



EXETER BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT AREA – BOARD MEETING

Tuesday, May 8, 2018 at 6:30pm

South Huron Municipal Office, 322 Main St. S., Exeter, Ontario



EXECUTIVE MEMBERS – Chair Rose Glavin, Vice Chair Tira Wootton, and Secretary / Treasurer Janice Brock

DIRECTORS – Beautification Chair Mary Hulley, Directors Allen Plant and Fred Godbolt and BIA Manager Brittany Wise

ABSENT – Promotions Chair Lauryn Marion, Directors Adrian Bakelaar and James Eddington and Councillor Craig Hebert

RECORDING SECRETARY – Brittany Wise, BIA Manager

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Call to Order

Ms. Wise welcomed everyone to the meeting at 6:31pm.

2. Changes to the Agenda and Approval of Minutes of April 10, 2018.

2.1 Approval of the Agenda

MOVED BY: Mary Hulley & SECONDED BY: Janice Brock

“THAT the agenda be adopted as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

2.2 Approval of the Minutes of April 10, 2018.

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Mary Hulley

“THAT the minutes of April 10, 2018 be adopted, as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

3. Chair’s Message Nil

4. Delegation

Sarah Smith, a land use planner from the County of Huron / Municipality of South Huron presented the South Huron Comprehensive Zoning By-Law. She summarized the changes happening to update the by-law. After her presentation, the BIA board discussed that they support the proposed changes in the commercial areas of Exeter, as was already included in the recommendations in the Thames Road Corridor Study.

Additionally, they discussed that at the 2018 Ontario Business Improvement Area Association (OBIAA) Conference, there was much discussion on how downtowns across North America are increasingly becoming mixed-use spaces with more residential development. Providing opportunities for people to live in the downtown increases the number of potential customers for small businesses and allows downtowns to look like thriving neighbourhoods' with people on the street, encouraging passersby to stop and spend money locally.

Thus, the board thinks that the zoning by-law should allow the addition of 'residential use' to certain properties within the C4 commercial districts, specifically to address the old Canadian Tire and Dinney's properties that have sat vacant for years. However, the board felt very strongly that we cannot allow residential use to the ground-floor level on the properties between Anne and Victoria Streets, but South of Anne Street should be open for residential to encourage investment in those properties.

The board also discussed that currently the properties above are overpriced and that could be part of the reason they haven't been sold and redeveloped. They wondered if the removal of the 'vacant unit rebate tax' would result in the current property owners selling those properties at a reduced price from their current over-priced ask and if they could be redeveloped under the currently permitted commercial use.

Nonetheless, the board felt that being less restrictive in those areas would only help to attract investment to those properties in a quicker fashion.

Furthermore, the board also discussed that although this was a definite step forward, South Huron needs to take a more proactive in marketing the opportunities available to potential investors; simply adding residential use will not necessarily result in investment.

Ms. Wise to summarize the boards comments and submit for review.

MOVED BY: Tira Wootton & SECONDED BY: Mary Hulley

"THAT the Delegation Report be adopted, as presented."

MOTION: CARRIED

5. Councillor's Report

Councillor Hebert was unable to attend the meeting, but he provided a report that stated that the steering committee for the Community Hub / Rec Centre is ready to send out an RFP for a market / feasibility study. He also noted that the outdoor pool is well on it's way to completion, hopefully opening to the public on July 1. He stated that the Municipality is looking at a comprehensive Zoning By-Law and the BIA should make comments as it effects future developments in the BIA area.

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Mary Hulley

"THAT the Councillor's Report be adopted, as presented."

MOTION: CARRIED

6. Financial Report

6.1 Treasurer's Report – April 2018

In April, we will receive payment for a bus tour conducted in March; our HST rebate; and payment for 26 banners. Our expenses will include regular monthly expenses, as well as the starburst light fixture maintenance and light bulbs, our AGM ad, and miscellaneous office expenses. At the end of April, we had \$38,304.48 in the bank.

6.2 Treasurer's Report – May 2018

In May, we will receive payment for at least 26 banners; our share of the JCP rent money; and fees for Ladies Night Out. Our expenses will include regular monthly expenses, as well as the OBIAA hotel and travel expenses and our outstanding website design fees. At the end of May, we can expect to have approximately \$37,006.03 in the bank.

