



## **The Corporation of the City of Stratford Planning and Heritage Sub-committee**

### **MINUTES**

Date: June 26, 2025  
Time: 4:30 P.M.  
Location: Council Chamber, City Hall

Sub-committee Present: Councillor Sebben - Chair Presiding, Councillor Burbach - Vice Chair, Councillor Biehn, Councillor McCabe

Regrets: Councillor Wordofa

Staff Present: Adam Betteridge - Interim Chief Administrative Officer and Director of Building and Planning Services, Tatiana Dafoe – Clerk, Audrey Pascual - Deputy Clerk, Miranda Franken - Council Clerk Secretary, Kendra Fry – Housing Specialist, investStratford

Also present: Members of the Public

#### **1. Call to Order**

The Chair called the meeting to Order.

Land Acknowledgment

Moment of Silent Reflection

Respectful Conduct 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

No disclosures of pecuniary interest were made by a Member at the June 26, 2025 Planning and Heritage Sub-committee meeting.

### **3. Delegations**

#### **3.1 Request for Delegation by Stratford Affordable Housing Alliance and Receipt of Petition**

Motion by Councillor Burbach

**THAT Niki Andre, representing Stratford Affordable Housing Alliance, be heard.**

**Carried**

A video delegation from Stratford Affordable Housing Alliance (SAHA) members Leigha McCarroll, Damilare Woleye, Tanner Bergsma and Niki Andre was played highlighting the following:

Leigha McCarroll;

- noted data from the Stratford Ontario 2025 Housing Needs Assessment including housing costs compared to incomes and housing stock compared to housing needs;
- seniors, young workers and families getting priced out of Stratford;
- housing being the foundation of health, dignity and economic stability;
- requested the City provide a publicly accessible inventory of all City owned lands and properties; and
- across Canada, transparency and land availability being a first step in enabling innovative and affordable solutions.

Damilare Woleye;

- requested the creation of a land bank that records all City owned properties for the use of affordable housing;
- there being an unprecedented housing crisis across Canada;

- Stratford being home to an arts community who increasingly cannot afford to live in Stratford;
- people increasingly making decisions they are not comfortable with for affordable living;
- a land bank allowing for organizations and citizens to partner to build affordable housing;
- private market solutions not being long term; and
- the most difficult part of building being cost of land.

Tanner Bergsma;

- noted silent shame coming with poverty;
- residents being priced out of Stratford;
- requested the following:
  - a public inventory of City owned land;
  - a commitment to a land bank that the community can access for lasting affordable housing;
- housing being the law; and
- requesting partnership not charity.

Niki Andre, Co-founder and Director, SAHA;

- City owned land not yet having been compiled into a publicly available database;
- two Requests for Proposal (RFP) having been issued January 2025 for two parcels of City owned Land;
- details regarding the award of the RFP's and the proposals;
- the Stratford Official Plan (OP) being under review;
- requested the 2019 OP definition of Affordable Housing be retained;
- noted housing costs not to exceed 30% of a households gross income;

- the provincial definition considering housing affordable if it costs up to 80% of market value;
- noted these definitions not aligning;
- requested the following;
  - the delivery of a publicly accessible inventory of City owned land and property; and
  - the creation of a land and property bank before finalizing, funding or incentivizing any new developments that involve City owned assets in Stratford.

Discussion occurred on this matter between Sub-committee, staff and Niki Andre. Highlights of the discussion included the following;

- discussion regarding the referenced RFP's;
- a member asked if there is a practice of releasing publicly owned land in other municipalities;
- staff noted the City lands able to be developed being few;
- a public land database not yet having been created due to lack of resources and competing priorities;
- City mapping being done through the Geographic Information System (GIS) and posted online by a separate division from Planning;
- the list of parcels having been evaluated and brought to Council attention;
- the inventory being slivers, reserves, not able to be developed or owned for purpose of development with the list not being vast;
- the delegation requesting the inclusion of properties or any land owned by the City including un-serviced land be in the land inventory;
- a member noted the RFP's being an opportunity to add to affordable housing stock and not increase taxes through servicing with increases in taxes possibly adding to the housing crisis;

- the delegation noted the crisis having begun 30 years ago with a contributing factor being all government levels pulling out of land development;
- the delegation noted community land trusts being in perpetuity forever; and
- a Member noted the definition of 'Affordable' being with staff for review.

Discussion on this matter occurred between Sub-committee and staff. Highlights of the discussion included the following;

- staff clarified the parcels of land not categorized by zoning;
- data for a public list to be compiled to include the size of a parcel noting some land being 1 foot reserves, when a parcel was acquired, if serviced, if located in flood plain control or regulated area;
- the management of City owned lands having been moved to invest Stratford;
- the managing of an online list requiring resources with the City often acquiring and disposing of land through development process;
- Council having been actively involved in dealing with housing options for City owned lands;
- a Member commented the City not sitting on unused properties and asked if there are City buildings not being used to full potential;
- staff noted a fulsome review including this, Asset Management, short and long term financial implications, including studies can be done and to require time, effort and resources;
- a member noted other municipalities having apartments built above fire stations and transit stations with Council actively looking for solutions and having asked staff where units can be built;
- investStratford staff noted a land inventory being a list of available land; and

- noted a land bank implying land be held for a mission based outcome with a set of terms and guidelines.

Motion by Councillor Burbach

**THAT the development of a publicly accessible inventory of all city-owned property and land and the creation of a land bank for all available City owned properties be referred to staff.**

**Carried**

Motion by Councillor Burbach

**THAT the petition from Stratford Affordable Housing Alliance regarding the development of a publicly accessible inventory of all city-owned property and land and the creation of a land bank for all available City owned properties, be received.**

**Carried**

#### **4. Department Update**

There was no Department Update provided to Sub-committee.

#### **5. Advisory Committee/Outside Board Minutes**

The following Advisory Committee Minutes were provided for the information of Sub-committee:

- Heritage Stratford Advisory Committee minutes of January 14, 2025 and March 11, 2025

#### **6. Next Sub-committee Meeting**

The next Planning and Heritage Sub-committee meeting is September 25, 2025 at 4:30 p.m. in the Council Chamber, City Hall.

#### **7. Adjournment**

Motion by Councillor Biehn

**Sub-committee Decision: THAT the Planning and Heritage Sub-committee meeting adjourn.**

**Carried**

Meeting Start Time: 4:30 P.M.

Meeting End Time: 5:13 P.M.