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# Township explores development phasing strategy

Strategy could impact how future development proceeds across entire municipality

MIRANDA GATHERCOLE / Nov. 28, 2017 11:50 a.m. / LOCAL NEWS / NEWS

The future of development in the Township could be shaped by a new phasing strategy.

On Nov. 27, council approved 8-1 a motion from Coun. Michelle Sparrow to have staff create a report and presentation on what a Township-wide development phasing strategy could look like.

The topic of phasing — which refers to the order in which development occurs — has been brought up many times in discussions about the new Brookswood-Fernridge Community Plan. Some argue that building sequentially will help prevent the chaos that occurred in Willoughby, while others say it will only cause artificial inflation of land values.

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Sparrow said she brought forward the motion as a way to begin the conversation. She noted that other municipalities are successfully using development phasing strategies, meaning the Township would not have to “reinvent the wheel.”

Originally, her motion asked that the strategy focus on phasing in Brookswood-Fernridge, where staff are currently building neighbourhood plans for three out of the four new communities. However, that was amended by a 5-4 vote to instead encompass the entire Township.

Coun. Blair Whitmarsh, who made the amendment, said having a report on phasing would be helpful, but starting that new strategy in Brookswood-Fernridge would be “premature.”

Coun. Angie Quaale agreed, adding that this could be an opportunity to talk about all of the neighbourhood plans underway in the Township, not just in one area.

Coun. Bob Long said council should take the conversation one step further and have staff create a presentation about both phasing, and how communities are developed as a whole.

Coun. Charlie Fox noted Willoughby's Smith and Williams neighbourhoods are "way ahead" of Brookwood-Fernridge, and that it made more sense to look at phasing in an area where development is closer to reality.

However, Sparrow said that is the very reason she does not want to start in Willoughby. She said it is "too ambitious" to add phasing in at the last minute, and that it should be done at the beginning of the neighbourhood planning process in Brookwood-Fernridge.

Coun. Petrina Arnason agreed with Sparrow, adding that there is a big rush to do it now in Brookwood-Fernridge as there is a stream of applications going through that are not connected to any neighbourhood plans.

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Coun. Kim Richter cast the lone vote against the motion, stating she could not support the amended version as it took the focus away from Brookwood-Fernridge.

She also attempted to address the issue of phasing earlier in the meeting by bringing forward a motion to reconsider council's decision to create three neighbourhood plans at the same time in Brookwood-Fernridge. That motion failed by a 7-2 vote.

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