



VISION: We will be a vibrant, dependable and clean city where services are delivered innovatively and effectively.
MISSION: To provide effective operations of the city through collaboration of members, management and staff.

City Hall, Hamilton
Infrastructure, Development & Future Committee
9 November 2016
10:00am

Present: Councillor John Harvey, MBE, JP (Chair)
Rt. Wor. Charles R. Gosling, JP
Councillor Henry Ming
Councillor George Scott, JP

Staff: Secretary - Ed Benevides, JP
City Engineer - Patrick Cooper
Thomas Lightbourne - Events / Marketing Co-ordinator

Apologies: Events Project Manager

1. Conformation of Notice:

The Secretary confirmed that the notices for the minutes and the agenda were posted and sent out in accordance with the new meeting guidelines.

2. Role of the Chairman:

Councillor Harvey acknowledged his role as Chair of the committee.

3. Open Meeting

Councillor Harvey called the meeting to order at 10:00am.

4. Apologies:

Councillor Nicholas Swan, Councillor RoseAnn Edwards and Events Project Manager.

5. Public Participation/Presentation:

There is no public participation/presentation.

6. Correspondence:

The Secretary advised that the only correspondence was the letter which was discussed at Council which was the request to lease the property at Donleigh Cottage. The Mayor corrected the Secretary and stated that the correspondence had in fact been discussed by the Property & Safety Committee who had decided it should go to RFP.

7. Minutes of Previous Meeting dated 19 October 2016

Councillor Harvey asked whether the action item in no. 2, page 4 had been completed. The City Engineer said he had not yet written to Dr. Bradshaw and therefore the item has not been completed.

Proposed: Mayor, Charles Gosling

Seconded: Councillor G Scott

8. Matters Arising:

There are no matters arising.

9. Status Update:

(i) Events:

Christmas in the City:

- The Tree of Lights lighting will take place on 25th November. It was agreed that Councillor George Scott will represent the Corporation.
- The Christmas Parade will take place on 27th November.
- There will be four (4) weeks of late night shopping commencing on 2nd December.
- A Vendor Village will be set up in Victoria Park on 9th and 23rd December in Victoria Park.
- There will also be a month long scavenger hunt with the hope that 20-40 retailers will participate. The retailers will submit a riddle and a prize will be donated with the intention of producing more sales.
- The Christmas Window Competition is taking place again this year and so far the Corporation has received 10 submissions. The prizes are items such as Belco vouchers and internet vouchers from One Communications.
- Tamara Bradshaw is also currently working on the logistics of the Mayor's party.
- It was confirmed that Fireworks for the New Year's Eve event can take place on Bernard's Park but the Corporation will have to secure permission from Government to close the street across from TCD for safety reasons (Dutton Avenue). The Mayor said that the certain deadlines will need to be met.

ACTION: Thomas Lightbourne to send a reminder to the Emperial Group of Companies (copy to Councillor Edwards and Tracy Marshall) that they need to confirm the arrangements for the fireworks.

Councillor Harvey mentioned the Mayor's party and it had been suggested that there should be some live background music such as a violinist on the steps of the foyer to give the event some Christmas spirit. The Mayor said he is not so keen on having live music at a social function such as this and he was also hoping that the CoH could showcase the new audio system it has in place. This would also show fiduciary responsibility.

The City Engineer said he had attended a Road Safety Council Meeting yesterday and they have requested that a road safety banner be placed in a suitable location either at City Hall or on the fence at Par-la-Ville. Thomas Lightbourne said this should not be a problem and it could be put up once the Arts Festival banner has been removed.

The Mayor said the CoH is also looking to do a ribbon cutting for the Laffan Street roundabout. The Mayor asked that the residents are invited to the ribbon cutting as well as to the Mayor's party.

ACTION: Thomas Lightbourne to confirm the arrangements for the Laffan Street roundabout ribbon cutting to The City Engineer.

(ii) Pedestrianisation of Reid Street:

Councillor Harvey said the pedestrianisation of Reid Street from Burnaby to Queen Streets had been previously discussed and opinions had been sought from the Chamber of Commerce (CoC) and retailers in the area but the project had not come to fruition. There has recently been some discussion within the community to revisit it.

