

Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel

Minutes

Date: Wednesday, August 28, 2024
Time: 3:30 pm
Location: Tecumseh Town Hall - Council Chambers
917 Lesperance Road
Tecumseh, Ontario N8N 1W9

Present:

Chair, Alicia Higgison
Vice Chair, Gary McNamara
Member, Brent Klundert
Member, David Petretta
Member, Lorraine Goddard
Member, Maggie Chen
Member, Nolan Goyette
Member, Peter Valente

Absent:

Member, Cynthia Summers
Member, Jeanie Diamond-Francis
Member, Joyce Zuk
Member, Vince Lapico

Also Present:

Council & Committee Assistant, Kaitlyn Baggio
Director Legislative Services & Clerk, Robert Auger
Director Development Services, Brian Hillman
Partner, MillerSilani Inc., Larry Silani

1. Call to Order

The chairperson calls the meeting to order at 3:30pm.

2. Roll Call

3. Election of Chair and Vice Chair

1. Election of Chair

Motion: THAP - 01/24

Moved By Member, Gary McNamara
Seconded By Member, Peter Valente

That Alicia Higgison **be appointed** as Chair of the Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel for the period of September 23, 2024 to November 14, 2026 or until such time a new appointment are made by Council.

Carried

2. Election of Vice Chair

Motion: THAP - 02/24

Moved By Member, Alicia Higgison
Seconded By Member, David Petretta

That Gary McNamara **be appointed** as Vice Chair of the Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel for the period of September 23, 2024 to November 14, 2026 or until such time a new appointment are made by Council.

Carried

4. Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that this land is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations (comprised of the Ojibway, the Odawa, and the Potawatomi Peoples), and of the Huron-Wendat Peoples. We are dedicated to honouring Indigenous history and culture while remaining committed to moving forward respectfully with all local and regional First Nations and all of the Original Peoples of Turtle Island who have been living and working on the land from time immemorial.

5. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

There was no pecuniary interest declared by a member of the Panel.

6. Introductions

Each member of the panel introduced themselves.

7. Reports

Reports to the panel were presented under New Business.

8. Communications

There were no Communications presented to the panel.

9. Unfinished Business

There are no Unfinished Business Items presented to the Panel.

10. New Business

1. Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel - Terms of Reference

Director Development Services, Brian Hillman presented the Terms of Reference for the Panel as appended on the agenda. He outlines the mandate. He stated that Larry, administrative staff and himself are there for support but are not apart of the panel.

Motion: THAP -03/24

Moved By Member, David Petretta

Seconded By Member, Brent Klundert

That the Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel **receive and approve** the Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel Terms of Reference.

Carried

2. Tecumseh Housing Action Plan

Re: Review of Initiatives

Brian Hillman provided an overview of the Housing Action [Plan](#).

Larry Silani stated that completing the initiatives and reaching the target number of building permits over the next few years is a requirement for the agreement in order to receive the full 4.3 million dollars in funding from the federal government.

Brian Hillman advised that the Housing Accelerator Fund agreement specifies that the Town of Tecumseh agree to a housing supply growth target over 3 years and types of housing units including affordable housing.

Member, Davide Petretta inquired how the Town can commit to the accelerator fund without knowing if they will meet the targets within three years. Brian Hillman responds that the fund is setup to establish initiatives that would stimulate reaching the targets over the next three years. He adds that the Town is receiving funding to help accelerate building processes and to accelerate the affordable housing units. The Town has received the first quarter of the funding which funds the initiatives that are underway. The Town is required to report on the status of each initiative

and has a detailed implementation program with milestones that will be reported to Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to ensure the terms of the funding agreement have been met.

Member, Lorraine Goddard inquired about the language around encouraging, ensuring and promoting initiatives. She asked how the targets will be accomplished and if there are any metrics or activities.

Brian Hillman responds that the metrics involves the number of residential building permits that result from each initiative, which themselves involve a number of actions that lead to Council decisions.

Larry Silani adds that the initiatives forming part of the agreement are actionable.

Member, Lorraine Goddard asked what extent the Town will go to educate the public on encouraging residential intensification activities. She inquired about the plan to promote, educate, encourage and manage the challenges the Town may be facing.

Brian Hillman advised the Town's ongoing consultation process includes public education on the various types of units, their typical built form, how they fit into the municipality and researching case studies that demonstrate ways of expanding housing choices.

Vice Chair, Gary McNamara stated that the biggest hurdle is trying to dispel myths and false information and work on educating the public and media on the process. Mr. McNamara adds that the Planning Act has changed and provides more autonomy to the Municipal sector.

Larry Silani adds that the [discussion paper](#) as appended on the agenda and titled Tecumseh: Expanding Housing Choices and Improving Affordability, dated July 21, 2024, established a baseline of understanding of different housing types and terminology. He stated that there is a lot of misinformation surrounding housing types. Mr. Silani highlighted the important role of the Panel which is to educate the public.

3. Status Update for Housing Accelerator Fund Initiatives No. 1 and 3

Larry Silani provided an update on the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) initiatives numbers one and three. With respect to Initiative No. 1 in particular, he reviewed the discussion paper appended on the agenda, titled Tecumseh: Expanding Housing Choices and Improving Affordability, dated July 21, 2024. Mr. Silani stated that the community open house and Council briefing are completed, and the community still has the opportunity to provide feedback. The Town is in phase two, where the consultants are working on a report recommending regulatory options that will propose addressing a range of matters including setbacks, parking and traffic. With respect to Initiative No. 3, Larry Silani reviewed the work underway for considering the implementation of residential intensification

and mixed-use development in the Manning and Tecumseh Road commercial district.

