

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

PUBLIC MEETING

LOT DEVELOPMENT CHARGE STUDY

May 8, 2008

There was a Public Meeting held in the Horton Community Centre on Thursday May 8, 2008 to receive public input into the Lot Development Study. Mayor Johnston and Brian Whitehead, partner Jp2g Consultants, were at the head table. Also present in the hall were Councillor Dave Bennett, chair of Planning Committee, Councillor Bob Kingsbury, John Wilson, Deputy Mayor Bob Hall and Rose Curley, Administrative Assistant. One other member of the public was present George Thompson.

1. **CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Johnston called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. **INTRODUCTIONS**

Mayor Johnston introduced Brian Whitehead of Jp2g Consultants who prepared the background report for our Lot Development Charge Study.

3. **BRIAN WHITEHEAD**

Mr Whitehead gave a presentation on the Draft Development Charge Background Study. He explained that under the Development Charges Act, the Development Charge is a fee charged to pay for increased capital costs required because of increased needs for services arising from development. Development charges can be collected for each new dwelling unit, commercial structure or addition or a new residential building or structure, or an addition greater than 50% of the existing floor area. This study is aimed at determining a development charge for each structure which will not require existing tax payers to contribute to the capital cost of anticipated growth. Similarly, new taxpayers should not have to contribute any more than their fair share of net capital cost of providing the current level of municipal services for new growth. Mr. Whitehead reviewed the methodology of determining development charges and reviewed the tools used in determining development charge costs.

4. **QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

Councillor Kingsbury disagreed with the Provincial Regulation which states that Waste Management is not to be included in the Development Charge Report, as increased population causes landfill sites to fill quicker. George Thompson agreed. It is a big ticket item to add more space for landfill site.

Councillor Kingsbury questioned the percentage for recreation and for fire department. He thought that fire would have been higher than recreation.

George Thompson noted that if a review was conducted of prior studies they would find that a number of projects were never completed. It should be taken into consideration that some projects will not happen.

Brian Whitehead advised that this is taken into consideration. The total eligible charges are reduced from the previous work not carried out. George Thompson said he has been a developer and has paid lot development fees, he has some property still to be developed, which he would not consider developing due to the cost of developing for all licenses and charges. A reasonable fee is alright. He would not want to see development lost because of large fees.

Councillor Bennett said that the problem the municipality is having is that development is happening on roads not up to standard and demands will come in from new residents to increase the standard of the road. If there was no charge all ratepayers would be required to pay for these road upgrades.

Councillor Bennett informed the public that in the past four years from 2004 to present, 76 building permits have been issued for new residences, 37 of these houses were new residents from outside Horton Township, 26 were by developers building houses to sell, 9 were for family of long term residents and 4 were for long term residents.

George Thompson agreed that any road has to be brought up to a standard and maintained. He is not in favour of allowing development on dead-end roads etc, but does support development on good lots. There should be some incentive for people to develop in certain areas that are good for development. Councillor Bennett noted that municipalities are not in a good position as it is property owners who develop. Council is subject to the pressures of ratepayers, especially from roads not up to standard, i.e. the Garden of Eden Road.

George Thompson said he understands the scenario but townships should put some incentives out for lots to be developed. High costs do not make sense to develop any more.

Brian Whitehead commented that he is not hearing that Mr. Thompson is against development but hearing that he wants Council to be fair.

George Thompson said yes, that is what he is saying. He does not see that we cannot categorize the fee by areas, a lower charge for areas that are good for development, higher in areas that have poorer development capability.

Mayor Johnston asked if there was an opportunity to pay the charge at lot creation rather than at building permit stage.

Brian Whitehead said yes, but usually the fee is charged at the time of permit, so the fee is paid just before the development appears. Councillor Bennett reviewed this suggestion, noting that we have some properties where families have parked a travel trailer for weekend use etc.

John Wilson noted that Council needs money up front to do these works ahead of the developers.

Brian Whitehead commented that allowance would have to be made for lots that had been created with no lot fee. There would be a lot of administration costs in controlling who has not paid before and who has paid under this new study.

John Wilson said new lots pay fee, old lots pay at building permit.

Brian Whitehead suggested this might slow down lot creation.

John Wilson agreed that some lots are created ahead of need anyway.

Brian Whitehead said that the Planning Act does permit this scenario.

George Thompson noted that he has paid all his lot developments except for his final lot, which he has not yet developed.

Councillor Bennett said if Council looked at where development is happening, there is a need for a higher lot development charge. He noted that the previous study established a fee of \$1615, which Council chose to reduce to \$1,000.

George Thompson said that from the time a lot is created to the occupancy of a new house there is continuous spinoff to other businesses and once the house is occupied there are more spinoffs, as it brings more people to spend money locally.

Councillor Bennett said he believes the growth potential is still there and would not want to see a reduction in development. An example was the township east of us McNab/Braeside who has had a higher rate all along and the development has not stopped.

Deputy Mayor Hall noted that there is not a lot of interest in what we do, that is evident by only one person from the public present.

George Thompson noted that there are not many people here tonight but there is a point when people reject and stop developing in Horton Township.

5. **CLOSE MEETING**

With no further questions, Mayor Johnston declared the meeting closed at 7:45 p.m.

Mayor

CAO/Clerk