



SUBJECT: Development pre-application policy

TO: Planning and Development Committee

FROM: Office of the Mayor

Report Number: MO-21-19

Wards Affected: All

File Numbers: 155-03-10

Date to Committee: December 3, 2019

Date to Council: December 16, 2019

Recommendation:

Receive and file mayor's office report MO-21-19 regarding a proposed pre-application development public meeting policy; and

Direct the Director of Community Planning to review the proposed policy attached as Appendix A to mayor's office report MO-21-19, incorporate any feedback from Committee and bring a revised policy for approval in January 2020.

Purpose:

A City that Grows

- Promoting Economic Growth
- Intensification
- Focused Population Growth

An Engaging City

- Good Governance

Background and Discussion:

The current process for pre-application meetings when new developments are being proposed in the City of Burlington is lacking the necessary impartiality and clarity of roles & responsibilities to offer the best experience to our residents.

At present, these meetings are hosted and facilitated by the developers, creating a perception to attendees that the meeting content is skewed in favour of the developers' point of view. The Mayor and councillors have received repeated feedback from constituents that this needs to change and that the city should be hosting these meetings and using an independent moderator or ward councillor to facilitate the agenda and discussion to keep it more neutral and impartial. There is also opportunity for the creation of a web-page related to each development as early in the process as possible so residents can access information in a more timely and proactive manner.

Additional feedback points to a lack of clarity of the roles & responsibilities all parties present at the meeting will play, leaving opportunity to better articulate those roles & responsibilities at the start of each meeting.

There is a further need for better communication around the expectation of respectful debate and dialogue at these meetings by all participants.

Feedback also identifies opportunities in the contents of standard notices to the public that accompany pre-development meetings to ensure items like photos/design sketch are also included.

Finally, there is opportunity to standardize message notices, distribution, and collection of feedback at the meeting or by other methods.

This proposed policy (see Appendix A) aims to provide that standardization, ensure clarity on roles & responsibilities at the meeting and provide maximum opportunity for residents to provide input at all points in the development process.

Financial Matters:

Not applicable

Total Financial Impact

Not applicable

Source of Funding

Not applicable

Other Resource Impacts

Not applicable

Public Engagement Matters:

This recommendation is the result of numerous instances of public feedback and requests for change that have been provided to the Mayor and city councillors before, during, or after previous pre-development meetings.

Conclusion:

Revising and better formalizing our process and policy for pre-application development meetings including hosting, facilitation and feedback collection to be done by the City and an impartial moderator, the better articulation of roles & responsibilities, inclusion of design materials in standard notices, and communication of the expectation of respectful debate & dialogue at meetings will help create a process that is more impartial and neutral to both developers and residents, better serving the overall community.

Respectfully submitted,

Mayor Marianne Meed Ward

Appendices:

A. Policy

Report Approval:

All reports are reviewed and/or approved by Department Director, Director of Finance and Director of Legal. Final approval is by the City Manager.