

Town of Huntsville

COMMUNITY MASTER PLAN PUBLIC MEETING

Meeting held on Wednesday, December 5, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.
in the Algonquin Theatre, Huntsville Civic Centre

ATTENDANCE Mayor Claude Doughty
Councillor Fran Coleman
Councillor John Davis
Councillor Mary Jane Fletcher
Councillor Mike Greaves
Councillor Brian Thompson
Councillor George Young

Absent: Councillor W. A. Beatty
Councillor Chris Zanetti

Approximately 40 people in attendance.

1. WELCOME

Mayor Claude Doughty welcomed all those in attendance.

2. OVERVIEW – PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mayor Doughty outlined the three main reasons for creating a Community Master Plan:

1. To identify Council's priorities for their term of office, to allocate resources and approve the 2008 Budget, ideally by the spring;
2. To secure funding from Provincial and Federal authorities when launching funding for various projects;
3. To encourage the Community to be excited about our future and to help make Huntsville an even better place to live, work and play.

Mayor Doughty outlined the different ways the public can submit their ideas and questions:

- (a) Participate in public meetings
- (b) Mail
- (c) E-mail the Mayor
- (d) Go to the Town website to review documents submitted
- (e) Go to the website and access the Blog to provide comment
- (f) Submit a CD of your presentation (a short summary may be

added to the website and the full presentation will be available in CD format at the Town Offices or at the Library)
(g) Deputations to Council

Stuart Morley, Community Master Plan Consultant explained the different ways the public can get help with their submissions:

1. Go to the Library to access high speed internet service, collect CD's of public meetings and get Library staff support on how to access the Blog;
2. Contact John Finley Economic Development/Grants Officer for the Town of Huntsville;
3. Ask your kids – they know about Blogs, video taping and using this new technology;
4. Video tape your message;
5. Call your Member of Council.

An outline was provided regarding the advantages of using technology to allow quick and easy access:

1. The Website and Blog can be utilized to allow the public to participate irrespective of where they are in the world, as long as they have internet access;
2. Some ideas can be incorporated in the 2008 Budget and consideration can be given to the ideas that need to be investigated before the 2009 Budget;
3. The use of new technologies will allow faster and more transparent ways for the public to see what is submitted and have an opportunity to comment on the submissions;
4. The Community Master Plan is a process, not an event; therefore, the Website content and Blog will be available during the term of Council. The public can add ideas and discussion throughout the remaining three-year term of council;
5. The Website and Blog will provide an easy access of public record for the next Council to build on.

Mayor Doughty indicated that he would be encouraging the youth of the Town of Huntsville to participate in this process.

It was noted that the meeting schedule for the Community Master Plan Committee was as follows:

- January 10, 2008 (to receive public comment/video submissions)
- January 31, 2008
- February 14, 2008 (Final Report from the Community Master Plan Committee).

3. EXPLANATION ON WEBSITE/BLOG USE

A detailed description was provided on the submission of documents to the Blog and how the information would be displayed on the Town Web Site.

4. COUNCIL COMMENTS

Members of Council provided comment with respect to the Community Master Plan process:

- The Community was encouraged to participate in this process
- The Community needed to provide input regarding the vision for the Town of Huntsville, while keeping the visions realistic
- It needs to be identified how the initiatives identified will be financed
- Many methods are available to assist the public with submitting their comments

5. PUBLIC INPUT

The following questions were presented by members of the public:

Question: There are not very many people in attendance tonight; how will the Community know the different methods available to them to provide comment?

Answer: Advertisements will be placed in the local newspaper, as well as televised on Cogeco Television.

Comment: Council Members could inform the general public of the Community Master Plan process during social/public events.

Comment: A suggestion was presented recommending that members of the public be appointed to sit on the Community Master Plan Committee.

Question: How are you going to prioritize the recommendations received?

Answer: The Committee would need to determine what they feel is the most important initiatives within the Community. The Consultant hired to assist with the Community Master Plan will provide guidance in this regard.

Question: User Groups were asked to hold off on presenting their requirements until Spring, 2008. I have concern that the Community Master Plan process will result in this information coming in "piecemeal".

Answer: The visions will be "areas" not specific projects. All groups/organizations will be recognized.

Comment: Perhaps specific issues should be included on the Blog to help people come up with ideas. Perhaps a set of questions should be provided.

Answer: Ongoing dialogue will occur on the Blog; the community can review and participate.

Comment: The majority of people in Huntsville are in the rural areas and do not have high speed internet services or local television. I recommend the old fashion process be available to the public (local newspaper).

Answer: The normal means of communication will still be available; the internet is an additional tool.

Question: I am worried about the timelines. I would encourage you to meet directly with various user groups and ask them what their ideas are. You will need to obtain public input on how to prioritize the visions. Is there an Agenda set?

Answer: The slate is clear; we are open to all ideas.

Comment: I have concern regarding the constant reference to the second ice pad – we need to have a “broad” vision.

Comment: You could provide the option for individuals to vote on-line for the visions that they concur with.

Comment: Technology – Are there any controls in place that would prevent abuse of the system?

Answer: The Town of Huntsville will do their best to secure the site and prevent it from being abused.

6. CONCLUSION

Mr. Morley summarized the major areas of the process:

Firstly,

- What do the youth want for the next 20 years
- Major Council projects
- Community views
- Business as usual – outstanding projects

Secondly, important to ensure equal balance between:

- Qualitative Information
- Quantitative Information

Thirdly,

- Ensure communication

This document will help Council and Staff make constructive decisions.

Mayor Doughty expressed his appreciation to all those in attendance.