

**VILLAGE OF PEMBERTON
-COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES-**

Minutes for the **Committee of the Whole** of Council of the Village of Pemberton held Tuesday, August 28, 2018 at 5:30 p.m. in Council Chamber, 7400 Prospect Street. This is Meeting No. 180.

ATTENDING: Mayor Mike Richman
Councillor Ted Craddock
Councillor James Linklater
Councillor Karen Ross
Councillor Jennie Helmer*

STAFF: Nikki Gilmore, Chief Administrative Officer
Sheena Fraser, Manager of Corporate & Legislative Services
Gwendolyn Kennedy, Legislative Assistant
Jill Brooksbank, Senior Communications & Grant Coordinator

Public: Mark Mendonca, Grimms Deli; Kostya De, Pemberton Hotel; Victor Lee & Jamie Lee, AG Foods; Matt Prescott, Town Square; Jeff Clarke & Paul Vacirca, Pemberton Valley Hardware; Albert Bush, Valley Chainsaw, Ivan Knowles, Spud Valley Sporting Goods, Steve Flynn, Pemberton Valley Dyking District

*Denotes partial attendance as Councillor Helmer left the meeting at 6:56 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER

At 5:31 p.m. Mayor Richman called the August 28, 2018 Committee of Whole meeting to order.

In honour of the Lil'wat7ul, the Village of Pemberton acknowledges that we are meeting within the unceded territory of the Lil'wat Nation.

2. DOWNTOWN ENHANCEMENT PROJECT UPDATE

Mayor Richman thanked the members of the downtown business community for attending the meeting and acknowledged the work that staff did to prepare a grant application that resulted in the grant of \$5.3 million to undertake the downtown enhancement project.

Mayor Richman asked Nikki Gilmore, Chief Administrative Officer, to provide an update with respect of the status of the project to date.

Chief Administrative Officer Gilmore presented an update on the Downtown Enhancement Project (DEP) and highlighted changes made in response to feedback received from residents and business owners.

Gilmore provided background on the grant program and advised that the grant was awarded based on elements of the Downtown Enhancement Strategy and the Frontier Street Plan developed over the period of 2009 – 2010. The granting program had a focus on climate change resiliency; thus, storm water management elements were added to the 2011 concept to ensure compliance with the granting criteria.

Gilmore advised that a meeting with downtown business owners was held on July 31st at which the Village Engineers presented the concept plan. Several concerns were raised related to loss of parking, traffic direction, turning radius in certain locations, sidewalk let downs and tree/street light locations. Following the meeting Staff were contacted by some business owners individually for follow-up and clarification, particularly with respect to issues that were outside the scope of the Downtown Enhancement Project.

Several business owners with businesses on the south side of downtown raised further concerns, prompting a second meeting on August 8th.

Following this second meeting, Village Staff held one-on-one meetings with several business owners and presented them with a concept plan that included the possibility of developing a public parking lot on a portion of Fougberg Park that is currently underutilized, bringing an additional 16 public parking spaces to the downtown core. Those business owners that Staff was unable to meet with were provided with the concept plan by email.

Ms. Gilmore noted that this Committee of the Whole meeting was called because, during the August 8th meeting, several business owners had asked for an opportunity to meet with Council.

Gilmore reviewed the Issues raised by business owners and subsequently addressed by Staff as follows:

1. Parking

CAO Gilmore acknowledged that the potential loss of parking has been the primary concern of business owners. Staff met with ISL Engineering to discuss options for increasing parking and have proposed an option of including in Fougberg Park a small public parking lot which would result in an addition of sixteen (16) parking spots downtown. CAO Gilmore presented a table showing that under the existing plan, there will be a total loss of 40 parking spots in the downtown. By adding a new public parking lot at Fougberg Park and by including the 21 spots behind the Pemberton Hotel which are delineated but not effectively utilized, the development of 4

pots for the Blackbird Bakery (as this building if owned by the Village) and the Pemberton Valley Dyking District developing their own off-street parking there will be a net gain of 9 parking spots. CAO Gilmore cautioned that these are high-level numbers at this stage.

Fougberg Park development is not part of the DEP and could be undertaken at any time; however, the work would be planned to coincide with the DEP work for cost-saving reasons.

CAO Gilmore mentioned that there are long-term plans to develop part of Lot 13 as a park & ride lot in the future. This will result in a gain of 50 parking spaces which can be used for park and ride and long term parking and is expected to address some of the challenges of commuters using downtown streets for all day parking.

