

Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee Minutes  
September 17, 2020 – 8:00 AM  
Virtual Meeting

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**Present:** Yvonne Chornobay (logged off at 9:20 a.m.)  
Kimberly Copetti, Chair  
Karey Anne Large, Downtown Whitby Business Improvement Area Representative  
Rick McDonnell, Heritage Whitby Advisory Committee Representative  
Meg Morine, Olde Whitby Neighbourhood Association Representative  
Matt Parish  
Natalie Prychitko, Whitby Chamber of Commerce Representative (logged off at 9:00 a.m.)  
Paul Rolland, Vice-Chair  
Paul Scott  
Chris van der Vliet

**Also Present:** Councillor Leahy, Mayor's Designate  
Rhonda Jessup, Chief Executive Officer, Whitby Public Library  
Lisa Shkut, Urban Designer, Landscape Architect  
Brayden Siersma, Research and Program Coordinator  
Lori Tesolin, Supervisor, Policy and Heritage, Principal Planner  
Christy Chrus, Staff Liaison, Project Manager, Downtowns and Culture  
Heather Oerlemans, Council and Committee Coordinator (Recording Secretary)

**Regrets:** Lara Perroni  
Lynn Winterstein

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Call to Order

Paul Rolland assumed the Chair.

1. Disclosures of Interest

1.1 There were no disclosures of interest.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes

**2.1** Minutes - June 18, 2020

Recommendation:

Moved By Rick McDonnell

That the Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee minutes of June 18, 2020 be approved.

**Carried**

**3.** Presentations

**3.1** Catherine Jay, Head of Urban Design Department, Sorensen Gravely Lowes (SGL) Planning and Design  
Re: Downtown Whitby Secondary Plan Update

Catherine Jay provided a PowerPoint presentation regarding the Downtown Whitby Secondary Plan update. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the area included in the Secondary Plan study area;
- the purpose of the Secondary Plan study to review the Plan, update and establish a policy and implementation framework, and establish downtown Whitby as a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable downtown core;
- information that would be used in the study such as cultural heritage, servicing, urban design and planning, alternative land use options, and public input; and,
- the four phases of the study; discussion paper, land use concepts, preferred downtown concept plan, and recommendations.

Lori Tesolin addressed the Committee and advised that the downtown was a key priority for Council and there would be an opportunity for public engagement in late October.

**4.** Delegations

**4.1** There were no delegations.

**5.** General Business and Reports

**5.1** COVID-19 Updates

Christy Chrus advised that the Town's recreation centres have re-opened by appointment only. Openings would be re-evaluated further at the end of the month.

## **5.2 Break-out Room Groups: Discussion and Summary**

Members of the Committee broke off into two discussion groups and reconvened to provide a summary to the entire Committee.

Highlights presented from the Neighbourhood discussion group included:

- traffic calming strategies such as prominent signage, best practices of other communities, and addressing public concerns;
- supporting walkable and safe street initiatives such as pedestrian crosswalks, lighting, signalized crosswalks on Brock Street and Colborne Street, and Dundas Street and Centre Street;
- updates on the redevelopment of the vacant space south of 360 insights;
- increasing outdoor public gathering spaces and hubs for socialization such as the green space around the Bell Building on Brock Street South, and the vacant space on the southeast corner of Dundas Street and Byron Street; and,
- focusing on active transportation and bicycle friendly streets.

Highlights presented from the Economy discussion group included:

- supporting the Digital Main Street Program to help businesses with e-commerce operations in the event of another pandemic wave;
- ensuring businesses have the resources and support they need should there be another lock down;
- harnessing technology such as computerized parking for easier access to the downtown and creating cleaner, more beautiful streets;
- defining the Committee's role regarding initiatives such as attainable and affordable housing;
- supporting the downtown to allow business to flourish through affordable housing for incoming workers and continuing to use outdoor public space; and,
- improving the broadband in Whitby and aligning with the Region of Durham.

## **5.3 Downtown Whitby Action Plan Report**

Christy Chrus advised that the Downtown Whitby Action Plan Report would be reviewed by the Committee of the Whole on Monday, September 21, 2020. Highlights of the report included:

- twenty-seven action items, twenty-five of which were underway;
- seven Community Improvement Facade grant applications had been received to date;
- the Culture Plan was expected to be ready in November; and,
- the benchmarking data such as an increase in retail vacancy in the Business Improvement Area, the average cost per rent space was lower in the downtown than the Town as a whole, and residential rentals in the downtown had increased.

