

NOTLINE NEWS

A NEWS UPDATE FROM THE COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF Niagara-On-The-Lake

Issue # 171 – April 28, 2009

CORPORATE SERVICES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Corporate Services Advisory Committee approved the minutes of the Town's Parking Advisory Committee, which met on April 14, 2009, with the exception of the parking rate increase of \$0.25.

Committee also approved the Current Budget as amended. At the completion of the amendments, an increase of approximately 11.8% or \$75.55 would apply on a typical home assessed at \$291,000. The 11.8% increase in the levy does not translate into a property tax increase of 11.8%, rather the affect on a typical property tax bill would be 2.2%.

The remuneration and expenses paid to Council, Committee of Adjustment, and Municipal Heritage Committee for the year 2008 was received. Committee also approved the July 1 Canada Day celebration events and granted permission to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Volunteer Firefighters to set off fireworks at the Virgil Stampede on Monday, May 18, 2009.

Discussion took place regarding the Town's five caleche permissions and MarieBeth Young's request to operate her miniature horse and carriage. A motion was defeated by Committee to grant Ms. Young a temporary permission for the remainder of 2009 to operate outside the downtown/Old Town district. Committee received the update on the development of the Town's Caleche Terms of Reference as outlined in a staff report.

PUBLIC PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A Public Planning meeting took place regarding the Zoning By-law Amendment for 901 East & West Line Road which would permit a farm equipment repair, fabrication, and sales for farm machinery and landscaping equipment for a temporary period of three years. Several neighbouring residents spoke in support of the change in use, and no one spoke in opposition.

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Planning Advisory Committee received a deputation from the owner and agents of the proposed 66 & 76 Picton Street Hotel. A slideshow was presented with pictures of historical buildings and designs for the project. It was advised the hotel is proposed as a three-storey building with approximately 84 rooms, having a small restaurant, and underground parking.

Following the Public Planning Meeting, Committee approved the temporary use zoning by-law amendment for 901 East West Line Road.

Due to timing restraints, the Planning Advisory Committee was unable to complete their agenda at the April 27 Committee of the Whole meeting. The balance of the agenda will be dealt with at a future Committee of the Whole meeting.

PUBLIC WORKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Public Works Advisory Committee accepted the tender bids for the 2009 Sidewalk and Curb Repairs Program, the installation of a storm sewer on Line 1 Road, and the 2009 Surface Treatment Program. Committee also approved the applications for funding under Intake 2 of the Communities Component of the Building Canada Fund for Concession 4 Road Reconstruction, as well as three projects under the Infrastructure Stimulus Fund, being the Multi-Purpose Trail, a road resurfacing program, and Warner Road Reconstruction. It was noted the 2009 Capital Budget will be amended to reflect this. Furthermore, the minutes of the March 26 Irrigation Committee Meeting and Municipal Irrigation System Public Meeting were received, and the recommendations contained therein were approved.

PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee endorsed a staff recommendation for the Town to maintain the Niagara Shores Park in 2009 as per Parks Canada's request.

Committee also discussed the role of the Queen Street Decoration Committee and whether it will oversee streets in the other communities as well.

In addition, the policies and procedures dealing with trees on public properties was approved following discussion regarding the involvement of the Tree Committee. The Director of Parks & Recreation explained the Tree Committee works with staff as needed to address issues as they arise. A staff report was also approved regarding trees on Airport Road which are failing.

The construction of a new Community Centre attached to the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library was approved, including the timelines of the construction to accommodate the Building Canada Fund conditions. Additional public comments regarding the preliminary design will be requested shortly in order to begin the preparation of working drawings. Committee members discussed the potential uses of the building, the organizations which have shown an interest in using the facility, and the importance of public input to accommodate the various needs of the community.

Under New Business, Council members were reminded of the Daffodil Garden of Hope opening ceremony on Saturday, May 2, at the Queenston Fire Hall.

COUNCIL SUMMARY – APRIL 20, 2009

Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs opened the meeting noting Earth Day is Wednesday, April 22, 2009, and Council will be hosting a barbeque at the Centennial Arena sports field on Saturday, April 25, 2009, between 12:30 p.m. and 1:30 p.m. for all Town residents who participate in earth day activities.

Lord Mayor Burroughs noted the recent ECO Conference at NDSS was a tremendous success, and it demonstrated the great energy and enthusiasm of the school. He stated it would be a terrible loss for the community should the school close. He further advised he recently attended the provincial legislature where Billy Morrison of NDSS was honoured as one of eight recipients of the Ontario Medal for Young Volunteers, which recognized his efforts with regard to keeping NDSS open.

Council received a deputation by Lisa Campbell from the Niagara Land Trust (NLT), which is a recently formed not-for-profit organization with a goal to provide an opportunity for people to protect and conserve valued landscapes in Niagara. To achieve their goal NLT uses land ownership, conservation easements, encourages conservation with private owners and fosters cooperative relationships with landowners and the general public. The deputant provided details to Council on various initiatives to achieve their goals and noted their mission is to 'conserve Niagara's natural heritage'. NLT is a volunteer organization and proposes to work with various government agencies, landowners, community groups and other volunteers to promote the preservation of natural heritage settings. NLT will consider all preservation projects which come to their attention. Further information is available on their website at www.niagaralandtrust.ca.

In review of the Public Works Advisory Committee recommendations, Council modified the request to consider the installation of double stop signs at the approaches to Concessions 1 and 2 on Line 3 Road by adding direction to consider all possible options to reduce the collision rates at these locations.

The balance of the recommendations of the Committee of the Whole meeting of April 6, 2009, were adopted without change.

Under New Business Council discussed the current status of the DSBN's recent decisions with respect to NDSS and directed staff to bring back a plan, including a strategy to approach the Board to pursue an amendment to extend the time frame for the school's potential closure. Council noted there has been significant progress made to achieve the enrollment numbers through various initiatives, however time is needed for these programs to work.

Council questioned staff on the current status of the new community centre, and staff advised the Steering Committee has met and expects to provide a report to the Committee of the Whole on April 27, 2009. It is expected the report will advise of the proposed timelines for the start of the project with a proposed occupancy of March 1, 2011. Staff noted the report will provide schematic drawings and a process for public involvement.

Council considered the matter of conflict of interest which may be associated with the procedures of ad-hoc committees who provide advice to Council. Direction was given to staff to develop rules for Council's consideration which will provide guidance for the operations of such committees.

Discussions were undertaken related to the proposed Green Energy Act and the contents of the proposed legislation. It was noted the legislation has not gone through the normal process of development and Council needs to be more familiar with the legislation, its contents and its potential impact on the community. Council directed staff to review the legislation, including the potential of it working outside the terms of the Planning Act, and report back.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2009, at 7:00 p.m. Additional information on meeting schedules and deputation procedures may be obtained by contacting the Clerk's Department or by visiting the Town's website at www.notl.org.

Lord Mayor Gary Burroughs, Councillors: Jim Collard, Dennis Dick, Terry Flynn, Andrea Kaiser, Jack Lowrey, Martin Mazza, Art Viola, Gary Zalepa