The City Engineer said that discussions regarding the pedestrianisation of Reid Street had started over forty years ago in the early 70s and the CoH probably has four (4) or five (5) schemes that have been drawn up over the years which range from little to grandiose. The schemes have been derailed for several reasons but the common reasons have always centred on traffic and the access to buildings and the ability for retailers to continue operations with limited access. All of the buildings are front-loaded in Hamilton unlike retail buildings in American cities where there is a back alley for loading, etc. Whatever scheme is implemented; it must allow for traffic. The City Engineer said the CoH is very fortunate to have Councillor Ming on this Committee because the CoH had hired a group of people to do a review of one of the schemes and Councillor Ming had been involved in that review.

Councillor Ming said at the time, a meeting had been set up with the CoC who had indicated that they did not wish to discuss this again. They were in favour of the concept and they recognised that there were problems involved in implementing pedestrianisation but the problems could be resolved. The CoC's bottom line was that they should not be approached about a further scheme unless it was definitely going to be implemented. Councillor Ming said that he and his colleagues did not propose a new scheme but they simply looked at the concept of pedestrianisation.

The Secretary said that the CoH has always taken the stance of doing all or nothing. He mentioned that at Christmas time, the road closure of Reid Street in the evenings seems to work and does not cause disruption. Shops are in a position to front load their stores either in the morning or in the evening. The Secretary said that villages in the UK which are pedestrian friendly during the day tend to load their merchandise during the evenings. He suggested the idea of closing the road off three (3) days a week - Monday, Wednesday and Friday to see how it would work. The City Engineer said that closing the road to all traffic is problematic and he would recommend that the CoH look at removing parking initially and undertake the scheme in a piecemeal fashion because it simply does not work if you try to pedestrianise Reid Street all in one go. The thought was possibly to do something like a Parking Day where so many sections of parking are removed and replaced with something lively. There is the potential to build the sidewalk out where those parking bays are and then never remove them. Therefore, the parking places are slowly diminished over a number of years instead of all at once, allowing the public to adjust to the scheme as it goes along.

The City Engineer said he was also thinking about bricking up the road to bring it up to the sidewalk level in order to create a flat area which would then indicate to traffic that they are in a different sort of zone. Councillor G. Scott said that the pedestrianisation of Ewing Street had worked well especially for disabled residents who no longer need to navigate the sidewalk.

The Mayor said he was concerned about how the project would be paid for and he felt it should go through a series of trials and to possibly try the Secretary's suggestion to begin with and measure the pushback from the retailers. The Mayor said he would hate for the CoH to get involved with a large project on Reid Street only to find that the last thing the retailers want is the pedestrianisation of the street. The CoH does need to listen to the retailers to find out what they want. The Mayor said the CoH should look to experiment with pedestrianisation and seek feedback.

Councillor Ming said that pedestrianisation for the sake of it is not going to help anybody and there needs to be some sort of activity which coincides with it. The notion was that activities such as alfresco dining should be encouraged and perhaps some type of major activity on a daily basis so things continue to flow. With that there will come the satisfaction from the retailers that they are getting the spin-off from the project. The City Engineer agreed and said there must be a number of reasons to entice people to use the space. The Mayor said there should also be some form of encouragement whereby the retailer is allowed to extend their services outside their four (4) walls. The City Engineer said that the infrastructure part is fairly easy to do but it is harder to give people a sense of place and to give them a reason to use the space. If it is proposed to do this throughout the year then it would need to be scheduled like an event all year long.

Councillor Harvey asked when the project could start. The City Engineer said the CoH is currently programming for Americas Cup and this will entail using the street. That might be a great time to start the project and extend it out of that event. Councillor Harvey said that all key stakeholders should be informed of any plans. The Mayor suggested communicating with the CoC, retailers and restaurant division.

The City Engineer indicated that there will need to be a great deal of pre-planning and the logistics discussed with the Events Department and CoC, planners, etc. in order to get a reasonable proposal together. Thomas Lightbourne mentioned that a template exists on how to run pedestrianisation during the Christmas period and this could be used going forward.

