



Stratford City Council Special Council Open Session MINUTES

Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2024
Time: 4:00 P.M.
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Council Present:	Mayor Ritsma - Chair Presiding, Councillor Beatty, Councillor Biehn, Councillor Briscoe, Councillor Burbach, Councillor Henderson, Councillor Hunter, Councillor McCabe, Councillor Nijjar, Councillor Wordofa
Regrets:	Councillor Sebben
Staff Present:	Joan Thomson - Chief Administrative Officer, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Kim McElroy - Director of Social Services, Karmen Krueger - Director of Corporate Services, Tim Wolfe - Director of Community Services, Adam Betteridge - Director of Building and Planning Services, Neil Anderson - Director of Emergency Services/Fire Chief, Dave Bush - Director of Human Resources, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary
Also Present:	Members of the Public and Media

1. Call to Order:

Mayor Ritsma, Chair presiding, called the Council meeting to order.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Respectful Workplace Policy Statement

2. Declarations 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 to otherwise comply with the *Act*.

Name, Item and General Nature Thereof

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by the members at the July 23, 2024, Special Council Meeting.

3. Added - Adoption of the Addendum to the Agenda:

R2024-294

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the Addendum to the Special Agenda of Council dated July 23, 2024, be added to the agenda as printed.

Carried

4. Added - Hearings of Deputations and Presentations:

4.1 Request for Delegation Regarding the Proposed Disposition of Land (Long Term Care Home) 3188 Vivian Line 37

R2024-295

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT Paul Brown, Jane Marie Mitchell and Robert Verdun be heard.

Carried

Paul Brown, referring to a PowerPoint presentation, spoke to Council in opposition of the Proposed Disposition of Land (Long Term Care Home) at 3188 Vivian Line 37. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the proposal for City owned land sale for a private long-term care facility appearing to be a good investment and good revenue source in the short-term but a staggering liability for residents in the long term;
- the 160 long-term care facility not being a solution to Stratford's long term care needs and the construction of the private facility costing

taxpayers at least 400 million dollars based on conservative estimates with Stratford residents owning 0% of the investment;

- an overview of the estimate of costs of the beds in the long-term care facility in Stratford and the associated costs to the facility resident and the taxpayers;
- the taxpayers having to pay 80% of the project cost yet the developer retains ownership of the home and the land;
- the effects to taxpayers of the expansion of long-term care facilities as the province announced the addition of 30,000 long term care beds plus 28,000 upgraded beds;
- the importance of investing in home care and supportive housing particularly as the length of stay in a nursing home is now declining, medical knowledge is doubling, and clinical discoveries continue which could reduce chronic diseases allowing people to have a better quality of life as they age;
- a proper analysis of the short-term financial gain versus the real citizen cost of development projects being needed;
- the long-term care home solutions being aligned with real citizen needs and medical home care trends instead of real estate development opportunities; and
- the importance of transparent community input and involvement for home care and real estate investment opportunities.

A question-and-answer period between the Members of Council and Mr. Brown was held regarding the following:

- with respect to a member requesting clarification that the tax dollars being referred to in the presentation are provincial tax dollars, Mr. Brown noted that they are provincial tax dollars and that health programs are also funded by transfers from the federal government as well but there is only one taxpayer; and
- with respect to a member requesting comment regarding the provincial government's plan to add 30,000 beds which if rejected in Stratford would go in another community but Stratford would still have the same tax burden, Mr. Brown noted that funding for long term care will be from both from provincial and federal sources and

it is important that the links to housing are considered. Mr. Brown further noted that his proposition is for home care and supportive housing and that supportive housing can be built as a cohesive program at the same rate as building the nursing home with the same taxpayer money but residents will retain ownership.

Jane Marie Mitchell spoke to Council in opposition of the Proposed Disposition of Land (Long Term Care Home) at 3188 Vivian Line 37. Highlights of the presentation included:

- long-term care homes being very much in need but the proposal not meeting basic human needs as the site is not large enough to house 160 to 288 residents as well as a personal care and a personal service establishment;
- the parking reduction for the site not making sense as there will not be enough parking for staff and visitors;
- the removal of the parking strip and bike spaces being concerning;
- the proposal needing to align with the One Planet Principles;
- plans for climate change mitigation and green building initiatives needing to be considered for any building to be built;
- the low and non-existent setbacks being a concern of residents beside the property;
- the re-adaptive use of the building needing to be considered so that it does not end up as an underutilized building in the next generation when there is less need for long term care homes; and
- the considerations and questions needing to be answered when choosing the location of a building rather than asking for setbacks, variances, and reliefs from the zoning requirements afterwards.

Robert Verdun spoke to Council in support of the Proposed Disposition of Land (Long Term Care Home) at 3188 Vivian Line 37. Highlights of the presentation included:

- the project being long overdue and there being a need to expedite it;
- there being a 20-year period where no new nursing home beds were created in Ontario;

- a continuum of care being important as residents want to live in their homes forever but realize that there is a reality that bodies wear out;
- staff being encouraged to be supportive of the project and to get it done;
- there being lots of big provincial issues that need to be debated but the City's role in this matter is to facilitate something that is overdue;
- Mr. Verdun noting that the City's website showed the special meeting as having already occurred and that Council should look into the mistake;
- the City Clerk's role being important and statutory;

Mayor Ritsma reminded Mr. Verdun to stay on the topic of the delegation.

