



**TOWN OF AURORA
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Thursday, June 11, 2015

Time and Location: 7 p.m., Leksand Room, Aurora Town Hall

Committee Members: Councillor Paul Pirri (Chair), Councillor John Abel (Vice Chair), Don Constable (arrived 7:05 p.m./departed 8:10 p.m.), Rosalyn Gonsalves, Paul Smith, and Bruce Walkinshaw

Member(s) Absent: Marilee Harris

Other Attendees: Councillor Tom Mrakas, Councillor Michael Thompson, Marco Ramunno, Director of Planning and Development Services, Anthony Ierullo, Manager of Long Range and Strategic Planning, Michael Logue, Program Manager, Economic Development, and Linda Bottos, Council/Committee Secretary

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

1. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest under *the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

2. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

**Moved by Bruce Walkinshaw
Seconded by Rosalyn Gonsalves**

THAT the agenda as circulated by Legal and Legislative Services be approved.

CARRIED

3. RECEIPT OF THE MINUTES

Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of May 14, 2015

Moved by Rosalyn Gonsalves
Seconded by Councillor Abel

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting minutes of May 14, 2015, be received for information.

CARRIED

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) Doug Lindeblom, Director of Economic Strategy, York Region
Re: York Region Broadband Study

Mr. Lindeblom presented an update on the Broadband Study in the context of the Region's Economic Development Action Plan where "Broadband Connectivity" is the second of six goals of the Plan. He noted that the most recent activity was the formation of a Regional Broadband Task Force, which was endorsed today by the Region's Committee of the Whole. Mr. Lindeblom provided background information on the Broadband Study, which was to determine the capabilities, issues, gaps, and opportunities across the Region. He stated that the Study results showed discontinuity across the Region while some parts of the Region have a very high level of connectivity which is attracting major data centres from around the world. Mr. Lindeblom added that the results showed that Aurora was a fairly well-served community, particularly from the number of internet service providers in employment areas. He discussed the Study recommendations and objectives, as well as the implementation priorities developed in the areas of education and advocacy, municipal processes, and infrastructure investments. Mr. Lindeblom reviewed the opportunities and services of YTN (York Telecom Network), ORION (Ontario Research and Innovation Optical Network), and CANARIE, Canada's national digital infrastructure supporting research, education, and innovation, and the partnership with Southlake Regional Health Centre and York University. He advised that the Region would be holding a Broadband & Innovation Summit, in partnership with the TAVES Consumer Electronics Show, in Richmond Hill on Friday, October 30 through Sunday, November 1, 2015, and noted that the Summit would be about establishing priorities on how to develop broadband capability that services the end user. Mr. Lindeblom concluded by reporting that the Region would be updating its Economic Development Action Plan in 2015 and would be holding sessions in the fall to solicit feedback regarding what issues and opportunities face the business community that the Region's Plan might help to address.

Moved by Paul Smith
Seconded by Councillor Abel

THAT the delegation by Doug Lindeblom be received for information.

CARRIED

5. MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Memorandum from Manager of Long Range and Strategic Planning Re: Preferred Medical Campus Locations (Update)

Staff provided a brief overview of the background information, including the four areas originally identified as potential locations for a medical campus, and noted that the preferred location in the area of Bayview Avenue and St. John's Sideroad was now less viable to accommodate large medical users due to recent redevelopment of the area. Staff stated that the project originally envisioned providing interconnectivity between larger medical users, medical practitioners, and medical research. Staff requested the Committee's direction regarding whether to proceed as previously discussed or to consider alternative options. Staff reported that the demand for practitioners locating in Aurora was strong, while the manufacturing aspect would require more attention. Staff informed the Committee of another potential opportunity and indicated that any potential interest in focusing on medical use would be investigated.

Moved by Paul Smith
Seconded by Councillor Abel

THAT the memorandum regarding Preferred Medical Campus Locations (Update) be received for information.

CARRIED

2. Economic Development Action Plan Review/Update – Discussion

Staff provided the context to the creation of the Economic Development Action Plan by the Economic Development Advisory Committee of the previous term. Staff noted that the Committee determined key priorities to be advanced in alignment with the Town's Strategic Plan and other policy documents. The Committee was invited to consider whether any adjustments to the Action Plan were necessary, and items discussed by the Committee and staff included:

- Business Ambassador Program – re-establish Program
- Business Retention & Expansion Plan – implement ongoing, shorter surveys
- Broadband Strategy
- Business Concierge Program – expand Program
- Marketing and Business Attraction – use successes as marketing tool, advertise in combination with entertainment district, sports, and tourism plan
- Entertainment District
- Future of Farmers' Market – define permanency, scope, and location
- Differentiated Tax Rates – explore potential to incentivize certain types of development

Moved by Councillor Abel
Seconded by Bruce Walkinshaw

THAT the Economic Development Advisory Committee recommend to Council:

THAT the following initiatives be added to the Economic Development Action Plan for the 2014-2018 Term of the Committee:

- Business Ambassador Program;
- Marketing and Business Attraction;
- Future of Farmers' Market; and
- Differentiated Tax Rates.

CARRIED

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

3. Memorandum from Manager of Long Range and Strategic Planning Re: 2014-2015 Town of Aurora Business Directory

Staff advised that an updated Business Directory, based on an annual employment survey carried out in partnership with York Region, is available online at businessaurora.ca in both a downloadable Excel spreadsheet format and an interactive, searchable map-based format. Staff briefly reviewed the Aurora 2014 employment survey results and noted that the numbers for employment and business growth were very positive. Staff further noted that the published information represents data collected last summer and that the collection of the 2015 data had already begun in Aurora this month.

The Committee inquired about the home-based business numbers and staff advised that the annual survey was traditionally focused on businesses with a physical store front. Staff noted that coordination with the local Chambers of Commerce had increased in an effort to capture more home-based businesses.

Moved by Bruce Walkinshaw
Seconded by Rosalyn Gonsalves

THAT the memorandum regarding 2014-2015 Town of Aurora Business Directory be received for information.

CARRIED

4. Extract from Council Meeting of April 28, 2015 Re: Economic Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes of April 9, 2015

Moved by Paul Smith
Seconded by Councillor Abel

THAT the Extract from Council Meeting of April 28, 2015, regarding the Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting minutes of April 9, 2015, be received for information.

CARRIED

7. NEW BUSINESS

The Committee requested clarification on the importance of economic development to the Town and the Chair confirmed that great importance has been placed on economic development.

The Committee expressed concern regarding the decision of a major employer to relocate outside of Aurora. Staff relayed that the decision was a corporate one and the Town would be proactively engaging with the owner regarding plans for the property.

The Committee and staff discussed how surveys have shown that Aurora's industrial and commercial tax rates are relatively low and it was suggested that this type of information could be used as a marketing tool.

The Committee noted that York Region recently increased its development charges and commented on the potential negative impact on development in Aurora.

The Committee suggested that an additional meeting of the Committee be scheduled prior to September 2015.

Moved by Bruce Walkinshaw
Seconded by Rosalyn Gonsalves

THAT an additional meeting of the Economic Development Advisory Committee be scheduled in August 2015.

CARRIED

8. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Bruce Walkinshaw
Seconded by Councillor Abel

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 9:22 p.m.

CARRIED

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS ARE NOT BINDING ON THE TOWN UNLESS ADOPTED BY COUNCIL AT A LATER MEETING.