The Committee recognised that pedestrianisation will obviously need to be budgeted for. The Mayor agreed that in terms of timing, the America's Cup would be a great starting place and the CoH needs to go to the CoC to ask them to discuss the idea with the retailers on Reid Street to find out what would make it viable for them.

Councillor Harvey proposed that Councillor Ming and the City Engineer meet to come up with a proposal and then report back to the Committee before the February 2017 meeting. The City Engineer said it would probably be before then because planning for the America's Cup is already well under way.

ACTION: The City Engineer and Councillor Ming to put together a proposal for the pedestrianisation of Reid Street and report back to the Infrastructure Committee.

(iii) Leasing of No. 1 Dock for Super Yachts 2017:

The Secretary reported that the CoH is still awaiting a business plan from America's Cup. Councillor Harvey felt there is still a grey area about who would control the waterfront during America's Cup. The Secretary said that only the CoH can dictate what happens with No. 1 dock but it looks as though the Government has committed the CoH's property. The CoH can either acquiesce or not. Councillor Harvey said the CoH will need to be very careful about how it controls the situation as not to harm their position. The Mayor said that the CoH has no plans in place for the No. 1 dock for the period of the America's Cup so we should just step aside. The Secretary confirmed that the Event Project Manager has provided America's Cup with all the maps and information they need on the waterfront. The Mayor said it was made very clear in the last meeting that the CoH would be telling America's Cup what they would be doing and they would wait for them to say 'no you can't'. Councillor Harvey said the problem is that somebody else has dictated what can be done with CoH property and now the CoH is trying to second-guess what has been done.

The City Engineer said that about four (4) months ago he and the Secretary were having fairly regular meetings with Mike Winfield and his team. It has always been expressed to them that the CoH wanted to help and was behind the country in getting America's Cup up and running but have also expressed the need to talk it through and negotiate these issues. The dock is probably the one that was negotiated the most whereby the CoH was trying to get a win for the City and get some infrastructure put in place and paid for but obviously it has not turned out that way. The CoH told America's Cup that it would not take on any financial liability but were behind the concept that during America's Cup the No. 1 dock would be used for Super Yachts but that the CoH would not go into debt over it. The CoH could not back out of having Super Yachts at No. 1 during the America's Cup because there was always the assertion made that it would be available for this purpose.

Councillor Harvey pointed out that the problem is that somebody has now gone out and leased the dock so the question is who is going to control things such as the moorings, etc. The Mayor said he did not want the CoH to be put in the position where it is implied that the CoH is the reason America's Cup failed. Councillor Harvey said that it was therefore important that somebody brings this to the attention of the Ministers. The City Engineer said the CoH has been abundantly clear with America's Cup about the CoH's position and where they are regarding Super Yachts.

The Secretary pointed out that America's Cup had already caused the CoH to nearly lose the entire schedule for the Veendam and they had lost \$40k in income because the schedule was delayed.

The Mayor mentioned that the CoH also has a Minister who has successfully negotiated a contract with one of the cruise lines to increase the number of cruise ship visits to Hamilton for next year although the only information the Minister has deemed to share with the CoH has been through the one mention of the City in the Throne Speech. It was confirmed that the Veendam will be staying in Hamilton for three (3) days at a time in most of the cases and it has increased its number of ship nights.

ACTION: The Secretary to forward to Councillor Harvey a copy of the 2017 Cruise Ship schedule for Hamilton.

Councillor Harvey said he felt it would be worth the Secretary emailing Government to say that the CoH is concerned that its control of the waterfront has been taken away and they are not being made aware of what is going to happen during America's Cup. The Mayor said he is wondering whether it would be better if the CoH's lawyers write a letter to Mike Winfield saying that the CoH has not contested this but unless there is a move on his part to be more transparent and to share information, that the CoH may have no other choice than to ask for a judicial review. If Mr. Winfield has plans scheduled for every single day then the CoH can work with him in informing everyone involved but at the moment the CoH is not aware of what is happening. The City Engineer said that he personally feels that the reason information is being withheld is because America's Cup does not want the CoH to put on events which are in direct competition with events scheduled by America's Cup. The Secretary said he started to ask America's Cup in January of this year for their schedule of events so that the CoH can work with them.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve for the Corporation's lawyer to write a letter to America's Cup Bermuda (ACBDA) to encourage discussions and transparency in relation to the waterfront area during America's Cup 2017.

