

NORTH WEST PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC MEETING
MINUTES
July 3, 2008

PRESENT: Ms. Ann Merritt, Chair
Ms. Gloria Lowther
Ms. Jessica Alexander
Mr. Walter Regan
Councillor Bob Harvey

REGRETS: Mr. Lorne Piercey
Mr. Jim Sullivan
Mr. Warren Hutt

STAFF: Ms. Leticia Smillie, Planner
Ms. Melody Campbell, Legislative Assistant

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. at the Bedford Library, 15 Dartmouth Road, Bedford.

Ms. Merritt, Chair, introduced the Committee and welcomed the public to the Information Meeting.

2. CASE 01066: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE BEDFORD MUNICIPAL PLANNING STRATEGY AND LAND USE BY-LAW TO EXTEND THE MAINSTREET COMMERCIAL DESIGNATION AND ZONE ALONG BEDFORD HIGHWAY BETWEEN CIVIC NUMBER 1094 BEDFORD HIGHWAY AND HOLLAND AVENUE

Ms. Leticia Smillie, Planner, outlined the proposal to the Committee and members of the public.

Ms. Merritt advised the public of the ground rules of the meeting and requested that anyone who wanted to speak to proposed amendments come forward.

Mr. Errol Guam, Bedford, advised the Committee that he has businesses in the area. He advised that as soon as you get to Holland Road traffic is backed up. There will be an increase in traffic if this amendment is approved adding that proposal does not make sense.

Ms. Charlotte Johnson, Bedford, raised concern about taxes. Staff clarified that commercial is taxed as a commercial property and residential will continue to be taxed as a residential property.

Mr. Johnson, Bedford, inquired about the development agreement process. In response, staff advised that if a residential property is sold it would have to go through the development agreement process if the new owner wanted to change to a commercial property.

Mr. Brad Walker, Bedford, raised concern about increased traffic in the area, adding that traffic is already a huge issue. The highway is not large enough for increased traffic. He advised that this area should be kept the way it is.

Ms. Paula MacInnis, Bedford, raised a question regarding the Bedford waterfront plan and the vision of the Municipal Plan. Staff advised that the Bedford Waterfront Visioning process is in the implementation stage.

Councillor Harvey added that this is a plan amendment and it is a two step process and will end up at Regional Council.

Mr. Guam added that many businesses or offices require parking noting that doctors' offices may have 40-50 vehicles at a time, which creates traffic. Additional commercial will create more traffic. He advised that it is very difficult to get back on the main road due to an already large amount of traffic. Staff advised that traffic is an area that will be looked at as the process and growth continues.

Mr. Doug Butchett, Bedford, stated that this will create business opportunities adding that it will not create too much extra traffic.

Ms. Smillie reminded the meeting attendees that this amendment is for seven properties only.

Mr. Newman Ali, Bedford, added his concern in regard to increased traffic. New business and new condos have increased traffic. The whole traffic issue needs to be addressed. He noted that he often takes the highway due to the heavy traffic in the area.

Mr. Dave Burrige, Bedford, stated he also is concerned about an increase in traffic. He advised that when HRM staff make all of these individual planning decisions, it does make an impact on the traffic in the area. He suggested that HRM planning staff deal with all of the planning issues at one time instead of individual amendments. In response to a query on the number of parking spots for each business, Ms. Smillie advised that parking spaces are determined by the type of use. Mr. Burrige suggested that the area could have a small town feel promoting a walking atmosphere.

Ms. Merritt agreed that traffic is a large issue in the area.

Ms. Lowther asked staff what the notification area was as there was only two residents present from the area proposed adding that she is concerned about community stability and issues related to the immediate residents. Staff advised that all of the other residential properties are rental properties.

Ms. Merritt advised that a good way to get feedback on local issues is to request responses in the form of a survey. This will enable everyone who is affected to have their say in matters.

Councillor Outhit advised that he was contacted by two property owners in the area supporting the application. Other than these two individuals, he has had no other feedback from residents.

Staff advised that if any other residents have any further concerns or would like to add any further comment, they could contact Ms. Smillie directly.

Ms. Paula MacInnis, Bedford, raised concern that Bedford may lose the community feel and added her concern that this planning is being done in bits and is not coming together very well.

Ms. Merritt added that Bedford has a pedestrian friendly, small town feel. She added that this is being looked at by having small businesses in the area.

3. CLOSING COMMENTS

As there were no other speakers, Ms. Merritt thanked the residents for their input to the process and Ms. Smillie outlined the process and timeline for the application as it proceeds to Regional Council.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Melody Campbell
Legislative Assistant