#### **5.4 Downtown Whitby Business Improvement Area (BIA) Update**

Karey Anne Large provided an update regarding the Downtown Whitby Business Improvement Area (BIA) which included:

- receiving a \$36,000 contract grant to administer the Digital Main Street program;
- receiving a grant from the Region of Durham to administer a digital, region wide, online shopping marketplace beginning in downtown Whitby;
- celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Business Improvement Areas (BIA) in the world;
- working on a curbside cuisine passport program which would begin in October; and,
- celebrating the opening of eleven new businesses within the BIA.

A brief question and answer period ensued regarding how the passport program would be advertised.

#### **5.5 Whitby Chamber of Commerce Update**

There was no Whitby Chamber of Commerce update.

#### **5.6 Olde Whitby Neighbourhood Association Update**

Meg Morine provided Olde Whitby Neighbourhood Association (OWNA) updates which included:

- a new OWNA website: [www.werdensdistrict.com](http://www.werdensdistrict.com);
- increasing public awareness regarding the rules and regulations within the heritage conservation district and tree cutting;
- providing resources to the public on preserving Whitby's heritage; and,

- integrating the neighbourhood and the downtown through various events and development of the downtown.

#### **5.7 Heritage Whitby Advisory Committee Update**

Paul Rolland advised that a newsletter was being drafted by Town Staff that would focus on educating the public on heritage matters.

Rick McDonnell provided updates which included:

- the distribution of the Heritage Newsletter within the Part IV and Part V Heritage Conservation Districts;
- completing the restoration of the downtown plaques and shadow boxes;
- the Doors Open Tour would be held virtually and the two sites would be the Lynde House and 1855 Whitby Accelerator Hub; and,
- development of Camp X and the old Pump House.

#### **5.8 Whitby Public Library Update**

Rhonda Jessup advised that various measures were taken to accomodate residents through the closure and reopening of the Whitby Public Library including:

- virtual programs;
- using 3D printers to generate face shields for front-line workers;
- contactless pick up; and,
- opening the first and second floor of the Whitby Public Library Main Branch with social distancing measures in place.

#### **5.9 Economic Development Update**

Brayden Siersma provided an update regarding:

- finalizing the Economic Recovery Plan which would go before Committee of the Whole on October 19, 2020;
- focusing on five key priorities including retaining existing businesses, revitalizing the downtown, fostering sustained growth, encouraging, customer service processes and experiences;
- supporting businesses by distributing over 400 business reopening kits and launching the 'What's Open Whitby' App; and,
- Amazon would be opening a delivery station in Whitby creating jobs.

#### **5.10 Public Works Department Update**

Christy Chrus provided updates regarding:

- the Brooklin North Major Roads Environmental Assessment;
- the Highway 7/12 Alternative Routes and Mid-Block Arterial Road Environmental Assessments;
- The Parking Master Plan in downtown Whitby; and,
- Bell was planning to expand Fibre to the Home (FTTH) in Whitby by 2021 over the course of the next two to four years.

6. Correspondence

**6.1** There was no correspondence.

7. Council Update

**7.1** Councillor Leahy provided updates regarding:

- the priority to develop serviced lands in the West Whitby and Brooklin areas;
- implementing photo radar and stop signs across the Region;
- stage 3 re-opening of Town Hall and Recreation facilities;
- changes to Durham Region Transit's bus service from scheduled service to on-demand in lower use locations;
- Town Staff were beginning the budget process for the 2021 budget; and,
- that Members of Council were now participating in hybrid in-person/virtual Council meetings with limited numbers of people in attendance.

A brief question and answer period ensued regarding when the autonomous shuttle trial by Durham Region Transit would be confirmed.

8. Other Business

**8.1** Presenter Update for the Joint Brooklin Downtown Development Steering Committee and Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee November Meeting

Christy Chrus requested feedback from the Committee regarding rescheduling the presentation by Chris Kallio, Economic Development Officer, Town of Newmarket for the upcoming Joint Brooklin Downtown Development Steering Committee and Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee meeting.

It was the consensus of the Committee to reschedule Chris Kallio.

9. Next Meeting

**9.1** To be Scheduled

10. Adjournment

**10.1** Motion to Adjourn

Recommendation:

Moved By Karey Anne Large

That the meeting adjourn.

**Carried**

The meeting adjourned at 9:43 a.m.

**Note: These minutes were approved by the Downtown Whitby Development Steering Committee on January 21, 2021.**