

**THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF ST. THOMAS
URBAN DESIGN COMMITTEE**

ROOM 309
CITY HALL

November 17, 2015

The meeting convened at 3:00 p.m.

ATTENDANCE

Members

Councilor Linda Stevenson
Councilor Joan Rymal
Beth Burns, Chair, Downtown Development Board
Tino Clarke, Heritage Committee
Russell Schnurr, Heritage Committee

Officials

Wendell Graves, CAO/Clerk
Matt Smale, Corporate Administrative Clerk

Confirmation of Minutes – June 24th, 2015

The Chair stated that an amendment was required to the adjournment motion to reflect the correct mover and seconder.

Moved by Coun. Rymal – Stevenson:

THAT: The minutes of the meeting held on October 15th, 2015 be approved as amended.

Carried.

Disclosures of Interest

Nil.

Project Updates

268-274 Talbot Street - Patry

The City Manager advised that the façade and residential projects at 268-274 Talbot Street had been approved by Council in 2006. The project had been eligible for loan and grant funding for each of the façade and residential components.

While all loans had been repaid, no grants had been conferred due to a lack of documentation submitted by the applicant.

The City Manager had recently written to the applicant and requested final documentation so that the grants could be conferred. The applicant did not respond and is no longer eligible for the grants. As a result \$40,000 has been returned to the CIP program for future projects.

Project Applications

A.N. Trad's Furniture – 560 Talbot Street

The members reviewed an application residential funding for 12 one bedroom units on the second floor of the building at 560 Talbot Street.

The City Manager advised that the applicant had previously been approved for CIP funding for 2 residential units. Since the program was restricted to one application per property, the applicant had requested to nullify the previous approval and seek a new application for all 12 units.

The City Manager provided an outline of what funding the project would be eligible for including:

- \$80,000 residential loan
- \$40,000 residential grant
- \$3,126 per unit development charge rebate (Approximately \$40,000)
- Municipal tax rebates of approximately \$90,000 over a five year period.

The members were further advised that there was no requirement to approve the maximum amount an application was eligible for.

An application could also only be in receipt of residential rehabilitation funds or tax rebates, but not both. The applicant for this project was not seeking any of the eligible tax rebates.

The Chair stated that the value of the proposed work did not seem to coincide with the value of the property. She also noted concern with the ability to stack funding from various government sources.

The City Manager advised that outside funding sources did not have any bearing on CIP eligibility. The applicant would be still be eligible under the CIP even though he would also be funded through the Investment in Affordable Housing Program.

The members discussed the value of the project as it would add more housing units to the downtown area.

The City Manager recommended the loan and grant be approved as well as half of the eligible development charge rebate. He further suggested that completion milestones be built into this agreement.

The members inquired how much money was left in the CIP fund for 2015.

The City Manager advised that \$50,000 was available in the fund as a result of the return of grant money from the 268-274 Talbot Street project and the withdraw of a previously application from 560 Talbot Street.

Moved by Coun. Stevenson – T. Clarke:

THAT: The Committee recommends the repeal of Application 2014-078 for 560 Talbot Street previously approved in 2014; and further,

THAT: The application from A.N. Trad's Furniture – 560 Talbot Street for a residential rehabilitation loan in the amount of \$80,000 be approved; and further,

THAT: The application from A.N. Trad's Furniture – 560 Talbot Street for a residential rehabilitation grant in the amount of \$40,000 utilizing reallocated CIP funds be approved; and further,

THAT: The project be granted a rebate of 50% of eligible development charge costs.

Carried.

Development Proposal – Centre Street and Ross Street

The City Manager provided a conceptual drawing and site plan for a proposed housing development geared to seniors at Centre Street and Ross Street.

The project was still in the planning stages but would be eligible for significant rebates under the CIP. The Committee's role with this project would be to make a recommendation to Council. The magnitude of the request would necessitate that it managed by Council outside of the regular CIP budget.

The City Manager provided some estimates on possible tax and development charge rebates the project could receive. The order of magnitude of all eligible components would be significant. He further added that development charge rebates could be spread over multiple years.

The members requested reconsideration by the applicant on the location of a proposed loading dock on the corner of Ross Street and Centre Street.

Clarification was requested on the number of parking spaces required and whether consideration had been given to any subsurface parking.

The City Manager noted that this was a brownfield location and the applicant would be remediating the site to residential standards.

The members inquired about urban design guidelines and whether developers were required to adhere to them.

The City Manager advised that the applicant would have been provided with the urban design guidelines, those guidelines were designed with the Talbot Streetscape in mind.

Mr. Schnurr inquired if the Committee would have an opportunity to speak with the applicant. He further stated that he would like to see a façade design geared to St. Thomas' heritage.

The members expressed their support for the project, noting the residents it would bring to the downtown and the need for geared to seniors accommodations in the City.

The City Manager stated that he would provide the Committee's comments to the applicant and invite them to attend an Urban Design meeting prior to the project going to the site plan process.

Promotion of Program

The members agreed to defer discussion of this item to a future meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.