The board decided that they would continue hosting the website domain with Campus Creative.

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Janice Brock

“THAT the financial report be adopted as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

7. Promotions

7.1 South Huron Map and Guide

Ms. Wise has been busy supporting the development of the new South Huron Map and Guide (editing, etc.), which is a 24-page booklet that is geared towards visitors and potential newcomers.

7.2 Digital Marketing Seminars

Ms. Wise reported that the BIA and Postmedia have held 3 of the 4 digital marketing sessions. They've all consistently had over 10 people participate each week. There have been return participants weekly, which shows the session have been well done. There have also been new faces each week.

7.3 Ladies Night Out

Ms. Wise reported that there are 25 businesses participating in Ladies Night Out this year. Promotion for the event will have started and will continue up until the event.

MOVED BY: Mary Hulley & SECONDED BY: Janice Brock

“THAT the promotions report be adopted as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

8. Beautification

8.1 Banner Program

Ms. Wise reported that the banner program is sold out. Ms. Wise informed the board that she has had some challenges with the sizing of the banners on some of the poles. She recently found out that the town was planning to replace the street poles from Victoria to Church street, but that they were not going to be the same as the heritage streetlights because of the distance the lights need to cover with only being on one side of the street in that area. Due to staff changes, the poles have not been researched and they cannot guarantee that they can make the banner arms the same as on the heritage poles.

The board agreed that since the BIA has sold all the banners, we need to proceed with putting banners up on the current poles and inform the Municipality of the size for the banner brackets on the new poles.

MOVED BY: Mary Hulley & SECONDED BY: Allen Plant

"THAT the banner program proceed as planned on the poles currently installed on Main Street. The BIA to inform the Municipality of the banner arm requirements for the new poles and insist that if they cannot ensure that the banner arms on the new poles will work, that the Municipality cover the cost to purchase 19 replacement banners for those poles."

MOTION: CARRIED

Due to this issue, Ms. Wise had to put the project on hold until she receives confirmation about the sizing for the banners because it affects the design. She is hopeful that the working timeline is to have them up by mid-June.

8.2 Starburst Light Decorations

Ms. Wise reported that the BIA recently replaced all the light bulbs in the starburst light decorations that stay up year-round. Courtesy Signs reported back that the starbursts are in pretty rough shape and says that we should have them replaced or refurbished. The other option would be to take them down all together.

Ms. Wise to Investigate the cost of replacing the light bursts replaced. Take them down one at a time, as required.

8.3 Flowers

As far as Ms. Wise knows, the flowers are set to be installed the first part of June.

8.4 Jessica's House Music Weekend

Ms. Hulley reported that Jessica's House has approached Council about making June "Jessica's House Month" in Exeter, for 2018 only to celebrate their grand opening. She noted that a group of volunteers will decorate Main Street and would like the BIA's support in encouraging business owners and residents to decorate their storefronts and homes with blue and yellow. Council has deferred the decision until the next meeting, Ms. Hulley will keep the BIA informed.

MOVED BY: Janice Brock & SECONDED BY: Fred Godbolt

"THAT the beautification report be adopted as presented."

MOTION: CARRIED

9. Member Events Nil

10. Economic Development

There was an Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held in April – it was the most well-attended meeting to date. There was a presentation from the County Economic Development Department about their recent activities, which was followed by a good discussion.

The committee plans to meet in May to develop an action-based economic development strategic plan, which will be more comprehensive than the current plan.

MOVED BY: Mary Hulley & SECONDED BY: Janice Brock

"THAT the Ec Dev report be adopted as presented."

MOTION: CARRIED

11. Digital Sign Report

Ms. Wise reported that she hasn't had time to address the sign yet. Ms. Wise was directed to take the "Digital Sign Report" off the agenda and to include any updates in the Manager's Report moving forward.

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Rose Glavin

"THAT the Digital Sign report be adopted as presented."

MOTION: CARRIED

12. BIA Manager's Report

12.1 JCP Update

The BIA's JCP has officially ended her position. At this time, Ms. Wise is not actively seeking a replacement due to the time left on the project – it would be more work than it's worth.

12.2 RED Funding Update

Ms. Wise is happy to report that we have received our RED grant in partnership with the Chamber and Municipality. We are planning to meet with the CAO to solidify our plans and release our marketing opportunities soon.

