

PUBLIC MEETING RE: SUSTAINABLE SUBDIVISION POLICY & BYLAW

August 25, 2010

Approved Minutes

DATE: August 25, 2010

TIME: 7:00 p.m.to 7:45 p.m.

PLACE: Stratford Town Centre, 234 Shakespeare Drive

COUNCIL: Mayor Jenkins, Deputy Mayor Sandy McMillan, Councillor Gary Clow, Councillor Patrick Ross, Councillor Steve MacDonald, Councillor Diane Griffin and Councillor Emile Gallant.

STAFF: Robert Hughes, Chief Administrative Officer, Vahid Ghomoshchi, Director of Planning and Doug Deacon, Sustainable Economic Development Coordinator

PUBLIC: 18 people

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Jenkins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance. Mayor Jenkins noted that the sustainable subdivision is something that we have been working towards for awhile. I think that this is an exciting concept. It offers the Developers the opportunity to develop a subdivision with a lot less asphalt, concrete, street lights, etc. This is a benefit for the Developers, but residents will also see benefits - like more green space, buffering between existing subdivisions and new subdivisions. There are a lot of opportunities with Sustainable Subdivisions.

Mayor Jenkins turned the meeting over to Councillor Gary Clow, Chair of the Planning and Heritage Committee.

Councillor

Clow: Thank you for attending the meeting this evening to hear about our proposed sustainable subdivision and bylaw. Following the adoption of our community sustainability plan – Imagine Stratford 2028, we have been reviewing our policies and operations to ensure that we are moving towards a more sustainable future. One area where we can have a big impact is encouraging new development to be more sustainable. We have therefore developed a draft sustainable subdivision policy and bylaw to allow developers the option of building more sustainable subdivisions which we are presenting to you tonight to seek your input. We will concentrate on the policy and the intent of the enabling bylaw. We have more work to do on the bylaw wording and official plan amendments, which we will do once we have some feedback from residents on the draft policy and bylaw intent. We will then bring the whole package back to residents at another public meeting for final review.

When we say sustainable subdivision we are talking about subdivisions where more green space is kept for resident use, where more social interaction is possible, where housing choices are increased, where environmentally sensitive land is protected, where trees are protected, where infrastructure costs are reduced, where more active transportation is possible etc. We hope that you will agree with our goals of subdivisions where there is increased resident health and wellness, better protection of natural resources and more efficient servicing and that you will offer your advice on how we may best achieve those goals through the draft policy and bylaw. I will now turn it over to the Director of Planning for the Town, Mr. Vahid Ghomoshchi, to explain the proposed policy and bylaw in more detail.

Vahid Ghomoshchi,

Director of Planning: The 24 principles of a sustainable subdivision were reviewed and explained through a power point presentation. The main topics from the presentation are listed below:

- A. Natural Environment
 - 1. Forest and Tree Conservation
 - 2. Wetland and Water Body Conservation
 - 3. Ecological Communities Conservation
 - 4. Floodplain Avoidance
 - 5. Steep Slope Protection and Soil Erosion Control
 - 6. Creation and/or Restoration of Wildlife Habitat/Wetlands
- B. Social and Cultural Amenities
 - 7. Public Transit Facilities
 - 8. Housing Diversity and Inclusion
 - 9. Collaboration with Neighboring Residents and Experts in the Design Process
 - 10. Community Gathering Place/Facilities
 - 11. Public Parks and Open Spaces
 - 12. Environment Protection During Construction Activity
 - 13. Heritage/Historic Resources Conservation
 - 14. Public Arts and Cultural Heritage Conservation
- C. Renewable Energy Sources and Water Efficiency
 - 15. On-site Renewable Energy Sources
 - 16. Energy Efficient System
 - 17. Waste Water Management
 - 18. Building Water Efficiency
 - 19. Certified Green Building (LEED, Green Globe...)

- D. Built Environment
 - 20. Connectivity to the Town's Street Network
 - 21. Tree Areas, Tree-Lined and Shaded Streets
 - 22. Active Transportation Network
 - 23. Storm Water Management
 - 24. Innovation in Design and Solar Orientation

The scoring system and the scoring table were then reviewed and explained to the public.

