

**THE CORPORATION OF THE
TOWNSHIP OF WELLINGTON NORTH
ARTHUR DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES
JANUARY 23, 2019 AT 7:00 PM**

The meeting was held in the Lower Hall at the Arthur Community Centre.

Committee Members Present:

Lisa Hern, Councillor, Chair
Andrew Lennox, Mayor
Tish Green, President, Arthur Chamber
Caroline Paquet
Paula Coffey
Jaime McKinnon
James Coffey
James Craig
Jacklyn Winter

Committee Members Absent:

Steve McCabe, Councillor
Corey Bilton
John Schmidt
Fran Turnbull
Joe Walsh
Steve Kozinets

Staff Present:

Michael Givens, CAO
Dale Small, Economic Development Officer
Mandy Jones, Community Recreation Coordinator

CALLING THE MEETING TO ORDER

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PASSING AND ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

RESOLUTION ADR 2019-001

Moved by: Andy Lennox

Seconded by: James Craig

THAT the agenda for the January 23rd, 2019 Arthur Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee meeting be accepted and passed.

CARRIED

DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST(S) AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

No declarations of pecuniary interest were declared.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the August 28th, 2018 Downtown Revitalization Committee meeting were received by council on September 24th, 2018.

ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Terms of Reference for discussion and approval

The Committee discussed the Terms of Reference and suggested the downtown vision statement be softened to indicate that “we believe the health of our downtown is an *indicator* of the health of our overall community versus *shows* the health of our overall community. Guiding Principle 1 was also discussed with no changes made. The committee thanked Councillor Hern for being willing to take on the role of Chair for the Arthur Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee.

RESOLUTION ADR 2019-002

Moved by: James Craig

Seconded by: Caroline Paquet

THAT the Arthur Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee of the Township of Wellington North adopt the Terms of Reference subject to the above minor change

CARRIED

2. Appointment of Committee Chair

RESOLUTION ADR 2019-003

Moved by: Tish Green

Seconded by: James Coffey

THAT the Arthur Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee of the Township of Wellington North appoint Lisa Hern as Chair of the Committee.

CARRIED

3. 20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown

The Committee discussed the 20 Ingredients of an outstanding downtown and agreed that on the agenda for our next meeting we should take some time to watch the remaining video's.

4. Top five priorities for our downtown

Remainder of the meeting was spent discussing what the committee felt were the top five priorities for our Downtown moving forward:

1) What is our focus/unique selling proposition/brand/theme: (Ingredient # 2)

Lots of great discussion around Canada's Most Patriotic Village, Murals, Art as well as the Poppy. Agreement that this is a very important item and we need to ensure we have it right before we jump to a conclusion as our marketing, promotion, signage and branding will all be influenced by the decision that is made. Discussed utilizing a branding consultant or university students to help

put together a proposal however conclusion was made to not do this. Instead the committee agreed that everyone needed to take the next two months to reflect on the discussion and come prepared at the next meeting to vote and finalize our focus and unique theme.

2) Consistent Hours: (Ingredient # 5)

Would like to start working with our downtown businesses to promote consistent hours and encourage all businesses to stay open until 8:00pm on Thursday evenings. Arthur Chamber will take the lead role on this.

3) Blade signage: (Ingredient # 16)

Committee agreed utilizing some of our Main Street Revitalization funding to promote blade signage was a good idea. In order to incent business owners to install Blade signs 50% of the cost would be covered under the Townships Community Improvement Plan, 25% from the Main Street Revitalization fund and 25% from the business owner.

The Township will work with two local suppliers to provide various options for businesses to select from. It was agreed that we would like to have all businesses utilize the same bracket for uniformity however they would have a say over the actual design of the sign itself within a certain size.

Signage should also include some link to our theme. For example, if we decide to go with the Poppy, all signage should include a Poppy.

4) Curb Appeal/Beautification Matters (Ingredient # 18)

Lots of discussion and suggestions. First Impressions do matter, and the committee agreed we need to focus on this and utilize funding to support it. Suggestions included window lights, more greenery, more lighting, speech bubbles, more benches, more flower pots, etc. and an offer from one committee member to volunteer her time to work with business and building owners to help beautify/cleanup the front of their building/business.

The majority of the committee seems to be committed to bringing something new to the downtown and lots of discussion took place pertaining to business recruitment, specially a coffee shop. While not discussed some communities have had success with a "win-this-space" type of program which might be something to consider and the Renew Northern Wellington Program might also provide some opportunity here and we might want to consider a relaunch.

Question was raised regarding the tracking of vacant buildings and the turn-over of businesses in our downtown. Dale indicated some tracking has taken

place for the past five years as a result of the Renew Northern Wellington Program and this information will be brought to the next meeting.

“Punishing” absentee building owners who allow their vacant properties to deteriorate and become an eye-sore is also a source of concern. Municipality and the Chamber have limited “powers” in this regard. Elimination of the vacancy tax rebate was one step the Municipality has taken but at the end of the day the onus is on the building owner to maintain their properties.

5) Constant Activity (Ingredient 19)

Committee support the idea of trying to work towards more year-round activities versus focusing on a big festival. Also talked about the need for a vacant space where we could create a downtown gathering area.

The suggestion to consider Wi-Fi in our downtowns was raised by a committee member. A variety of concerns were identified, and it was concluded that while we would like to see more activity in our downtowns installing free Wi-Fi was not one of the recommended solutions.

The idea to create more housing options in our downtowns was raised in order to provide more living spaces for people to live in close to the downtown. The conversion of commercial rental space into affordable housing options was discussed however was generally not supported by the committee.

OTHER ITEMS

Was asked if we see there continuing to be two revitalization committees, one for Arthur and one for Mount Forest moving forward. Everyone agreed that both downtowns have their own unique character, strengths and challenges and that having two committees was the right way to proceed.

For information the Mount Forest Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee Meeting is being held on January 24th.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, March 27, 2019 at 7:00 pm in the Lower Hall, Arthur Community Centre

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION ADR 2019-004

Moved by: Jamie McKinnon

Seconded by: Jacklyn Winter

THAT the Arthur Downtown Revitalization Advisory Committee meeting be adjourned at 8.58 p.m.

CARRIED