



The Corporation of the City of Stratford Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee MINUTES

Date: February 28, 2024
 Time: 4:30 P.M.
 Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Burbach - Chair Presiding, Councillor Nijjar - Vice Chair, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Hunter

Regrets: Councillor McCabe

Staff Present: Taylor Crinklaw - Director of Infrastructure Services, Johnny Bowes - Manager of Environmental Services, Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Tatiana Dafoe - City Clerk, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary

1. Call to Order

The Chair called the Meeting to Order.

Councillor McCabe provided regrets for this meeting.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

The Chair read the City of Stratford Respectful Workplace Policy statement.

2. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and the General Nature Thereof

The *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act* requires any member of Council declaring a pecuniary interest and the general nature thereof, where the interest of a member of Council has not been disclosed by reason of the member's absence

from the meeting, to disclose the interest at the first open meeting attended by the member of Council and otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature of Pecuniary Interest

Councillor Hunter declared pecuniary interest on item 4.1, "386 William Street – Street Access Request onto Joffre Street (ITS24-004)." Councillor Hunter owns property on Joffre Street abutting 386 William Street. Councillor Hunter advised that while he does not have a pecuniary interest, there has been a dispute with the owner of 386 William Street in 2019 and recused himself out of an abundance of caution.

3. Delegations

3.1 ADDED - Request for Delegation by Craig Merkley on behalf of the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee

Motion by Councillor Hunter

THAT Craig Merkley be heard.

Carried

Craig Merkley, member of the Energy and Environment Advisory Committee provided Sub-committee with a 2023 Update on the Committee's initiatives and activities. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the mandate of the Committee being to advise Council on related issues;
- there being three Working Groups: Ecological, ICI Waste Reduction, and Carbon Reduction;
- the focus of the Ecological Working Group being on four areas; shoreline work, native grasses project, invasive species issues and TJ Dolan Area;
- with respect to shoreline work the Committee having:
 - completed maintenance on native grass cribs planted along the shoreline behind William Street to remove invasive species;
 - working with summer students and retired Upper Thames River Conservation Authority employees to remove thistles, coltsfoot, bindweed and ragweed; and

- thinning the Red Dogwood planted in 2008 as part of Bio-engineering work.
- with respect to the Native Grass project:
 - a sample plot of big blue stem and small blue stem grass plugs being planted to gage the survival rate of the grasses;
 - native grasses being beneficial for biodiversity, filtering sediments, the roots creating corridors and once established they will maintain themselves;
 - a sample plot yielding 95% survival rate and 200 plugs being planted in June with neighborhood assistance;
 - challenges for this area being parking on the boulevard, drainage issues, bikes and weeding maintenance while plants are established;
 - signage being added outlining what the project is and why it is important;
 - a positive outcome of the project being a turtle nest being found in the boulevard with 64 eggs;
 - the eggs having been gathered, incubated, hatched and released at the John Street Weir in early September; and
 - to offset turtle fatalities crossing the Street, staff are looking at posting a yellow turtle crossing sign.
- with respect to the invasive species project:
 - phragmites, knotweed and periwinkle being the focus;
 - a \$5,000 grant from Invasive Species Council of Canada being obtained to deal with phragmites and knotweed by spraying;
 - there being plans to treat periwinkle in 2024;
 - periwinkle planted locally having taken over and there being a focus to raise awareness;
 - periwinkle being a problem in both the TJ Dolan area and Shakespearean Gardens.
- with respect to the TJ Dolan project:

- the focus being on the ecology within the area;
 - there being concerns with side trails being created causing compaction, disruptions of nesting and feeding birds;
 - bikes running over vegetation;
 - reviewing other municipal solutions to address these issues;
 - education being key to keep people on wood chip trails;
 - lean-to's made out of materials from the forest floor causing issues; and
 - materials being needed to build soil structure to improve integrity of the ground itself and the lean-to's having been dismantled and redistributed.
- in 2024, work will be continuing on the shoreline, in the TJ Dolan area and in the Native Grasses area;
 - Invasive Species Council of Canada having been contracted to create a masterplan for the City;
 - the masterplan being completed in the Spring of 2024 and being used to inform the invasive species work in the City and to create opportunity to apply for further funding; and
 - additional work being completed with the Chestnut Council of Canada and Re-Leaf, planting rare species of chestnut seedlings in areas where mature American Chestnut was found to promote growth.

The Chair thanked Mr. Merkley, members of the Committee, and the Manager of Parks, Forestry and Cemetery for working in tandem and helping to move projects forward.

4. Report of the Director of Infrastructure Services

4.1 386 William Street – Street Access Request onto Joffre Street (ITS24-004)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the request by the Owner of 386 William Street to be permitted legal street access onto Joffre Street, be denied as the City of Stratford continues to require the use of this parcel of property for municipal purposes.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Chair noted that the addenda included a request from Tom Drake to defer his delegation and Report ITS24-004 for a minimum of two months.

A member stated this matter has been before Council many times, there does not appear to be substantial changes and that they did not believe it should be before Council.

