



Council Committee as a Whole

Minutes

February 13, 2025

6:30 pm

In attendance: Tim Lewis, Taylor Braun, Chris Hamblin, Mayor Scott Crick, Trevor Thiessen, Mel Baxter,

Also in Attendance: Brigitte Doerksen CAO

6:30 – Arien – Facilities Manager re: Rec Report - Provided her report electronically

7:00 - Delegation: Michelle Richards & Co. – Zoning By-Law recap presentation & Placemaking Strategy discussions.

Hooman and Michelle presented both the Zoning By-Law changes and Placemaking initiative.

Placemaking Strategy discussion points:

Economic Development Committee Meeting

Notes: about the Placemaking Strategy and how we best deal with improving Main Street.

The Placemaking Strategy lists the following “Observed Opportunities”

1. Patio Space – Flexible spaces that can accommodate Patio expansion
2. Public Art – Such as we have on the Museum and Bigway
3. Street Furniture – Visually appealing and useable – (we have placed new benches since this report was initiated.)
4. Pedestrian Amenities – To be more pedestrian friendly. As much of this is adjacent to Highway 75, we would need to work within constraints that this poses.
5. Infill Development – Allow housing and commercial to co-exist - new zoning bylaws should address some of this.
6. Historic Preservation – Historic walking tour has already worked on this.
7. Storefronts – Enhanced façade and activated sidewalk areas.
8. Activation Open Spaces – Invest in public areas to be physically attractive and provide for activity.
9. Lighting – Enhanced to make more attractive at night.
10. Pedestrian Crossings – Include cultural displays and artwork. A lot of this is difficult to change due to mandate of Highways.
11. Traffic Flow – Better managing the traffic patterns with traffic calming measures to ensure pedestrian safety and comfort. Also have some limitations here due to the province’s involvement with Highway 75.
12. Existing Sidewalks – Widen and repave making them more accessible and comfortable for pedestrians.

From this list, the committee felt that considering what we are hearing from citizens and what is already in place and what is most feasible, number 7 should be our top priority with number 1 and 8 following and possibly 12. If council agrees with these priorities, we will reach out to the businesses impacted along Main and Charles Streets. Our intention is to gather interested owners together to review our thoughts and provide their input. Contact will be made directly with follow-up prior to meeting.

Our Thoughts:

Number 7 –

- Would love to see consistency of design but this may be overly optimistic.
- We will encourage occupancy. (we don’t believe we can apply any force on this)
- Encourage bright signage and store front
- (what else?)
- What can we do to encourage?

Number 1 –

- Encourage outdoor patios for summer use
- Can we use the sidewalk bulbs as space for businesses to set up outdoor space?
- Are there bylaws needed to help make this happen? I don't think so but not sure??

Number 8 –

- Part of the Placemaking Strategy is to encourage open green spaces for people to gather and meet both informally and also for workshops or concerts.
- Do we make changes to “Smith Park” to help make this happen?
- Can we Use space between library and Early Child Learning Centre (school age)?
- Private Spaces?
- Encourage community to drive these spaces.
- We may need to help with seating/tables/shelter etc.

Number 12 –

- Upgrades to sidewalks would require Town resources but could be with cooperation with businesses.
- Would we want to change the parking bulbs? Remove if Highways would allow or possibly make larger to accommodate patios?

Noted and Discussed

Council Round Table (Committee, Board, and Personal Reports):

Mayor Scott Crick:

- Provided a verbal report to council.

Noted and Discussed

Councillor Chris Hamblin

- **Morris Area Foundation**
 - Morris and Area Foundation board met on January 14th and February 11th, 2025. Work has shifted from granting to preparing the annual report along with preparing a budget for 2025. Also work is being done on updating some policies.
 - Signage is being prepared so that recipients can post to acknowledge the support of the Morris and Area Foundation.
 - Annual meeting will be held in June. At this time, we will be looking for one or two new members for the board. Search has already begun.
 - Regional meeting will be held in Altona, Likely on April 22nd.
 - Next Board meeting to be March 18th, 2025 at 8:30 am virtually.
- **Economic Development**
 - Work has continued on the zoning bylaws. CAAW will review the zoning bylaws at this meeting with the goal of having first reading at the February council meeting. M Richards has been guiding this process and will present at CAAW.
 - The committee has been reviewing the Placemaking Strategy with a focus on Main Street. M Richards will attend CAAW to discuss further.

Noted and discussed

Councillor Taylor Braun

- **Morris Fire Department**
 - Total calls for 2024 saw an increase of about 6 from previous year (2023). 65-75 calls per year seems to be the running average from the last couple of years. There was a total of 6 calls in January. Some of the crew attended the Winter Carnival on January 8th. I heard that the event went well. The 2025 budget has been submitted to Chris.

- **Valley Regional Library**
 - VRL (Sean Conway) is still looking for a second person to do the free tax clinic. This involves some quick courses and computer knowledge. Having a second person would be very beneficial. We have applied for a few grants for the furnace update. 2025 budget is complete. There has been quite a bit of talk about library regionalization – the board consensus was that for now, we wait and look for a good fit for our library.
- **Morris & District Chamber of Commerce**
 - Meeting was yesterday at noon. I went but then got called back to work so I missed most of the meeting. Sharon Eadie was in attendance to share a bit about the TRC committee. She expressed thanks to the Town of Morris for being willing to provide multiplex, etc. for the event held in September. Meeting with Lauren Stone in the coming weeks.
- **Valley Agricultural Society**
 - 2025 budget is complete. We have applied for a couple of grants in then last couple of weeks/weeks coming up. 2025 charity of choice has been selected. Planning is well underway, and we are looking forward to a great 2025!

Noted and discussed

Councillor Tim Lewis

- Triple R Community Futures
- PW

Noted and discussed

Councillor Mel Baxter

- **M.A.S.S Report**
 - The congregate meal program continues to improve with a new energetic cook (Jessica) on board. Lots of variety in food selection. Occasional entertainment has been added to the Friday night meals.
 - A Monday afternoon (2 to 3pm) High Tea program has been started with tea and dainties to sample.
- **Morris Wellness Board Report**
 - Financial statements and expenditures have been approved by the board and the Wellness Centre continues to do well.
 - A report from physioGO has been presented and they continue to expand their services. They wish to renew their yearly rental for \$600.00 per month. New workout equipment is being investigated for purchase.

Noted and discussed

Councillor David Funk

Noted and Discussed

Councillor Trevor Thiessen

- Trevor left meeting at 8:30pm

Noted and Discussed

Red River Supportive Housing Project: Chris Hamblin

- The committee met on January 17th to discuss our upcoming community meetings in light of the uncertainties around costing given the political situation. We reviewed some rough numbers provided by Pennco. It was agreed

to cancel the community meetings until such time as we had more certainty on costing and the go forward plan for building.

- The committee met with representatives from ft3 and Pennco on February 5th. The purpose of this meeting was to review the preliminary costing and identify areas where savings could be achieved. Ideas were shared and Pennco will take these ideas and bring back more information for our next meeting. In the meantime, we will proceed with the Geotech work. This will allow us to have a more accurate price for foundation work related to the type of piles etc.
- As a result of the work still needed to be done with Geotech and other changes we are looking at, the project start date will likely be pushed back. Pushing back the start date. Pushing back the start will also achieve some savings on hoarding etc. over the cold months.
- The committee will meet again once we have information on the revised plans. Hoping for mid-March.

Noted and Discussed

New Business:

- None

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.