Proposed: Mayor, Charles Gosling
Unanimous

Seconded: Councillor H Ming

(i) Laffan Street Roundabout:

The City Engineer confirmed that the final asphalt coat is being applied today. Work is also being undertaken on the sidewalks and should be completed this week. The plantings are about 80% done so the project is taking shape. At the weekend all the lines should be completed and signage erected and by next Monday it will be a fully functioning roundabout. Ribbon cutting will take place on 16th November 2016. The Mayor asked that residents are invited.

(ii) Residential Parking Permit Policy Review:

The Secretary confirmed that the Staff, Legislative and Governance Committee is reviewing this policy and moving ahead with the changes which will be brought before the Council for approval.

10. Recommendations for Review:

The Secretary said that both recommendations are awaiting the Ministers approval.

11. Any Other Business:

(iii) Consolidation of Infrastructure and Property & Safety Committees:

The Mayor and Committee agreed that the consolidation is a good idea. This item will now be added to the Staff, Legislative and Governance Committee agenda for them to approve at their next meeting. There was a question over which Councillors would sit on the consolidated committee and the Mayor said he felt it would be best to continue on the basis of four (4) Councillors.

(iv) New King Street Layout (Councillor G. Scott):

Councillor G. Scott referred to the layout of King and Church Street and said there used to be two (2) lanes coming off the hill going South and now it has been narrowed down to one (1). He said he felt this needs to be given some more thought. There is currently a person in the mornings on Spurling Hill directing / stopping traffic and the CoH could consider somebody doing the same on Church Street so that traffic could flow up King Street quicker than it is now. The traffic currently has to stop on Church Street to allow the traffic to come off the King Street stop sign. Councillor Harvey said that the mornings are probably not such a problem but the traffic would be heavier in the afternoon. The Mayor felt people are starting to get used to the fact that it is now one-way and he suggested it might be a good idea to erect a sign saying enter leftway, merge to right. Councillor Ming said he felt that in this case it would be a good idea to have a sign. The City Engineer said this would cause congestion issues because it would diminish the capacity of Church Street's two (2) lanes all the way up and that the CoH should leave it to play out a little longer.

The intention was to put some hard features in place to indicate to the public that it is now one (1) lane instead of two (2).

Take Note: Councillor Ming said that several comments have been made to him that there is a 'No Entry' sign at his parking lot at the exit side of Victoria Street which is creating confusion.

Take Note: The Mayor said that an email had been received regarding the condition of the sidewalks on Union Street. The Secretary said this had come from the Residents Advisory Committee and it had been an agenda item which started off by stating that the CoH is ignoring a medical claim for damages. The Secretary said he had not been able to find historic communications in this regard. This matter had nothing to do with damages and instead a person had tripped some time ago and it was confirmed at the time that the sidewalk would be repaired but this had not yet been done. The repair has been on the CoH's budget for three (3) years but came off twice. It is on this year's budget again and has survived so far. The Mayor said that what will be on this year's budget is to deal with the intersection itself and the creation of a crosswalk. The Secretary recalled that \$100K has been set aside for the Union Street sidewalk / crosswalk but the City Engineer could not remember the exact amount and said he would need to review the budget. The Mayor said the lady who tripped needs to be responded to. The Secretary confirmed he had copied her in on the email he had sent to the Committee which stated the sidewalk repair is in this year's budget again.

ACTION: The Secretary to write to the person who tripped on Union Street and confirm that the sidewalk will be mended if it is included in the budget.

12. Motion to Move to Restricted Session

Proposed: Councillor H. Ming

Seconded: Councillor G. Scott

The Public Session adjourned at 11.20am.