CAO Gilmore noted that the current downtown enhancement plan has changed very little since 2011 but includes more parking than the 2011 version. Ms. Gilmore clarified that it is not the addition of the storm water cistern that reduces parking, but the re-alignment of the intersection at Birch and Frontier Streets that has had the greatest impact.

2. One-Way Streets

CAO Gilmore noted that many business owners have expressed a preference for changing some streets to one-way, and that Council and Staff originally favoured this option as well. However, Staff have reviewed various one-way traffic pattern options in consultation with ISL Engineering and have concluded that one-way streets will increase congestion, risk causing a back-up of traffic at the rail way tracks and intersections, and will force drivers to make a left turn onto the highway at Camus Street. Thus, one-way traffic is not being considered at this time.

3. Truck Traffic

CAO Gilmore noted that, in response to concerns raised by business owners, the concept plan has been modified slightly to permit safer movement of trucks and that a recommended truck route has been identified. Trucks will now be able to make left-hand turns more safely and without obstructing oncoming traffic.

4. Prospect Street Utility Strip

Some business owners have suggested removing the utility strip that contains the trees and streetlights planned for Prospect Street to create more space for parking. The trees and streetlights are important components of this plan not only for storm water management plan (trees), but also for public safety (streetlights) and the removal of the utility strip is not being considered. Gilmore noted that if the removal was to be contemplated it would result in the addition of only 6 more parking spaced

and the proposed Fougberg Park option more than accommodates that number.

5. Lane – Direction and Signage

CAO Gilmore noted that there is confusion with respect to the alley that runs from Aster Street to Camus related to the one way directions and the lack of effective signage. Gilmore acknowledged the concerns raised by the business owners and advised that the Village will work on addressing these issues immediately by adjusting the one way direction to better suit and will install improved signage. Staff will be following up with the businesses that utilize this lane prior to any changes being made.

6. Storm Water Management

CAO Gilmore acknowledged that there are some storm water management issues at Valley Chainsaw and Pemberton Valley Supermarket and other locations. Staff will be investigating how best to resolve these issues but noted that this would be work that is outside the scope of the project and therefore may not be undertaken immediately.

Mayor Richman noted that previous storm water drain blockages occurring on Birch located next to the CN tracks that had resulted from slush, rain and snow conditions were unavoidable and not indicative of drainage deficiencies.

7. Bus Stop Location

CAO Gilmore noted that in the first concept plan the bus stop location was to be on Aster Street by Pioneer Park. After further consideration and feedback received, Council resolved to move the bus stop back to Frontier Street but on the east side rather than the current west side location. Under the updated concept plan there is flexibility to move the bus stop; however, relocating the bus stop to Birch Street is not being contemplated.

CAO Gilmore noted that Staff had the opportunity to meet with Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) officials recently and reiterated the following issues that had been raised at the meeting held on July 31st:

1. Secondary Access

Council and Staff have identified the need for a secondary access to the downtown as a priority. Staff will continue to have discussions at every opportunity with MOTI officials with an aim to find solutions for an alternate access point off Highway 99.

2. Crosswalks

Business owners and residents have raised concerns regarding the poor condition of the crosswalks. CAO Gilmore noted that those crosswalks under the responsibility of the Village have been painted. The crosswalks

along Portage Road and Birch Street are under the authority of MOTI. The Village has been advised that painting of the MOTI crosswalks will on September 15th. MOTI will grind down the pavement and use a higher quality paint for longer wear. Gilmore noted that the issue of the lack of regular crosswalk maintenance has been brought forward to the Ministry by the Village on a regular basis.

3. Traffic Light Timing

MOTI officials will investigate the reported traffic light timing issues.

Next steps in the communication process will include an information booth at upcoming Farmers Markets. Once project timelines have been tentatively planned, Staff will present the plan at an information meeting and follow up with affected business owners to ensure the work can be done with minimal impact to businesses.

Discussion took place respecting the following:

- Parking Regulations in the downtown core
- Use of Lot 13 for long term parking
- Stormwater drainage impacts – noting that when the work is being done along the alley it will provide an opportunity to investigate what is happening in the area of the alley/Birch Street intersection
- Establishment of drivable letdowns near business accesses
- Rational for the trees and cisterns – to capture the stormwater
- Clarification respecting the status of the 21 spaces behind the Pemberton Hotel

Mayor Richman asked the Committee if there was a desire to open the meeting to for public input and the following resolution was passed:

Moved/Seconded

THAT the floor be opened to the public.

CARRIED

Mayor Richman opened the floor to the public and reminded those in attendance that this was a Committee meeting of the Village and, as Mayor, he would chair the meeting.

