

NOTES

The second meeting of the task force was held August 8, 2023, with the following in attendance:

- Myles Murdock – Mayor
- Trevor Bazinet – Deputy Mayor
- Randy Carroll – Councillor
- Vicky Culbert – BIA
- Heather Boa – Chamber
- Chris Spaleta – Citizen Appointment (virtual attendance)

- Janice Hallahan
- Andrea Fisher
- Sean Thomas

- Dennis Elliott
- Matt Peason
- Bruce Potter
- Dale Erb

The following items were discussed. Refer to appended agenda.

1. Mayor Myles Murdock called the meeting to order.
2. Dale noted that the minutes for the 1st meeting would be provided when complete.
3. Myles turned the meeting over to Matt.
4. Matt discussed the results of the previous brainstorming meeting/session and presented the following synopsis that was developed from the session. Ideas were categorized into theme streams:

Overarching

- Create downtown living room: ‘gathering place’ lively and vibrant.
- Better use of external (off) Square areas.
- Attract people; drives economic development and healthy community.
- How do we get more retail on the Square?
- Tourism attraction/destination; Circle attracts people.
- Safe space for everyone to enjoy.
- Create consistency w.r.t benches, lighting etc, to make one overall feel. Not eclectic.
- Expanded Park approach to entire downtown core.
- Vibrant heritage in town centre.
- Need public education on change.

- Be appropriate for next 100 years.
- Housing friendly.
- Take the best ideas of earlier plan – wide streets, architecture themes.

Big change, mindsets, utilization

- Closure of core on weekends
- Closure of core for events
- Look at by-laws w.r.t. to food trucks, alcohol in the park, buskers.

Sidewalks

- Pedestrian friendly.
- Uniform walking surface.
- Wider sidewalks.
- Reduced traffic lanes, more sidewalk width.
- Reduced parking, more promenade (sidewalks).
- Wider sidewalks (concrete), cafes on sidewalks, space for outdoor business.
- Safe outdoor places that do not obstruct pedestrians or traffic.

Accessibility

- Open to all people of all backgrounds and ability.
- Integrate accessibility.

Parking

- Look at interior and exterior parking.
- Maintain most parking.
- Keep existing parking.
- More off-street parking.

Vehicular traffic

Autos:

- Mixed traffic – vehicle, pedestrian, cycle.
- Reduced traffic lanes, more sidewalk.
- Two lanes for vehicle traffic.
- Narrower roads.
- Reduced parking, more promenade.
- Delineated driving lanes.

Bicycles:

- Bike friendly.
- More bikes- active transportation.
- Bicycle path.

Existing Interior Square Layout

- Revitalize Performance Stage.
- Can anything be done to get trees on the outside of the Square.
- Crossroads that make it easier too enter the Square, not leave it.
- Bury all cables that extend onto connecting streets.
- Upgrade performance stage for the safety of performers.

- Make entranceways to the park more exciting, interesting, visible.
 - Realign seating and trees to ensure proper sightlines for performances and to maximize operating space.
5. There was further discussion related to the above summary. Point form thoughts from the discussion are summarized below:
- Discussed what are important considerations:
 - o Active transportation/accessibility and safety for all
 - o Parking
 - o Success of Businesses
 - o Community events
 - o Tourism
 - o Future uses – it was noted that there used to be lots of gas stations in the area, convenience stores, more retail (hardware stores, etc.). Trending may see the 4 banks relocating elsewhere or closing their buildings in favour of on-line usage. EV charging requirements could increase.
 - o BIA to provide percentage of retail/business/banking etc. for information
 - Competing Priorities: Matt emphasized that there are a number of competing ideas that have to be considered. Ultimately there may need to be give and take to accommodate the overall strategy given the various constraints and it is likely that some sacrifices will need to be made.
 - Parking:
 - o Not ready to take away parking from front of stores – elderly demographic prefer store-front parking as to the business owners.
 - o Angled versus parallel parking provides more parking (i.e., 112 spots available around the outside and 56 spots available around the interior.
 - o Tom Fincher (audience) noted that at 11:00 am there were only 8 spots available around the Square.
 - Some initial comments from Business Owners:
 - o Covered patio
 - o Water access to wash off patios
 - o During construction – temporary relocation down to beach area
 - Construction
 - o Want to keep the area as vibrant as possible
 - o Temporary Relocation Discussed:
 - Farmers Market – Lions Harbour Park or a side street
 - Beach discussion/pavilion area
 - Possible store relocation to mall? Might be challenging for restaurants although the old Zellers plaza never removed their kitchen.
 - In all cases, considerations to availability of washrooms, short-term loss of downtown feel/appeal, parking, etc. will need to be part of the discussion.
 - o It was noted that construction will impact retail (Kincardine as an example). Communication/promotion/marketing will be important.
 - o Backdoor access is a positive – deliveries, people, customers, etc.

6. Mapping Exercise

Matt lead the Team in a mapping exercise to allow a flow of ideas. Three teams were formed and a number of ideas/concepts discussed. Highlights of some of the additional ideas are noted below:

- Revise shape of square to allow additional width along building frontage
 - o will provide width in front of building for expanded walkway, patios and landscaping features.
 - o may impact interior park area
 - o consider closing some of the connecting hub streets (for a short distance) and change to parking/landscape areas
 - o may be challenging from a historical perspective
- Generally agree that two lanes of traffic are important
- Consider opportunities for farmers market closer to main pedestrian pathway (to entice tourists into outer retail facilities).
- Consider improvements to remote parking areas (i.e., beside Knox church, across from Legion, behind Service Ontario, beside Library, behind Fincher's).
- Suggestion that County staff park off-site in one of the remote parking areas. This could then provide potential repurpose the parallel parking spots for a different purpose.

7. Hiring of Landscape Architect/Planner/Urban Designer:

- Confirmed that at the last meeting it was agreed that BMROSS would retain consultant.
- Three firms who are known to the Town and to BMROSS have been contacted - The Planning Partnership, Stempski Kelly and Ron Koudys.
- BMROSS to develop a package that can be provided to each that includes some history, master plan document, latest meeting notes, and other pertinent information. They will be asked to prepare for an interview to be scheduled for late August or early September.
- It was suggested that the proposed planning companies visit the Town during the Salt Festival being held from September 15th to the 17th to get a glimpse of what things can look like during a Square based event.

8. Next meeting:

- September – at the call of the chair.

Notes prepared by D. Erb



REBUILDING DOWNTOWN INFRASTRUCTURE
Task Force Meeting #2 - AGENDA
2023-08-08

23145

Location

Goderich Municipal Office – Menesetung Room
2:00 pm

Attendees

Myles Murdock	Janice Hallahan	Bruce Potter	Vickie Culbert - BIA
Trevor Bazinet	Sean Thomas	Dennis Elliott	Heather Boa - Chamber
Randy Carroll	Andrea Fisher	Matt Pearson	Christopher Spaleta - Citizen
		Dale Erb	

Brief Agenda Items

Action

- | | |
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| 1. Call to Order | All |
| 2. Meeting Protocol Items | All |
| 3. Approval of Agenda and Adoption of Minutes | All |
| 4. Brainstorming and Visioning | BMROSS |
| 5. Landscape Architect – Candidates and Interview Process | All |
| 6. Other Business | All |
| 7. Next Meeting | BMROSS |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set Date – Week of August 28th • LA interviews | |