- Mr. Verdun further noted that the municipal clerk's role is statutory and essential and the CAO's role is optional so Council should pay close attention; and
- Mr. Verdun advising Council to read the Municipal Act, the law that gives Council the authority to do what they do, and Council to read the website about the duties of the Clerk.

A member commented that accessing the website worked fine for them.

5. Orders of the Day:

5.1 Proposed Disposition of Land (Long Term Care Home) 3188 Vivian Line 37

R2024-296

Motion by Councillor Nijjar

Seconded by Councillor Hunter

THAT Council authorize the entering into and execution of an Agreement of Purchase and Sale with Stratford Long Term Care LP for the disposition of the surplus lands known municipally as 3188 Vivian Line 37 to facilitate the development of a minimum 160 bed long term care home and continuum of care facility;

THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to execute the Agreement of Purchase and Sale

substantially in the form provided that has been reviewed by the Chief Administrative Officer and the City Solicitor;

THAT the City Solicitor be directed to prepare the conveyance documents necessary for the disposition of the lands known municipally as 3188 Vivian Line 37, subject to the City's satisfaction of the completion of the terms and conditions of sale;

AND THAT the Mayor and Clerk, or their respective delegates, be authorized to execute any conveyance documents prepared by the City Solicitor as required for the conveyance of the land to Stratford Long Term Care LP.

Members of Council held a discussion regarding this matter. Highlights of the discussion included:

- the situation being one where the City is playing the best hand it can, but it does not mean that the City stops playing as this is still a very good hand that the City can have to meet an immediate need which the City has with its aging population;
- there still being things the City can do to work systemically to bring change;
- the City looking to bring the best possible care to its citizens with the availability that they have;
- there being hurdles faced by not-for-profit care which the City can advocate for;
- not-for-profit care facing a substantial turnover, being highly underfunded, and involving high amounts of risk which leads many to back out of that space leaving private care to come in;
- partnerships between for-profit and not-for-profit organizations existing to learn best practices.
- the project being one that Council should support now to meet the needs of the community;
- the continuum of care model getting the City to a place where it can bring in not-for-profit care as well as some of the really advanced in community living pieces;

- the Province making it a prerequisite to have a continuum of care in place when expansion requests are submitted;
- there being substantial waitlists, with provinces currently using up to a four-hour radius and this is a significant distance;
- Stratford being a retirement community and this opportunity allowing people to live a full and wholesome life exactly how they want;
- there being an undeniable need for long term care beds in the community and this being an opportunity to get beds in the community;
- there being a possibility that Council can use the proceeds from the sale for housing and to address other needs in the community;
- there being support for the proposed sale;
- it being acknowledged that it would be great to have more home care and for people to stay in their homes longer but that the system is not currently set up for it;
- support being expressed for Council to take advantage of this opportunity as it will be a way to invest in the local community and citizens would not have to move away to access care and a way to address many needs in the community;
- a member not being in support as the land could be used for affordable housing initiatives;
- support being expressed for more funding for independent living but needing to move forward with this opportunity;
- there being an urgent need for long-term care beds with over a thousand people being on the waitlist; and
- support being expressed for more provincial emphasis on home care which would go hand in hand and would be fantastic together.

The Mayor called the question on the motion.

Carried

6. Reading of the By-laws:

The following By-laws required First and Second Readings and Third and Final Readings and could have been taken collectively upon unanimous vote of Council present:

6.1 Agreement of Purchase and Sale - 3188 Vivian Line 37 – By-law 91-2024

To authorize the execution of an Agreement of Purchase and Sale with Stratford Long Term Care LP for 3188 Vivian Line 37.

6.2 Conveyance of 3188 Vivian Line 37 – By-law 92-2024

To authorize the transfer (conveyance) to Stratford Long Term Care LP of 3188 Vivian Line 37.

6.3 Confirmatory By-law – By-law 93-2024

To confirm the proceedings of Council of The Corporation of the City of Stratford at its meeting held on July 23, 2024.

Motion by Councillor Henderson

Seconded by Councillor Nijjar

THAT By-laws 91-2024 to 93-2024 be taken collectively.

Defeated

R2024-297

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT By-law 91-2024 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2024-298

Motion by Councillor Burbach

Seconded by Councillor Hunter

THAT By-law 91-2024 read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

R2024-299

Motion by Councillor McCabe

Seconded by Councillor Beatty

THAT By-law 92-2024 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2024-300

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT By-law 92-2024 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

R2024-301

Motion by Councillor Beatty

Seconded by Councillor Hunter

THAT By-law 93-2024 be read a First and Second Time.

Carried two-thirds support

R2024-302

Motion by Councillor Biehn

Seconded by Councillor McCabe

THAT By-law 93-2024 be read a Third Time and Finally Passed.

Carried

7. Adjournment:

R2024-303

Motion by Councillor Hunter

Seconded by Councillor Burbach

THAT the July 23, 2024, Special Council Meeting adjourn.

Carried

Meeting Start Time: 4:00 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 4:52 P.M.

Mayor - Martin Ritsma

Deputy Clerk - Audrey Pascual