Paul Vacirca, Pemberton Valley Hardware, requested clarification of the date the current downtown enhancement project concept was first presented to Council, asked CAO Gilmore for some information on growth and traffic studies, and raised the following concerns:

- Consultation with business owners was left too late in the planning process; a steering committee should have been formed in April to ensure no decisions were made without appropriate consultation;

- Opportunity for business owners to comment was not provided until August;
- Lack of consultation has resulted in a plan that does not suit downtown businesses;
- The plan fits the grant criteria but it doesn't fit the community;
- Business owners are in favour of the wider sidewalks, but boulevards and trees were added since 2011;
- CAO Gilmore's parking numbers are unrealistic as parking regulations are not enforceable;
- Although Pemberton does not currently have a parking problem, suspects that we will have one in the future;
- Pemberton relies on trucks and tourism and needs to accommodate large vehicles; parallel parking of large vehicles on Prospect Street is not realistic and snow will only exacerbate the problem;
- How does the downtown enhancement project accommodate growth;
- Snow-clearing in winter

Mr. Vacirca suggested asking the engineers to create a mock-up the concept on roads and sidewalks to make it easier to see the proposed changes. Mr. Vacirca acknowledged there is an element of fear with the changes as they are proposed.

Victor Lee, AG Foods, brought up the following concerns:

- The DEP has changed substantially since first presented in 2009 and 2011, particularly with respect to the loss of parking and the addition of water features, and no longer reflects the needs of downtown business owners;
- The plan will not work;
- The plan reduces parking, does not accommodate tractor trailers and does not provide for a safe route for trucks to move through the downtown;
- Acknowledged that the intersection at Birch and Frontier is problematic and would like to see solutions put in place;
- Moving parking from Frontier Street S to Frontier Street N causes problems and will make people have to walk;
- Plans are proceeding too quickly and decisions are being made without due consultation;
- Business owners raised concerns and noted problematic elements but no changes have been made and concerns have been ignored;
- We don't have a parking problem but the DEP will create one;
- Many other towns have one-way streets;
- Would like to find a middle road in resolving some of the concerns raised.

Mark Mendonca, Grimms Deli, requested clarification regarding when the concept removing parking spots was first presented and when it was approved by Council, and raised the following points:

- The relocation of the bus stop, which will be problematic for the disabled, the elderly and shoppers with young children, has caused him to lose faith in the consultation process;
- The project is great and there is a desire for a walkable town with trees and water circulations; but some elements do not make sense and the process is flawed;
- Concerned about the effect the changes will have on both Grimms and the AG Supermarket;
- There is no parking problem in Pemberton;
- The DEP will create instability in a challenging business environment;
- The addition of a parking lot at Fougberg Park shows we can work together to find solutions;
- Communication has been lacking and suggested that Staff hand deliver letters to businesses inviting them to attend meetings whenever issues of concern are to be discussed.

Mr. Mendonca noted that the project is great but there are pieces that don't make sense to him and his business. The lack of direct parking in front of his business will be impactful as his clientele relies on parking in the front.

Ivan Knowles, Spud Valley Sporting Goods, commented that Staff, Council and business owners are all committed to this process and need to work together, and raised the following additional points:

- Despite asking for input, Council and Staff have failed to consider and respond to the feedback offered;
- The plan will not work;
- The community is evolving; today's problems will be compounded in the future;
- Issues to be considered are related to parking and snow-clearing;
- Dust from unpaved areas is a serious concern; any new parking lots such as Fougberg Park will need to be paved immediately;
- Changes may result in much higher operating and maintenance costs for the Village;
- Noted that there is a need for good sidewalks and crosswalks in the downtown core;
- Business owners pay high taxes and need to know their concerns are being heard;
- Process is too quick and consultation not adequate;
- Supports a walkable community but need to ensure snow-clearing is effective;

- Noted that enforcement of off-street parking requirements not being met by business owners should have been done a long time ago;
- Requested that the business community be kept informed throughout this process.