It was also noted that a draft copy of the Sustainability Policy and Bylaw is also available for viewing on the Town web site at www.townofstratford.ca

Councillor Clow: Is there any questions or comments from the Public?

Mayor Jenkins: The biggest revelation was the two pictures showing a traditional subdivision and a sustainable subdivision. I know, for myself on the Mason Rd. you see more and more infill subdivisions, closer to other subdivisions, so the opportunity for sustainability subdivisions to offer more buffer space and really get more green space and park space.

Resident: The sketches showing the traditional and sustainable subdivisions are not in the hand out. It would be nice if they were included.

Director of Planning: This is the Sustainable Policy and Bylaw. I will put this presentation on the Town's web site.

Mayor Jenkins: If you want to leave you email address or contact the Town hall, we can have copies made for you.

Resident: I'm interested in who would own the green space.

Director of Planning: The green space would be owned mostly by the Town.

Resident: The Town would own and maintain it forever. It would be zoned as green space?

Director of Planning: Yes

Alan Forbes: I think that it is a very good idea but from my perceptive I think that you should spend a little more time at looking after what you already have. I'm referring specifically to Keppoch Park. Its been used as a dump for a number of years. We had an Official Plan going back 25 years ago to 1985. it has been changed since that time, but under your Council for the last 10 years they have been dumping fill in there. They have finally stopped now but nothing has been done to develop the park. I think you should spend a little more time fixing up what you have now before you start getting into new stuff.

- Resident: Would the lots be significantly smaller? Not necessarily, that it would be a good or bad thing. There are things like the thermal heating systems, which required a fair bit of space. You can't cracker box completely with little parcels of small lots. I'd like to have an idea of the concept of how large the lots would be. Is it the same as the present R1 zoning or would the zoning have to be amended, or the specifications of the size of zoning have to be changed.
- Director of Planning: The main intention is to remove the lots size and look at the design and benefits. So, in this sustainable subdivision we will not have a minimum lot size requirement. We will look at the design and other aspects of sustainability. The intention is to develop an overlay zone. We will look at a sustainability subdivision as an overlay zone and we will apply this to any existing zone, which will be mostly R1, R1L and R2. We will then have new rules and regulations for this zone but not for whole zone, only the specific land which the applicant apply's for a sustainability subdivision.
- John Horrelt: It is important to point out that when people mention the green space that in a lot of these subdivision these areas will be left as natural meadows, not necessarily a cut park, they maybe left as a natural fields and forests it will not be something that will be maintained as a park.
- In terms of answering the question on geothermal heat systems. You could have one system that could be shared by a number of homes. Again, this would save on capital costs and the environment.
- Alan McIssac,MLA These lots will be a smaller sized lots. Will the price of these lots be less and will the taxes be less? Is this something that will be tried in one area or is concept that the Town is taking forward for most developments from now on?
- Director of Planning: This is for land that has the potential to use these indicators and requirements to develop a sustainable subdivision. For instance, in the R3 Zone and TCR Zone, it may not fit those zones, but if it is in the R1L Zone, and you want to develop that piece of land. If you meet the requirements then you could have a smaller size lot, a different design, you would be able to get the benefits of less infrastructure, less roads. The Community will then gain open space, natural features, trails.
- Councillor Clow: There will be another public meeting at a later date and if you have any input we love to hear about it.
- Resident: The only other input that I have is, this is a very, very important decision because if it is brought in as a bylaw then it is forever. Therefore, it is an excellent opportunity with the Election coming to have it as a plebiscite item on the ballot.

Councillor Griffin: You need to understand, that this is optional for developers. If they want to be classified as having a sustainable subdivision. Developers can still develop a traditional subdivision. It is not mandatory that they build a sustainable subdivision.

Director of Planning: If you feel that you have potential to have a sustainable subdivision you can. The original zone still stays in place.

Councillor Griffin: I suspect that you will see more sustainable subdivisions over the years when everyone sees its success. It is strictly volunteer.

Resident: We do want R1 zones with good housing and large lots. I think that we would want a mix.

There being no further comments or questions, the meeting adjourned. at 7:45 p.m.