The Director of Infrastructure Services provided the following information on the report:

- the report being brought before Sub-committee to consider the request of the owner of 386 William Street;
- City staff having been made aware of the owner's intent to sever the lot through an incomplete application to the Committee of Adjustment;
- Planning staff having identified an obstacle to obtaining a severance being the need to ensure legal street access;
- 386 William Street not having access to Joffre Street;
- the City owning the parcel of land between the road right of way and the subject property which acts as a land reserve;
- without this parcel acting as a land reserve, the adjoining properties having automatic access to the street and ability to add an additional driveway if desired;
- the establishment of a reserve being common practice employed by municipalities to ensure some control on how land is developed;
- multiple requests by the owner to be granted access onto Joffre Street having been denied by Council, most recently in 2018;
- City staff requiring this property for municipal purposes;
- Joffre Street having been fully reconstructed in 2016;
- Staff having made best efforts to meet current standards with the biggest obstacle being the turnaround at the end of the street;
- a significant amount of property from a minimum of two adjacent property owners being required to meet the current standards for the preferred bulb shape turn around which was not feasible;

- the preferred bulb standard permitting easier turning movements for a larger fleet and emergency vehicle use and better for facilitating winter operations;
- best efforts in 2016 resulting in construction of a hammerhead turnaround which is difficult to navigate and challenging to manage winter operations; and
- the addition of a driveway access would further impede the City's ability to manage winter events, a specialized and infrequently used piece of equipment like front end loader may be required to complete winter maintenance in the area which would add additional cost and difficulty to winter operations.

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Sub-committee Recommendation: **THAT the request by the Owner of 386 William Street to be permitted legal street access onto Joffre Street, be denied as the City of Stratford continues to require the use of this parcel of property for municipal purposes.**
Carried

Councillor Hunter, having declared a pecuniary interest on this item, did not participate in the discussion or vote on this item.

5. Report of the Manager of Environmental Services

5.1 Drinking Water Quality Management Standard 2023 Infrastructure Review (ITS24-002)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard 2023 Infrastructure Review (ITS24-002) be received by Council to fulfil the requirement of the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Management Standard.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Manager of Environmental Services provided the following highlights from the report:

- this being an annual report to Council;
- staff being required through Ministry Regulations to ensure transparency between staff, management and the owner of the drinking water system with the owner being the Mayor and Council;

- one component examined is infrastructure and use which means staff undertake a comprehensive look at all elements related to the drinking water system in regards to maintenance, major projects reviewed, major projects completed and major infrastructure costs incurred during 2023;
- highlights from the report include;
 - there having been 16 water main breaks in 2023, significantly lower than the City average of 30;
 - there being no frozen water services due to mild winter; and
 - staff having replaced 28 lead water services as a result of reconstruction projects during the reporting project on Kinsey Street, Huron Street and Argyle Street.

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Drinking Water Quality Management Standard 2023 Infrastructure Review (ITS24-002) be received by Council to fulfil the requirement of the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Management Standard.

Carried

5.2 Drinking Water Quality Management Standard 2023 Management Review (ITS24-003)

Staff Recommendation: THAT the Management Review Minutes 2023 and Summary Table of Action Items 2023 attached to Report ITS24-003, be received by Council to fulfil the requirement of the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Management Standard.

Sub-committee Discussion: The Manager of Environmental Services provided the following highlights from the report:

- this being a separate report from the previous item but being brought to Council for the same reason of transparency between the owner and management;
- this report being a comprehensive evaluation of the City's drinking water quality management system (QMS);

- this being a top management review looking at the Ministry of Environment annual inspection that occurred in 2023;
- there being an internal and external audit of our quality management drinking water system annually which includes best management practices, opportunities for improvement and operational performance highlighting any alarms received through the year, and any trending abnormal situations to be aware of; and
- the report including the minutes from the Top Management Review meeting.

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Sub-committee Recommendation: THAT the Management Review Minutes 2023 and Summary Table of Action Items 2023 attached to Report ITS24-003, be received by Council to fulfil the requirement of the Ontario Drinking Water Quality Management Standard.

Carried

6. Department Update

Sub-committee Discussion: The Manager of Environmental Services provided the following highlights on water:

- there being 7 water main breaks over the February 23-25 weekend bringing the 2024 total to 14;
- in 2023, the total water main break being 16, highlighting annual inconsistencies;
- factors for the breaks are undetermined; common reasons being temperature fluctuations, ground disturbances, pressure transits in the system and often older infrastructure;
- Water Staff being thanked for managing these water main breaks;
- World Water Day being held on March 22 and staff developing social media posts to raise awareness; and
- on March 22, World Water Day, staff hosting open house tours of the Waste Water Treatment Plant on West Gore Street, the Romeo Control Centre and the Dufferin Water Tower.

The Director of Infrastructure Services provided the following highlights from the update:

- an open house for residents will be held in the coming months to outline the plan for the Albert Street Reconstruction Phase 2 project from King Street to Front Street;
- Phase 1 restart likely happening in late April;
- Staff finalizing the design for the Erie Street Resurfacing project;
- intricacies between Ontario Street and St. Patrick Street being addressed before the project can be finalized;
- resurfacing for 2024 to include the Erie Street parking lot;
- the Moderwell Street Local Improvement Open House having been hosted on February 20 to outline implications of the local improvement;
- the open house having been well attended and staff having received good feedback, with a report being brought to the next Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee meeting; and
- the first fully electric piece of fleet being obtained and operational.

A question and answer period took place between Sub-committee members and staff regarding technological developments to offset watermain breaks. It was noted that:

- 5 hydrant pressure transmitters were installed in 5 quadrants of the City;
- transmitters constantly read the pressure in the system and email staff if a pressure transient occurs meaning a spike or drop in pressure;
- the system not being able to predict a watermain break but does help staff to understand why some areas are more susceptible;
- if a pressure transient occurs close to wells and there is an issue with the well, BFD (frequency drives from the pumps) can be adjusted; and
- technologies in place assisting but the system still being unpredictable.

7. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes

The following Advisory Committee/Outside Board minutes were provided for the information of Sub-committee:

- Active Transportation Advisory Committee Minutes of November 22, 2023
- Accessibility Advisory Committee Minutes of January 23, 2024

8. Next Sub-committee Meeting

The next Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee meeting is March 27, 2024 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Infrastructure, Transportation and Safety Sub-committee meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:02 P.M.