewer for their homes. This amendment would lower Development Charges by \$7,429 per unit. If the Murphy lands are developed with the proposed 200 homes the loss would be \$1,485,800. Lowering the Development Charges will have ramifications.

Councillor Yake explained that Council spent time going over the importance of development in the community and the role it plays with employment and the local economy. Comparing municipalities is difficult as each municipality is different. Councillor Yake questioned the accuracy of the previous study. In discussion with other municipalities he learned that they either hired someone or did an independent study. He suggested that the study should have been tendered or we should have had two studies done.

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Mr. Chaulk stated that the study was not implemented at 100%.

Councillor Yake again stated that they should have had a second opinion. Based on what has been going on the numbers were not right. With this amendment there is a stipulation that there needs to be a minimum of 35 new dwelling units. If 35 dwellings are not built then Council will know that Development Charges are not the issue, that the issue is the economy.

Mayor Tout explained that the developers had provided numbers for three options; pessimistic, realistic and optimistic. Council chose to go with the realistic number. This is a one year trial.

Mr. Chaulk commented that homes can only sell for market value. If money doesn't come from Development Charges then it has to come from taxpayers.

Mayor Tout stated that the consumer is aware of the reduction in Development Charges. It has been mentioned that others need to reduce their commission to help stimulate the economy. All developers have to work together.

Councillor Lennox commented that the developers feel Development Charges are standing in their way. Council wants to be able to say if Development Charges are or are not holding back development.

Mr. Chaulk stated that when the economy improves people will develop. People are moving here from Kitchener and Waterloo. We will see more than 35 homes per year built.

Councillor Yake explained that we will have to do a new study in 2013 and that should tell us where we should be in regards to Development Charges.

Gerald Shepetunko asked for clarification in regards to wind turbines not paying Development Charges for parks and recreation when commercial, institutional, industrial and warehouse do.

Mayor Tout explained that turbines were not part of this amendment.

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Mr. Shepetunko asked if the parks and recreation amounts have changed for these classifications. How do these classifications benefit from parks and recreation.

Lori Heinbuch, CAO/Clerk, explained that turbines were added as an amendment in 2008 and put into place until the next study. Council saw no need to change these Development Charges at this time.

Mayor Tout stated that some of those companies use the recreation facilities and so do their employees. Some of these factories only have 26% of their employees living in this community.

Councillor Yake commented that turbines will be part of the new study in 2013.

Councillor Lennox commented that there are no turbine proposals in our imminent future. There will be room to amend Development Charges during the next study.

Campbell Cork requested the previous rates and questioned changes to the categories and questioned how the figure of \$10,000 was reached.

Councillor Lennox explained that the category of warehouse has been added.

Mayor Tout stated that some categories did not seem fair, ie. warehouses not using water and sewer. If they tap into the water and sewer in the future they will have to pay Development Charges. No professional formula was used and a consultant was not hired. Council looked at \$14,000 and \$10,000 and felt they needed to be aggressive to stimulate the economy. The amendment was discussed at four Building/Property Committee meetings with information received from various builders/developers.

Mr. Cork questioned if Council will consider this a success if 35 homes are built.

Mayor Tout explained that the amendment has not been passed yet. Builders must get permits by March 31, 2012. If they don't build within six months it comes off the 35. New rates will kick in on April 1, 2012, in accordance with Schedule B-2 of the proposed amendment.

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Lynn Turner asked where the 35 homes came from.

Mayor Tout stated that it was the realistic number provided by builders/developers.

Mr. Chaulk questioned if the build trade had approached the County.

Councillor Yake replied they had not.

Mayor Tout stated that we have to work and try to keep people here. Seniors are a big part of our community but we need youth to come into our community.

Mr. Cork expressed concern regarding seniors. The building trade is being subsidized, are we going to subsidize seniors to cover their taxes.

Mayor Tout replied that taxes should not increase. Development Charges are for future growth. The budget has been passed already.

Mr. Cork commented that there won't be as much money for the future.

Councillor Yake stated that he didn't disagree with what was being said and felt that existing taxpayers should not have to pay for new development. In this instance Council is hoping that by putting this amendment in place the economy will be stimulated. By the time the tax base is affected we will have a new study.

Mayor Tout commented that if there is no development there is no growth. We need to maintain youth and maintain jobs for them. Retired people need youth to buy their homes. Hopefully this will help increase employment. If people are working they are spending money.

Mr. Cork stated that the biggest development is from out of town.

Scott Hartle stated that he lives on South Water St. bordering the development on the Murphy lands. The developer entered into an agreement knowing that the higher Development Charges would be charged. If the developers only get to 34 will they be asking for more reductions? What about individuals building homes and developers building on spec?

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Mayor Tout explained that individual builders will benefit from the lower Development Charges. Most home buyers do not want to go through the building process.

Councillor Burke stated that the agreement is for 35; 34 won't be enough.

Mr. Hartle questioned if the Township is collecting the larger amount and then rebating if 35 homes are built.

Mayor Tout stated the amended rates will be collected. If there is no development there are no development charges collected.

Councillor Yake commented that if they get to 35 then we will discuss Development Charges further.

Wayne Baker, President of the Arthur Chamber of Commerce, commented that he appreciated what is being done as he knows of buildings not built here because of Development Charges. He would also like to see reductions in taxes. Reduced taxes would give more incentive to work.

- Written Submissions - none received

Mayor Tout explained that a By-law to amend the Development Charges will be tabled at the Regular Council Meeting on June 6, 2011

(E) CLOSE PUBLIC MEETING

Meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

C.A.O./CLERK

MAYOR