

THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF HORTON

PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING

**July 30th 2015
8:30 a.m.**

There was a Special Planning Committee meeting held in the Municipal Council Chambers on Thursday, July 30th, 2015. Present were Chair Jamey Larone, Vice Chair David Bennett, Mayor Bob Kingsbury; Committee Members David Brown and John Wilson. Staff: Mackie McLaren, CAO/Clerk, Christina Mulcahey, Administrative/Planning Assistant. Absent was Committee member Mae Craig. Committee member Bob Lockwood joined the meeting at 8:55 a.m. Deputy Mayor Johnston was also in attendance.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Larone called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

There was no declaration of pecuniary interest made by Committee Members or Staff.

3. SATURN POWER – SOLAR FARM PROPOSAL

Chair Larone welcomed Mr. Dave Paterson and Mr. Jeremy Goertz (Vice President). Today was Mr. Paterson's last day with this company.

Mr. Goertz gave a brief overview on the company. They are looking at a large scale project here. Most of the issues have been discussed and addressed he believes.

- **SIGNING BONUS OR FRONT LOADED PAYMENT**
Mr. Goertz said they are willing to do some pre-payment. They do not use a signing bonus.
- **SECURITY TO ENSURE THE PROPERTY IS WELL MAINTAINED**
Mr. Goertz added a line item that they will set up an escrow account. Asking for 60 days notification if there were any maintenance issues so they could resolve. They do plan on working diligently. He said Saturn agrees to set up this account once the project contract is secured.
- **VIBRANCY AGREEMENT**
Mr. Goertz stated that the 1 million was inclusive of estimated taxes and the vibrancy payment. There is no problem paying the difference between actual and estimated taxes as part of the vibrancy agreement. They have estimated a payment of \$37,000 for taxes and \$14,000 for the vibrancy fund annually.
- **TREE BERM**
Mr. Goertz said they have looked at what will thrive within the environment and what will look the best. Willing to agree to that on a discretionary basis. They have looked at cedar trees. They plant 6' high trees – 2 rows, trees offset.

Mr. Goertz is looking for the support of Council today.

Chair Larone asked Committee members and Council for questions.

Mayor Kingsbury said he did visit some other of solar farms in the area. He noted that the trees at one farms was not as satisfactory that we would want. One of his concerns is that some farms have been sold. Is this farm going to be sold? MR. Goertz said part of the decision for the company is that they are submitting a lot of projects. He believes this project would be one of the best projects. The policy of the company is to keep some and to sell some. He cannot predict the future. Some groups have expressed interests to partnership. He did not have a final answer at this time.

Mayor Kingsbury had another concern with the layout of the panels. He questioned if it could change again as it has already a few times. Mr. Paterson said the layout changed to satisfy the neighbours in the area. The final design will reflect what the neighbors want and will be satisfied. They want to have it all on the same side of the road. Any overflow will go to the other side. They do hear the concerns of the community. Mr. Goertz said there are more approvals needed from MOE etc. There could be changes due to this as well. The changes have been driven by the community. Mayor Kingsbury had concern that the layout could change totally. Mr. Goertz said that no there would not be any major layout changes. He would come to the Committee if there were. This is the area they are focused on and are satisfied. He noted that there will be open houses again looking for comments and concerns as well.

David Brown asked if all the neighbors were satisfied. Mr. Paterson said that most of the neighbors are. There were some concerns that were met and now are satisfactory.

Vice Chair Bennett said he is in favor of the project however he still has concerns that there are unanswered questions. He noted it is hard to make a recommendation when everything is not finalized. Mr. Paterson said the company feels the same. Mr. Goertz said the company is looking to partner together with the township and community.

(Committee member Bob Lockwood arrived at 8:55 am.)

Chair Larone said as we move forward there needs to have good communication.

John Wilson noted that the Township would need a key for emergency purposes. Mr. Goertz said yes, that is part of the emergency plan as well.

John Wilson asked if the property would be sold would the township be involved. Mr. Goertz said yes, the vibrancy agreement would be handed over to the purchaser.

Chair Larone asked about the layout of the panels. Mr. Goertz said there will be panels fairly close to the road. There are setbacks that the company has to adhere to – roughly 60 to 80 feet back and then there would be hedge row. To use the property to its full intent they will have to use the entire property. There are a lot of considerations for the final layout. Chair Larone asked about the pipeline that runs through there. Mr. Paterson said that is not a concern with the new layout as it does not go through this property.

Chair Larone asked about the installation of the panels and what they are mounted on. Mr. Paterson said more than likely they will be pounded posts.

Chair Larone asked about access roads, gates or fencing etc. Would we see the design for this as well? Mr. Paterson said yes.

Chair Larone asked about the maintenance and how often the grass will be looked after. Mr. Paterson said there will be low minimal weed growth with the type of ground cover they plant. There will be routine checks monthly.

Mr. Goertz said they are registering the sites next week. September 1st the proposal gets submitted. December or January will be an announcement of who is successful. Mid to late 2017 they would be moving forward.

Mayor Kingsbury asked if there were panels across the road how would they connect. Mr. Goertz said either underground or overhead they would have to see at that time.

Mayor Kingsbury asked about putting panels on the roof of the Community Center. Mr. Goertz said that is something the company could entertain. Taking the Community center off the grid would be a good partnership with Saturn power.

Mr. Goertz said the Vibrancy Agreement is the key to moving forward.

Mayor Kingsbury asked when we need the final approval. Mr. Goertz said as early as possible. They are registering their sites next week. In general the committee seems satisfied. Definitely need by the 3rd week of August at the very latest. ISO forms that need to be signed. Resolution and Municipal Agreement and the Vibrancy Agreement.

Chair Larone thanked Mr. Paterson and Mr. Goertz for coming today. He said the intent is to work together with Saturn Power. The representatives of Saturn left.

Chair Larone asked for Committee comments.

Vice Chair Bennett said he does have concerns with the loose ends however, there is time to work together. Generally is he in support of the project.

Bob Lockwood still wonders if this is a viable project. He sees that it can be a benefit to the township. He would go along with the project.

Chair Larone asked if our Treasurer could reach out to the other Township's in the area to see what the taxes are. Or her contact at MPAC and see what information is available.

Mayor Kingsbury suggested Committee members take home the agreement and review it.

Bob Lockwood suggested asking to cover the cost to the municipality for the meetings held on this project.

Special Council meeting will be held Tuesday August 11th 2015 at 5:00 p.m.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:20 a.m.

CHAIR

SECRETARY