Albert Bush, Valley Chainsaw, thanked Staff for monitoring parking on Birch Street and noted that this has been effective. Mr. Bush suggested that the Village offer incentives encouraging employees to park elsewhere or to use alternate forms of transportation. Mr. Bush brought up the following concerns:

- Dust is a significant problem already and has worsened substantially over the last three years;
- Traffic heading north is increasing; a one-way traffic pattern would reduce traffic congestion;
- Loading zones are problematic at times;
- A secondary access to downtown is essential;
- The beautification program will result in tighter corners, snow clearing challenges and impact truck movement;
- The group present today is not truly representative of Pemberton;
- Paving parking lots will increase storm water run-off;

Jeff Clarke, Pemberton Valley Hardware, noted that he was encouraged that Staff had responded to business owners' concerns regarding the loss of parking through the addition of a parking lot at Fougberg Park, and added the following points:

- The plan is too ambitious; it would be better to limit the scope of work to the requirements of the grant, such as road grading and elevations, and avoid the risk of failure by attempting too much;
- Fear that the Village is trying to do too much with too little money and that we are being set up to fail both financially and operationally;
- Wanted assurance that the funds received will be used for the purpose for which they have been given;
- It won't be possible to solve all traffic problems with \$5 million; a second access route is necessary;
- Left-hand turns are problematic and need to be accounted for in the planning;
- Prefers angle parking to parallel parking as it is a better use of space; street width would be adequate for angle parking if traffic was restricted to one-way on Prospect Street;
- Suggested that the development permit process is onerous and prevents business owners from making improvements to their store fronts and properties;
- Suggested that the data from 2009/2011 may be out of date; Pemberton has changed since the concept was first presented;

- Wants project to proceed and noted that no one is opposed to the DEP, but business owners need reassurance that changes will be made to reflect concerns raised.

Mr. Clarke argued that one-way traffic pattern would resolve many parking and traffic issues.

Matt Prescott, Town Square, reminded those present that the \$5 million is a gift to be used for a specific purpose as per the grant application. Mr. Prescott cautioned that we risk losing the grant should business owners continue to stall the process. Mr. Prescott pointed out that Prospect Street is hazardous for vehicle and pedestrian traffic due to the lack of sidewalks and suggested working together with the Village would benefit the entire community.

Jamie Lee, AG Foods, requested clarification regarding the purpose of the grant and raised concerns regarding the cost of the addition of the cistern as part of storm water management. Ms. Lee mentioned storm water problems at AG Foods and asked how the Village would address these in the future.

Mayor Richman thanked those present for attending and taking the time to provide their feedback. Mr. Richman reminded everyone that each business owner inevitably views the concept from a personal lens and that while no plan could satisfy everyone, by working together, an acceptable compromise could be achieved. Mayor Richman noted Council must consider the big picture when making decisions related to large infrastructure projects.

In response to the concerns raised about the timing of the concept plan development, Staff advised that the plan was first presented to Council on April 10th and approved on April 24th. Staff reminded that the concept plan is based on the Downtown Enhancement Strategy and the Frontier Street Design Master Plan developed with resident and business input over a two year period. Further clarification was provided with respect to the expertise of the Village engineers and assurances that consideration has been given to all the concerns that have been raised by the business community and many of those concerns have been addressed in the revised concept including the proposal to look at a small public parking lot in Fougberg Park to address the parking concerns.

Councillor Helmer had to leave the meeting early but prior to leaving noted that she is appreciative of the feedback received from the business community and raised concern about the cynicism related to this project. Councillor Helmer asked those in attendance if changes are made in response to some of the issues raised is there a spirit to support the plan.

Councillor Ross spoke from the perspective of a former business owner in the downtown core and raised concern about the impacts the one-way street concept would have especially on the corner of Prospect and Pemberton Meadows Road.

Councillor Ross noted that the Village has up to now held more meetings on this initiative than any other and that Council and Staff have heard the concerns; however, there has to be some level of compromise. Councillor Ross noted that she supports this plan and appreciates the feedback received from everyone.

Councillor Craddock noted that he too is in support of the plan and pointed out some of the other issues that cause challenges in the downtown core such as the placement of containers in parking lots which reduces the number of parking spaces available, staff using on-street parking in front of businesses to park all day, and businesses not meeting the parking obligations in general or simply not using the parking lots they have available to them. Councillor Craddock suggested that part of the problem related to parking may be that the Village has not been actively enforcing our own bylaws. Councillor Craddock noted that to be successful it is key that the community work together to find the middle road.

Mayor Richman assured all present that they would continue to be consulted throughout the construction of the project. He noted that the downtown business owners must accept an element of personal responsibility and take those steps available to them to address parking issues at their establishments. Mayor Richman noted that the DEP will impact business owners and asked them to work with the Village to reach a compromise acceptable to all.

Mayor Richman thanked everyone for taking the time to attend the meeting and provide their feedback.

3. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:38p.m. the Committee of the Whole Meeting was adjourned.

Mike Richman
Mayor

Sheena Fraser
Corporate Officer