



December 4, 2017

Re: Clerk Reports on Governance Model and Planning Advisory Committee tonight at Committee of the Whole, 4 December 2017

Dear Mayor Bennett and Councillors,

Two Clerk's reports are coming before you this evening, December 4th, regarding a new governance model and a Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). We appreciate the work that staff have put into these reports and their recognition of broad public interests in enhancing public engagement with City decisions. Certainly, this direction for procedure and the PAC supports Reimagine Peterborough's proposed 6th principle of public engagement and governance for the Official Plan.

Nonetheless, we are disappointed that such efforts to foster public engagement have not actually involved the public in discussions about what might be most helpful and contribute to the goals identified by staff. We are concerned that the current proposals do not: reflect effective public engagement, the staff-noted goals of the authorizing Bill 73 which are to “give residents a greater, more meaningful say in how their communities grow”, the first goal of Bill 68 which is “transparency and accountability”, nor the Council-approved Strategic Framework with its principles that include “responsive, collaborative, transparent, and accountable”.

The proposed changes to governance and the PAC are largely minor in nature and will not be effective to achieve the staff-articulated public engagement goals and the challenges (and growing criticisms) in this area that Council has faced. More needs to be done, and here we present 11 suggestions that will make a difference. Given the short period for reviewing these reports over the weekend and providing input to the Committee today, **the following are our initial recommendations that we urge you to adopt at the Committee meeting this evening and then at Council.**

Governance Model (Report CPCLK17-023):

a) Make staff reports public on the Friday 10 days before the meeting at which it would be considered by Committee. The staff recommendation is to make such staff reports available one day earlier than before, in other words 4 rather than 3 days in advance (p.4). One additional day does not effectively address this issue. By having information available to the public earlier, it will enable the discussions with staff and Council that the report itself identifies as valuable but also have the additional benefit of helping resolve many questions and concerns and thus avoid many of the



proposed public meetings in the week between proposed General Committee and Council meetings.

b) New: Make staff reports for planning applications available at the time that public notice is given of the public meeting. In the absence of staff and agencies' comments on the application, and without having the details and proposed conditions of approval until 3 to 4 days before the application goes to Planning or now General Committee, it is almost impossible for citizens to have sufficient information and be provided the opportunity to have input, as is required under the Planning Act and encouraged under the Growth Plan.

c) The 20-minute time limit should not be imposed on unregistered delegations at a meeting (p.4), if there is not a change to making staff reports available 10 days in advance of a meeting. A 4 day time line is not sufficient to learn of the report, review and research it, and then register as a delegation. This is particularly so for youth, those unfamiliar with City or formal processes, and also within the context of a problematic website that remains quite limited for many visitors (including how to present as a delegation). It may be more feasible to have such a time limit for unregistered delegations if there is more advance time for release of staff reports. If so, then the procedural by-law could permit the lifting of such a time limit (not even 3 speakers!) at a particular meeting by consent of Committee members as part of the review of the agenda, or upon a motion during a meeting.

d) New: The deadline for submitting presentations (materials or slides) to staff for a meeting should be adjusted to 11:00 am of the day of the meeting. Currently, the presentation is required on the Wednesday before the meeting -- even before the meeting's agenda and staff reports are available! If the public release is to be the Thursday before the meeting, as staff proposes, then this timeline remains illogical and a problem for delegations.

e) Permit public delegations at Committee of the Whole/General Committee (p.5) meetings in order that Council can learn of public input before committing themselves to a particular position, which is then more difficult to change at a Council meeting, with input received there at the last minute.

f) The time limit of 10 minutes should be retained for planning delegations (p.5). This time limit should also apply to proponents of planning applications to put them on an even footing with other delegations. Many planning applications are complex and have significant implications for neighbourhoods and sometimes the city. The Planning Act has many areas of provincial interest, the proposed City Official Plan has 5 main principles identified as important for planning, and every applications has considerations relevant from at least each of the Growth Plan, Provincial Policy Statement and City Official Plan. These cannot be addressed without at least 10 minutes of time allowed for delegations. Of course, delegations are welcome to present more briefly, but should not be required to do so. Staff will have sufficient time to provide various and integrated perspectives at a meeting.



g) Minutes and videos of Committee meetings should be posted publicly on the website at least several days before the Council meeting at which that Committee's recommendations are considered. Such a requirement in the procedural by-law will ensure that everyone interested is familiar with the proceedings at the Committee meeting.

Planning Advisory Committee (Report CPCLK17-024):

h) The PAC should include at least 7 members (section 5): a Councillor, plus one from each principle area of the proposed Official Plan, namely environmental stewardship, economic strength, complete communities, unique and vibrant, connectivity and mobility. A seventh member should be included from local First Nations or urban Indigenous peoples in order that the Council-approved protocols, duties to consult, and growing relationships may be advanced. It may be worthwhile to include other expertise on the PAC, but these seven will address at least the scope of planning contemplated in the Official Plan.

i) The PAC's mandate should include privately-initiated planning applications, not just those initiated by the City as currently listed in the mandate, section 3.1. Surely, the intention of the PAC is to provide non-staff input and perspective on planning in the City, and this cannot be done without including the substantial number of applications that are initiated by private landowners, particularly those on a larger scale with significant potential impacts on City finances and neighbourhoods.

j) The PAC should be able to set its own agenda and schedule more meetings, not be bound solely by those items selected by staff (see section 3.2, 7.1). It may well be that there is considerable public interest in a particular site or project, and the PAC can assist with identifying this interest on its agenda and providing perspectives that are helpful for staff and Council.

k) The PAC should be enabled to solicit some level of public input and delegations, not be prohibited outright from doing so (see sections 2, 3.3 and 3.4). This can be arranged in conjunction with City staff and forwarded for consideration by Council through existing channels. To prohibit such input seems counter-productive for a body that is especially designed to provide public input, and contrary to the intentions of the authorizing legislation.

Staff have met over months to consider these proposals, without specific public input. If Committee wants to approve these reports at next week's Council meeting (scheduled for December 11th), we would encourage Committee to call a public meeting later this week to seek additional public input on these recommendations.

If this is not seen as feasible, practical or effective, then we encourage Committee to defer its timeline for bringing this to Council until early January, after such a public



meeting, in the pattern of the current Committee structure and three-week cycle. We look forward to continuing the dialogue regarding how best to incorporate public engagement, experience and expertise into City processes and plans.

With best regards,

Ian Attridge
on behalf of Reimagine Peterborough