Member, Davide Petretta inquired on the County of Essex position in terms of approvals. He asked if the Plan conforms with the County of Essex's Official Plan.

Larry Silani stated that the County of Essex is finishing work on the new official plan that has supportive policies to expand housing in all neighbourhoods across the County.

Member, Davide Petretta stated the challenges to build affordable and attainable housing in the area.

Brian Hillman stated the importance of focusing on areas that have suitable infrastructure and the importance of making better use of that infrastructure.

Larry Silani highlighted the importance of schools and parks nearby which are amenities needed when introducing housing.

4. Discussion

The Panel discussed the current state of the local housing market, and considered how the private, public and non-profit sectors could help in meeting evolving needs, improving affordability, and increasing the supply of both rental and ownership housing in Tecumseh.

Member, Lorraine Goddard responds to housing data which indicate rental units versus home ownership. She asked if there is any data that specifies if rental units are owned by residents or non-residents. Ms. Goddard comments on rental units being owned by non residents and the challenges with this type of ownership. She asked how this can be managed so that communities don't deteriorate.

Brian Hillman stated that the Town does not currently have the data but will look into this. He explained that upper levels of government are recognizing offshore ownership and how it is in some instances adversely affecting the housing market.

Member, Davide Petretta stated that construction costs and interest rates affect buyers and their mindset. He explained that the problem is the shift to capture what the market wants and making it affordable. Mr. Petretta asked how future agenda items will come forward.

Larry Silani stated that Administration will come up with certain pieces of business they want the panel to deal with and recommended each member bring forward items for discussions at future meetings. Mr. Silani stated seeing where the market will be in the future for both ownership and social housing will help the Town meet those housing needs. He

stated that the public and non-profit sector needs to help move in the same direction.

Member, Peter Valente stated that prices rise and fall and are greatly impacted by interest rates. He explained that typically as interest rates go up prices will fall, and consumers then wonder how far the prices will fall. People who can afford homes are waiting on the right opportunity. He provided an insight to developer's business methods and the concern with what the government is trying to do to the price of housing. He explained the challenges with preselling a condominium being impossible when a person does not know what the interest rate will be years later. Mr. Valente stated that they are moving towards smaller units and shrinking lot sizes.

Member, Brent Klundert stated that customer sentiment comes with purchasing a home and that people want to know they are making a long-term decision. He stated that many people are looking and considering how to make the move but put it off for a while. Mr. Klundert comments that projects have taken a while to meet customer demands but now pre-zoning can help meet the demands quicker. He explained that there is a significant portion of the population that does not have generational wealth or that is new to the area and needs housing. He stated that municipalities who can get on the frontlines and hit the pricing for the missing middle class will have great success.

Member, Nolan Goyette stated that the housing corporation is only rental housing, with 5,000 units in Windsor-Essex and 40 of those units in Tecumseh. He explained that they are maxed out of occupancy. Mr. Goyette stated that supportive housing is the last step before private market but many individuals are not moving into the private market. He explained that there are 9,000 people on the waitlist, with individuals facing homelessness or domestic violence being made priorities. Mr. Goyette stated that low-income households will realistically never be housed as they will be on the waitlist for at least 20 years. He stated that municipalities need to look at deeply affordable, low-income supportive housing.

Member, Maggie Chen inquired on the Town's definition of affordable housing. She stated that the average sale price in Windsor-Essex is \$600,000. Ms. Chen asked how to minimize the gap and bring more people into home ownership.

Brian Hillman stated that the province has established a bulletin with the intent to have affordable numbers established across Ontario. He explained that every municipality including Tecumseh has a rental affordable rate and a purchase affordable rate which is essentially based off 30% of a household's income going towards housing costs. On both the rental and affordable side it is very challenging if not impossible for the private home builder to meet that need, at least not without some level of government support. He explained that under recent legislation changes,

affordable units built that meet the definition and number has been legislated so that no development charges would be paid for those units.

Larry Silani stated that the Housing Action Plan used 2021 census data that indicated that the median income is over \$100,000. He explained that 27% of households have incomes of less than \$50,000 and 50% of the population is making under \$80,000.

Chair, Alicia Higginson stated that the numbers are outdated from 2021. The average home price of \$600,000.00 is unattainable to most people.

Member, Lorraine Goddard comments that home ownership creates generational wealth, but the rental market still needs to be available as there will always be a population of people who cannot get into home ownership. She explained that the private sector needs to provide deeply affordable housing but from her perspective there is no interest. Ms. Goddard asked if there has been any consideration around land trust home ownership. She explained that land trust home ownership is property that you build smaller homes and people purchase the home, but the land is owned by a non-profit organization.

Brian Hillman stated that there has not been consideration for land trust area. He stated that he has heard of it being used but has not seen it locally.

11. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at the call of the Chair.

12. Adjournment

Motion: THAP - 04/24

Moved By Member, Brent Klundert

Seconded By Member, David Petretta

That there being no further business to discuss, the Tuesday, August 28, 2024 meeting of the Tecumseh Housing Advisory Panel **adjourn** at 5:10 pm.

Carried