



Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee

Minutes

AHSIC#01-24

Tuesday, March 5, 2024, 1:30 p.m.

225 East Beaver Creek Road

Richmond Hill, Ontario

An Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee meeting of the Council of the City of Richmond Hill was held on Tuesday, March 5, 2024 at 1:30 p.m. via videoconference.

Committee Member present in Council Chambers:

Mayor West (Chair)

Committee Members present via videoconference:

Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola (Vice-Chair)

Michael Clare

Gabe DiMartino

Cheryl Geness

Kathleen Mochnacki

Council Members also present in Council Chambers:

Councillor Davidson

Councillor Cilevitz

Council Members also in attendance via videoconference:

Councillor Thompson

Councillor Shiu

Staff Members present via videoconference:

D. Joslin, City Manager

S. Adams, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services

G. Galanis, Acting Commissioner of Planning and Building Services

P. Masaro, Commissioner of Infrastructure and Engineering Services

T. Steele, Commissioner of Community Services

M. Flores, Director, Policy Planning

P. Chow, Manager, Policy Planning
C. Chu, Senior Planner – Policy

Staff Members present in Council Chambers:

R. Ban, Deputy City Clerk
L. Sampogna, Council/Committee Coordinator
C. Connolly, Legislative Services Assistant

Sarah Cameron, Senior Planner, Policy and Data, York Region, was also in attendance via videoconference.

1. Call to Order

Mayor West, Chair of the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee, informed the Committee of the sudden passing of Committee Member Mr. Ally Esmail. He recognized the late A. Esmail's extensive accomplishments and the significant contributions he made to the community and the City, and on behalf of himself, Members of Council, and the Committee, expressed heartfelt condolences to the late A. Esmail's family, colleagues, and the community.

Chair West called the meeting to order at 1:36 p.m.

2. Adoption of Agenda

Moved by: C. Geness

That the agenda be adopted as distributed by the Clerk.

Carried

3. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest by members of the Committee under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

4. Adoption of Previous Minutes

**4.1 Minutes - Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee
AHSIC#03-23 held October 17, 2023**

Moved by: K. Mochnacki

That the minutes of the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee AHSIC#03-23 held October 17, 2023, be received.

Carried

5. Delegation(s)

There were no delegations.

6. Scheduled Business

Maria Flores, Director of Policy Planning, introduced Phoebe Chow, as the new Manager, Policy Planning, reviewed today's meeting agenda, and introduced Sarah Cameron, Senior Planner, Policy and Data, York Region, who would provide an update on the Region's Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan; and Chun Chu, Senior Planner, who would provide an update on Richmond Hill's initiatives.

6.1 York Region Update regarding Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan

Sarah Cameron, Senior Planner, Policy and Data, York Region, made a presentation to Committee regarding an update with respect to York Region's proposed Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan (AHIP). She reviewed the segments of the Region's 10-year housing and homelessness plan, the AHIP objective, and provided a comprehensive overview of the three-step process to develop the AHIP comprised of Step 1: key findings of the housing needs analysis; Step 2: potential approaches to address housing needs (financial, coordination/partnership and advocacy options); and Step 3: recommended solutions, which would be presented to Regional Council for consideration later in 2024. S. Cameron concluded the presentation by outlining next steps of the proposed AHIP, and displayed discussion questions for Committee feedback.

Members of Committee extended their appreciation for the presentation, noted that they were pleased with the proposed Plan, and acknowledged the work of the Region to coordinate the efforts of building affordable housing across municipalities in York Region. Questions were asked regarding the Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF) for incentivizing purpose-built rentals; if by-law and parking reforms would be reviewed to stimulate development; remarked on Canada's affordable housing crisis and proposed to collect innovative housing strategies from provinces; and supported increasing development with skinny homes, smaller residences, and multi-generational units in the City.

Committee expressed the support for purpose-built rentals in the City and commented on the cost of land in Richmond Hill. They inquired whether the Provincial and Federal government would consider allowing municipalities to use municipal lands or reserve funds to finance affordable housing at lower market costs, and suggested to advocate to the government to increase ownership affordability to relieve rental market pressure.

Committee members remarked on the number of development applications approved by the City, the uncertainty of when builders would commence construction, and the need for the Building Faster Fund (BFF). Committee inquired how other Regional municipalities were funding their initiatives; if York Region School Boards were contacted for potential affordable housing sites; if the Region engaged with not-for-profit organizations who specialize in purpose-built rentals; about the role of Housing York; and whether the Region considered having consistency across the region by delineating areas as southern and northern York Region to collaborate with the local municipalities with their housing strategies.

Moved by: K. Mochnacki

a) That the presentation by Sarah Cameron, Senior Planner, Planning, Policy and Data, York Region, regarding a York Region Update of the Affordable Private Market Housing Implementation Plan, be received.

Carried

6.2 Richmond Hill Update

Chun Chu, Senior Planner - Policy, made a presentation to Committee regarding an update to Richmond Hill's housing news and on City initiatives related to affordable housing. She provided contextual information and a status update to each of the City's initiatives, comprised of the four Centre-Specific Official Plan Amendments; Housing Accelerator Fund (HAF); Community Improvement Plan (CIP) for Affordable Housing and Sustainable Design; the peer review of Inclusionary Zoning (IZ) development and to the housing needs assessment in Richmond Hill. C. Chu provided details on the City's Affordable Housing Learning Forum being held in late April to early May 2024, outlined staff's recommendations for the presentation, and noted that the next meeting of Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee was scheduled on September 10th at 1:30 p.m.

Committee members commented on Provincial funding through the BFF; remarked on how attaining housing targets and aligning infrastructure was crucial to sustain development and support growth, and that advocating to the government for infrastructure funding was essential. A Committee member shared their involvement in setting new sustainability metrics for affordable housing under the CIP, and noted costs associated with sustainable development and meeting the target goals.

City staff responded to Committee questions and confirmed the viability of achieving the City's assigned housing target by 2031, clarified the BFF process, outlined targets and parameters, advised that a staff report addressing the feasibility of meeting the provincial housing targets and Bill 23 was being presented at the March 20th Committee of the Whole meeting, and highlighted that the City had voiced their concerns to the Province regarding the eligibility criteria.

Moved by: Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola

a) That the presentation by Chun Chu, Senior Planner - Policy, Planning and Building Services, regarding a Richmond Hill Update with respect to: Adoption of the four Centre-Specific Official Plan Amendments; Housing Accelerator Fund; Community Improvement Plan for Affordable Housing and Sustainable Design; Peer Review for Inclusionary Zoning and to the Housing Needs Assessment; and Affordable Housing Learning Forum, be received.

Carried

7. **Adjournment**

Moved by: C. Geness

That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m.

The next meeting of the Affordable Housing Strategy Implementation Committee will be held electronically on Tuesday, September 10, 2024 at 1:30 p.m.