



MAY 24, 2011 - 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Meeting No. 15

All Members of Council

Development Services

Chair: Regional Councillor Jim Jones
Vice-Chair: Councillor Don Hamilton

Economic Development

Chair: Councillor Carolina Moretti
Vice-Chair: Councillor Alex Chiu

Transportation Issues

Chair: Regional Councillor Gord Landon
Vice-Chair: Councillor Alan Ho

PART A

Presentations, Major Studies, and Issues Agenda

9:00 a.m. – Canada Room

Attendance

Deputy Mayor Jack Heath
Regional Councillor Jim Jones
Regional Councillor Gord Landon
Regional Councillor Joe Li
Councillor Don Hamilton
Councillor Colin Campbell
Councillor Alan Ho
Councillor Logan Kanapathi
Councillor Alex Chiu

John Livey, Chief Administrative Officer
Jim Baird, Commissioner of Development Services
Brenda Librecz, Commissioner of Community & Fire Services
Murray Boyce, Senior Policy Coordinator
Catherine Conrad, Town Solicitor
Rino Mostacci, Director of Planning and Urban Design
Kitty Bavington, Council/Committee Coordinator

Regrets

Mayor Frank Scarpitti
Councillor Valerie Burke
Councillor Howard Shore
Councillor Carolina Moretti

The Development Services Committee convened at the hour of 9:05 a.m. in the Canada Room with Regional Councillor Jim Jones in the Chair.

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST – None Declared

1. DEVELOPMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES

- May 3, 2011, Part A (10.0)

[Minutes](#)

Moved by: Councillor Logan Kanapathi

Seconded by: Councillor Alan Ho

That the minutes of the Development Services Committee meeting, Part A, held May 3, 2011, be confirmed.

CARRIED

2. AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

SHARED AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING POLICY REVIEW (10.0)

[Presentation](#)

Murray Boyce, Senior Policy Coordinator, introduced the presentation to update the Committee on the Town's Draft Affordable and Special Needs Housing Strategy. Mr. Boyce provided a brief overview of the process to date and the next steps. The draft Strategy identifies several actions that address the provision of Special Needs Housing. The Town is currently proceeding with the Shared and Supportive Housing Policy Review component of the Strategy. Staff will report back to the Committee on final recommendations for a Strategy, as well as a plan to implement the actions outlined in the Strategy and incorporate policies for Affordable and Special Needs Housing into the draft Official Plan.

Christine Pacini of SHS Consulting presented an overview of the purpose and approach for the Town's Shared and Supportive Housing Policy Review. The goal of the study is to identify new Official Plan definitions and policies for Special Needs Housing, more commonly referred to as Shared Housing (ie. student housing, rooming houses) and Supportive Housing (ie. group homes, long term care homes, private retirement homes, residential care facilities).

An overview of the need for Shared and Supportive Housing highlighted Markham's aging population, the growing number of students, the growing waiting list for housing for persons with disabilities, as well as the need for more affordable housing options. The Town's current policies, housing definitions, initial findings, and preliminary policy directions respecting Shared and Supportive Housing were discussed. In particular, the challenge in responding to the new Provincial focus of keeping seniors and other persons with special needs in their own community and providing support in their own homes rather than moving them into an institution was discussed. In spite of the Provincial focus on aging in place, there is a point where seniors may have to move to a long term care home or private retirement home with support services so there is still a need for these facilities as part of the housing continuum.

The following comments and issues were discussed:

