



Minutes of Business and Economic Development Committee

March 23, 2021, 8:30 a.m.

**Chair and Secretary Participating Remotely
The Corporation of the Town of Orangeville**

Members Present: Councillor Joe Andrews
P. Renshaw, Vice Chair
D. Morris, Dufferin Board of Trade
L. Horne, Orangeville Real Estate Board, arrived at 8:43 a.m.
P. Cervený, Public Member
T. Brett, Orangeville BIA
W. Edwards, Public Member

Members Absent: B. Pitt, Greater Dufferin Home Builders' Association

Staff Present: R. Phillips, Manager, Economic Development & Culture
B. Lusk, Administrative Assistant
K. Lemire, Tourism and Culture Officer

1. Call to Order

Councillor Andrews called the meeting to order at 8:32 a.m.

He welcomed Troy Brett as the new BIA representative.

2. Disclosures of (Direct or Indirect) Pecuniary Interest

None.

3. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

3.1 2020-12-01 BEDAC Minutes

Recommendation:

Moved by W. Edwards

That the minutes of the following meeting are approved:

2020-12-01 BEDAC Minutes

Carried

4. Presentations

4.1 Ms. Ruth Phillips - Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2026)

R Phillips introduced Katrina Lemire as the new Tourism & Culture Officer and advised that K. Lemire had been involved with the Tourism Strategy in her role as the Co-ordinator of Business, Tourism & Culture. She said that approximately 70 detailed actions across four priority areas had been identified in the Plan, including the creation of K. Lemire's new position.

K. Lemire provided a summary of the Tourism Strategy and Action Plan (2021-2026) adopted by Council on January 11, 2021.

K. Lemire provided a background to the Strategy's development and advised of the tourism vision for the next five years. She identified the four strategic priority areas of the plan, including Administration and Operations, Branding and Marketing, Tourism Assets and Experience Development, and Infrastructure and Investments. K. Lemire then outlined key actions with each priority area to be undertaken in 2021 and advised that the upcoming 12-24 months would be utilized as an opportunity to develop the tools that will be used to enhance the Town's tourism appeal in the post-COVID period.

She advised that a Tourism Branding exercise to establish a brand identity for Orangeville would be a priority and that work was anticipated to begin soon.

K. Lemire said that Council had also approved funding for completion of a new Community Improvement Plan (CIP) and that an RFP for the project had been released in February. She said that the CIP would be a major project for completion in 2021 and that when implemented, would help to encourage private sector investment that can improve visitor appeal.

K. Lemire said that updates to existing way-finding signage, and tasks related to the potential re-development of 82-90 Broadway were also priority actions being fulfilled in 2021.

T. Brett asked if the new CIP would discourage professional businesses from filling vacant properties on Broadway in support of establishing more tourism focused shops and restaurants. R. Phillips said that input for such ideas could be presented as part of the stakeholder/public outreach. She added that having a balanced business mix supports the downtown businesses during the non-tourism months.

R. Phillips said that the office will continue to access government funding as relevant programs become available and that the Ministry of Tourism had indicated that funding for municipalities would be announced in the future. She said that the Economic Development and Culture office would investigate all opportunities to leverage funding that could further implementation of the Tourism Strategy recommendations.

4.2 Ms. Sarah Clarke - Owner, Dufferin Media (9 a.m.)

S. Clarke introduced her company and provided a background and overview of the services offered by Dufferin Media. She highlighted a new division of the company - Dufferin Media Cares, which supports their core value of giving.

S. Clarke said that Dufferin Media Cares offered digital marketing services to non-profit organizations at favourable rates, while also providing education and networking opportunities for non-profit staff. She indicated that by helping non-profit groups to deliver improved social media outreach and build increased awareness in the community, these organizations may in turn, gain access to greater funding opportunities.

S. Clarke said that on June 30, 2021 all public, private, and nonprofit organizations with 50+ employees must make their public facing websites compliant with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines as per the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act. She said that organizations

with non-compliant websites could face fines, and/or be denied access to funding programs.

S. Clarke said that web accessibility includes websites, emails, social media, pdfs, etc. S. Clarke demonstrated how an accessibility evaluation tool called WAVE can magnify non-compliant website content.

R. Phillips said that Dufferin Media was helping many local business owners with digitalization support through the Virtual Advisor Program offered by the SBEC office.

5. Items for Discussion and Reports

5.1 Virtual Symposium - Councillor Andrews

Councillor Andrews said that one of the deliverables in the BEDAC work plan for 2021 was a virtual symposium and that preliminary investigation for a keynote speaker for a fall event had been completed. Councillor Andrews said that the recommendation of keynote speaker - Lindsay Angelo, had been made based on her capacity to deliver a timely, pandemic related address – Post Pandemic Consumerism – five key trends in consumerism in 2021.

T. Brett requested that the virtual symposium be recorded to allow business owners to view it later if they were unavailable to participate during the presentation time. R. Phillips advised that staff would review capacities to ensure this while also respecting copyright regulations.

5.2 Member Updates

L. Horne said that the real estate sector continued to be extremely active. She said that there were currently 50 properties for sale in the Town of Orangeville making it a sellers' market. L. Horne said that 17 homes had been sold in the previous seven days and that 164 homes had sold to date since January 1, 2021. She said that properties ranged from a bachelor condo on First Street for \$199,000 to an investment property on Broadway for \$1,650,000.

L. Horne said that there are more inquiries than availability for commercial and industrial properties as well. She said that multiple offers for leasing were not uncommon in the current market.

W. Edwards said that realtors were doing more extensive work with fewer successes and were dealing with multiple offers on behalf of buyers. She said that buyers with unconditional offers were making competition very difficult for first-time buyers.

T. Brett provided an update on BIA activities. He said that a high priority for the last year has been the provision of COVID response support to OBIA members.

T. Brett said that the “Better Together Task Force” had installed a selfie mural at 3 Little York Street and that there were plans for two additional murals to be installed on Broadway. He said that another recommendation from the Roger Brooks Destination Assessment included an “Open Sunday” campaign with musicians and boulevard activities on Broadway but that COVID had delayed some of this planning. He said that the BIA would re-visit and realign events and promotions to fit with changing COVID restrictions.

T. Brett said that the Farmers’ Market had continued throughout the winter months with COVID protocols in place and that the outdoor Farmers’ Market was scheduled to start May 8th and run until October 23rd.

R. Koekkoek said that Orangeville Hydro had exhausted the COVID energy assistance funding provided by the Ontario Energy Board. He said that their office would be checking with other utilities for any surplus funds, and if available, would extend further assistance to the local community.

6. Correspondence

None.

7. New Business

None.

8. Date of Next Meeting

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 10:04 a.m.