12.3 Canada Summer Jobs

Ms. Wise reported that we were successful in receiving a summer student for July and August to help provide staffing support for the Welcome Centre in the summer months. We plan to post the job in May.

12.4 OBIAA Conference

Ms. Wise attended the OBIAA Conference in April. Key learnings at the event included:

Mixed Uses Downtown

- Throughout the conference, there was much discussion on how downtowns across North America are increasingly becoming mixed-use spaces with more residential development.
- Providing opportunities for people to live in the downtown provides more customer opportunity for small businesses and allows downtowns to look like thriving neighbourhoods' with people on the street, encouraging passersby to stop and spend money locally.
- This information is timely because South Huron is doing a Comprehensive By-Law update and Ms. Wise believes it will state that we need to add residential zoning opportunities in the downtown area, specifically to increase the chances for re-development of vacant properties (namely the former Canadian Tire building and the former Dinney's locations).

Digital Main Street Program

- OMAFRA provided funding the Digital Main Street Program to expand services across Ontario (previously only offered in Toronto).

- Digital Main Street is an online platform and service for Main Street businesses that can help with the adoption of digital tools and/or technologies.
- Ms. Wise spoke with the OMAFRA rep responsible and expressed our interest in being a rural community partner because it aligns with our digital goals.
- They are still working on the details about how this program will be rolled out, but details will be announced through OBIAA.
- When details are announced, Ms. Wise will follow up.

20 Ingredients of an Outstanding Downtown

Property Owners List:

1. They all begin with a plan.
2. They defined a strong brand and retail focus.
3. They orchestrated recruitment of “critical mass” or “clustering”
4. They have anchor tenants.
5. Lease agreements included defined operating hours and days.
6. People living and / or staying downtown.
7. Pioneers with patient money were convinced to invest.
8. They started with just one or two blocks – a “demonstration project.”

Public Sector List:

9. Solving the parking dilemma (no 2-hour parking limits).
10. Public washrooms.
11. Development of gathering spaces.
12. Creation of good first impressions – community gateways.
13. Design, fabrication and installation of a wayfinding system.

Merchants List:

14. A good first impression – downtown or district gateways.
15. 20/20 signage – retail signage rules and regulations.
16. Sidewalk cafes and intimate surroundings.
17. They invested heavily in retail beautification.
18. They provide activities and entertainment – bring downtown to life.
19. They gave downtowns a name.
20. The marketing is experiential – focused on activities, not buildings.

The full presentation can be found on the Google Drive or Ms. Wise can send it to those who want to read more.

Ms. Wise also attended sessions on social media, accessibility, how to create a tourist attraction in your town.

MOVED BY: Mary Hulley & SECONDED BY: Fred Godbolt

“THAT the BIA Manager report be adopted as presented.”

MOTION: CARRIED

13. Non-Director Comments Nil

14. Closed Session

In a closed session with no staff present, the BIA board made the following motion:

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Mary Hulley

"THAT the BIA Manager position is to become a permanent full-time position with the BIA."

MOTION: CARRIED

Mr. Plant will make the necessary changes to the employment contract to suit the full-time position.

Next, the board discussed the temporary contract position that will replace Ms. Wise while she is on a maternity leave. They agreed that ideally they would hire a person for 61 weeks to allow overlap with staff, but realize that could be affected by the number and quality of applicants. They agreed to post the job early next week to have it posted as long as possible. The job will be posted on the BIA website and job sites and will be posted to social media. It will also be circulated to OBIAA. The board decided they'd do a small ad in the Times-Advocate that will direct people back to the website for details.

They formed a hiring subcommittee that will be chaired by Allen Plant, with members Rose Glavin and Tira Wootton. Ms. Wise will also sit on the subcommittee, but will not have any voting rights. Ms. Wise to work with the subcommittee to develop the job posting and job description.

15. Upcoming Events

Next Regular Meeting: *Tuesday, June 12, 2018 at 6:30pm at the Town Hall**

16. Adjournment

MOVED BY: Allen Plant & SECONDED BY: Janice Brock

"THAT the BIA meeting does now adjourn at 8:23pm."

MOTION: CARRIED



Rose Glavin, Chair



Tira Wootton, Vice-Chair



Brittany Wise, Recording Secretary