- the aging population's ethnic mix presents language barriers with unique communications needs to address
- a strong funding component could be a regional requirement for 5% contribution of units from high rise development to be earmarked for affordable and special needs housing
- should investigate licensing requirements for absentee landlords/owners of student housing accommodations
- extended driveway and parking issues and regulations will be included in the review
- it was suggested that second suites should be included in the draft Strategy as a significant affordable housing option
- the prevention of conversion or demolition of rental housing should be discussed with the stakeholders
- interview neighbours of current group homes to understand the impacts
- it was suggested that rooming houses not be encouraged
- with respect to student housing, it was suggested that Seneca College purchase and convert a building close to the school for this purpose
- it is intended that Markham's shared and supportive housing will accommodate Markham residents and workers
- Section 37 of the Planning Act would be a beneficial tool to secure affordable and special needs housing as part of a higher density development in Markham's identified intensification areas
- container housing and co-op housing could be affordable alternatives
- currently internal property standard inspections are contracted to the province; however, the Town should address issues such as rooming house standards and tenants' rights through development of its own internal property standards by-law
- Provincial government needs to take the lead in revising the Building Code to reduce the cost of construction of more affordable housing options (ie. mid-rise buildings)
- include ratepayer groups as stakeholders in discussion of shared and supportive housing
- incentives to keep family members in the family home, in order to accommodate cultural needs
- shared and supportive housing should be located close to public transit
- joint redevelopment of Metrolinx parking lots with more affordable housing options

Staff clarified that the Region of York is the Affordable and Special Needs Housing service manager; however, it is a shared responsibility and other governments, the not-for-profit and the private sector must get involved. Markham provides support through financial incentives, partnerships, identifying the need/advocacy, and the development of appropriate policies for the municipality.

SHS Consulting will report back on research findings for the Shared and Supportive Policy Review in the Fall of 2011 and will report back separately on policies regarding demolition and conversion of rental housing. A Stakeholder Workshop will be held on June 1, 2011.

The Committee requested an inventory of current Affordable and Special Needs Housing stock in Markham, and a review of the City of Oshawa's recent experience with student housing, including licensing absentee landlords

Moved by: Councillor Alex Chiu
Seconded by: Councillor Alan Ho

That the presentation provided by Murray Boyce, Special Projects Coordinator, Town of Markham and Christine Pacini, SHS Consulting, regarding Affordable and Special Needs Housing: Shared and Supportive Housing Policy Review be received.

CARRIED

3. MARKHAM INTER-CHURCH COMMITTEE FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING (MICAHA) UPDATE (10.0)

[Background Information](#) [Presentation](#)

Murray Boyce, Senior Policy Coordinator, introduced the presentation to update the Committee on the Markham Interchurch for Affordable Housing (MICAHA) Affordable Housing Forum.

Pamela Roth, President of MICAHA, introduced two other MICAHA members in attendance: David Wallace and Ruth Fuyarchuk. Ms. Roth's presentation was a review of a Community Forum held on April 1, 2011 - "Meeting the Markham Affordable Housing Need: Engaging the Markham Community". The purpose of the stakeholder gathering was to find solutions to the real need for increased provision of affordable housing in Markham, including addressing the on-going challenge to MICAHA and other non-profit organizations to acquire land for affordable housing projects. Ms. Roth outlined the findings from the forum related to partnerships, interested developers, funding sources, legislative support, affordable housing needs, and the perspectives of the public sector (CMHC, the Region, and Markham) and the private sector (Markham, York Region and GTA Developers).

The key messages are to change the perceptions around affordable housing and educate the community; work on creative partnerships; develop effective communication; break down barriers (ie. identify land and address cost, financial incentives for fees and charges, streamline approvals, and develop strategies to move low income families from rental to ownership freeing up rental units and building security for low income); and think outside the box (provide a range of affordable housing tenure options, both rental and ownership, affordable housing type options, both smaller and family sized units, use of innovative energy-efficient, high standard construction. Opportunities for Markham include multi-sector collaborations; supportive and innovative policies; and continuing the dialogue. Discussions included the wait list times, provincial policies, home ownership, land issues relating to providing available parcels and reducing costs, and partnership collaborations. Two projects in Ward 8 that have land available but are waiting for funding, were discussed.

The committee expressed support for the MICAHA organization and its initiatives.

Moved by: Councillor Alex Chiu

Seconded by: Councillor Don Hamilton

That the presentation provided by Ms. Pamela Roth, President, MICAH regarding Markham Interchurch for Affordable Housing (MICAH) Update be received.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

The Development Services Committee meeting adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Alternate formats for this document are available upon request.