

Advisory Committee on Industry, Economic Development and Tourism

Meeting Minutes - August 26, 2015

The 2nd meeting of the Advisory Committee on Industry, Economic Development and Tourism was called to order at 7:00 pm on June 29, 2015 in Council Chambers.

Present: Councillor Anne Barr, Ian Donald, Yves Grandmaitre, Jane Graham (Chairperson), Nick Previsich (Secretary)

Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of the June 29, 2015 meeting of the Advisory Committee were accepted with one revision – to note that the 2nd meeting of the Advisory Committee was to take place on August 26, 2015.

Approval of Agenda

The agenda was unanimously approved as distributed.

Open Issues

1. A presentation was made by Ms. Connie Adams notifying the Advisory Committee that there is interest in entering Merrickville in the “Communities in Bloom” competition for 2016 or 2017. A presentation had already been made to Council and Ms. Adams indicated that they supported the concept but had also requested that “cost-benefit” information be provided if it is available. Advisory Committee members were advised to access on the on-line link for further information on the Communities in Bloom at:
<http://www.communitiesinbloom.ca/>
The Chair recommended to Ms. Adams that she coordinate with Ian Donald, as the Committee lead on this issue, as she develops further related documentation for Council.

Business Arising

- a. Paper copies of key planning and financial documents were distributed. Members were asked to review these documents prior to the next Advisory Committee meeting.
- b. The financial breakdown for 2015 Municipal Budget was not provided. Councillor Barr offered to provide additional details on the 2015 Budget as it relates to Industry and Tourism at a subsequent meeting. Financial information will be posted under Dropbox in addition to being available at a future meeting.
- c. Key elements of the Economic Action Plan were not discussed pending the review of key financial documents by the Advisory Committee members.
- d. A list of special events for 2015 and beyond was not provided. The Advisory Committee requested that Bronwen McKnight provide this list at a subsequent meeting.
- e. Yves Grandmaitre distributed a three page overview (with photos) of vacant buildings/space or “space with potential” to stimulate new economic development. A discussion ensued on how best to engage private building owners. Councillor Barr noted that a recommendation

to Council has been made to encourage greater use of Municipal buildings by Community groups by eliminating rental fees.

- f. A list of government grants available to the Municipality was not provided. However, it was noted that the provincial government does advertise grants which can be viewed at: <http://www.grants.gov.on.ca/GrantsPortal/en/OntarioGrants/GrantOpportunities/GrantsA-Z/index.htm> It was also noted that CN Rail is advertising a grant for tree planning and greening programs in communities. Details can be viewed at: www.cnfromthegroundup.ca.
- g. No update was provided on the operations of the Chamber of Commerce. However, copies of a recent pamphlet produced by the Chamber of Commerce were distributed. Advisory Committee members noted that the pamphlet could add value to the visitor information available on businesses in the community. It was suggested that the Merrickville-Wolford visual logo be used on such documents to ensure consistency and reinforce existing branding.
- h. Councillor Barr reported on the Mayor's initiative related to the development of a comprehensive Strategic Plan for the municipality including economic development, sustainability, landfill, recreation, etc. A Strategic Planning (SP) Committee has been created and lead consultants have been appointed. IEDT Committee members emphasized the importance and urgency of clarifying the respective mandates and roles of the SP and IEDT Committees.

Future Actions

1. Councillor Barr will create a Dropbox account for access by Advisory Committee members. The Dropbox will be used to post relevant documents (eg. the key financial documents) as well as comments by Committee members.
2. Committee members were asked to identify three to four issues that could be taken to Council as evidence of "low hanging fruit". These ideas would be posted in the Dropbox and discussed at the next meeting of the Advisory Committee.
3. Councillor Barr will ensure that one of the SP Committee members and/or consultants be invited to attend the next meeting of the IEDT Committee meeting to discuss and ensure complementarity of the work of these two Committees.
4. Committee members will review the action items identified in the 2013 Economic Development Strategic Review & Action Plan with a view to forward specific items for consideration by Council.
5. Councillor Barr will speak with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) about a suitable time/date to provide training to Advisory Committee members to the operations of Council and Advisory Committees.

Agenda and Date for the Next Meeting

The Committee Chairperson will develop and distribute an Agenda for the next meeting. To the extent possible, all meetings will be held on the third Monday of each month. If the Council Chambers is not available the meetings will be held in the Council Office. The next meeting will take place on Monday, September 21, 2015.

Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm by the Chairperson.