



Ward Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 14, 2024, 7:00 p.m.
S.H. Blake Memorial Auditorium

1. Neebing Ward Meeting 01-2024

Chair: Councillor Greg Johnsen

2. Resource Persons

Mike Vogrig, Project Engineer
Aaron Ward, Project Manager
Flo-Ann Track, Council & Committee Clerk

3. Guests

Senior Project Manager Kevin Saunders, Ministry of Transportation
Chief Executive Officer Steve Taylor, BT Engineering

There were approximately 14 people in attendance.

4. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed Administration and those in attendance, and provided introductory comments.

5. Land Acknowledgement

The Chair acknowledged that the Committee was meeting on the traditional territory of the Ojibwa Anishnaabe people of Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850, and also recognized the historic contributions made to the community by the Métis people. On behalf of the City of Thunder Bay, acknowledged the history that many nations hold, and the

commitment to a relationship with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples based on the principles of mutual trust, respect, reciprocity, and collaboration in the spirit of reconciliation.

6. Minutes of Previous Meeting

Minutes of the Neebing Ward meeting held on October 12, 2023, for information.

7. Ontario Ministry of Transportation Project Updates

7.1 Highway 61 Planning and Preliminary Design Study Arthur Street and Loch Lomond Road - Update

Chief Executive Officer - BT Engineering Steve Taylor and Senior Project Manager - Ministry of Transportation Kevin Saunders appeared via MS Teams, provided a PowerPoint Presentation, and responded to questions relative to the above noted.

The following information was provided:

- Project is located on Highway 61 between Arthur Street and Loch Lomond Road.
- The Study is very large and will occur over several decades.
 - Project started in 2017 with 3 community engagement events:
 - Community Cafe
 - Fort William First Nations
 - Value Planning Workshop
 - Project paused in 2018.
 - Project Initiation October 2021.
 - Public Information Centre PIC No. 1 was held in October 2021.
 - Council was provided with information and alternatives before any decisions were made.
 - Analysis and Evaluation completed Fall 2022.
 - Public Information Centre PIC No. 2 was held on October 5, 2023, comments were accepted until November 4, 2023.

- Technical Evaluation of Preferences - in-person presentation, 42 people attended, 17 comment sheets were received.
- Public Information Centre PIC No. 2, Fort William First Nations was held on November 6, 2023, questions and comments were accepted until November 17, 2024, in-person, 7 people attended.
- Study Recommendations break the Project Area into 2 sections:
 - Part A: Chippewa Road to 0.5 km south of Arthur Street.
 - Part B: 0.5 km south of Loch Lomond Road to Chippewa Road.
- Community engagement sessions identified opportunities.
 - recommendations were brought forward in the presentation of Technical Recommendations provided to Council in Fall 2023.
- Public Information Centre PIC No. 3, to be held later in 2024, will identify refinements to the final plan.

Discussion was held relative to the above noted.

The Chair noted this meeting is being recorded, and the video will be available on the City of Thunder Bay's Agenda's and Minutes web page for anyone wishing to review the presentation.

A Resident asked when construction will start?

Senior Project Manager - Ministry of Transportation Kevin Saunders provided that it will be several years before construction begins, estimating that it will be more than 10 years.

The Chair asked what part of the project will be completed first?

Steve Taylor provided the following information:

- A few projects have been identified for the short term, including:
 - Chippewa Road – Intersection at Highway 61.
 - Bridge projects.

The Chair noted that residents have expressed concern that the Broadway Avenue access will be eliminated at Highway 61.

Steve Taylor provided the following information:

- The implementation of an interchange at Broadway Avenue would cost approximately \$40 Million, and a distance of approximately 3 kilometres between interchanges is recommended.
- The design plan includes an overpass over Highway 61 to Neebing Avenue, where access to either of the interchanges to the North or to the South are available.

Kevin Saunders provided the following information:

- several constraints at Broadway Avenue also prevent an interchange at this location:
 - there are Cemetery's located at both the Southwest and Northwest corners of the intersection.
 - Thunder Bay Pulp and Paper is located on both the Southeast and Northeast corners of the intersection.

The next Public Information Centre meeting date has not been determined at this time, should residents have further questions relating to this project, please email Kevin Saunders, Kevin.Saunders@ontario.ca, or Steve Taylor, steven.taylor@bteng.ca.

The Chair thanked Steve Taylor and Kevin Saunders for the presentation.

7.2 Storm Sewer Work - Confederation Drive - Update

The Chair provided an overview relative to the above noted.

Senior Project Manager - Ministry of Transportation Kevin Saunders appeared via MS Teams provided a PowerPoint Presentation and responded to questions relative to the above noted.

Kevin Saunders provided the following information:

- The project started Fall 2023.
- Existing infrastructure will remain in use until new infrastructure is placed.
- the project was paused when unknown infrastructure was discovered.
- a new design is being developed.

- once the new plan is approved, the contractors will continue with the work as weather permits.

The Chair asked if a berm will be established to help mitigate noise?

Kevin Saunders provided the following information:

- ground material will not be removed from the site, instead it will be used to create a berm where future trees will be planted.

The Chair thanked Kevin Saunders for providing the presentation.

8. 2024 Infrastructure Updates

The Chair provided an overview relative to the above noted.

Project Engineer Mike Vogrig provided an overview relative to the above noted.

The following Neebing Ward Infrastructure Projects are scheduled during the 2024 construction season:

- Pavement Rehabilitation:
 - Asphalt resurfacing - Freeman Drive from Almira Avenue to Perozak Street.
 - City Road at the James Street intersection.
 - Asphalt resurfacing - Arthur Street from Fairview Avenue west to the city limits.
- Railway Crossing Reconstruction - Fairview Avenue
 - Watermain Cement Mortar Relining - Area bounded by Arthur Street, Terminal Street, Morgan Avenue and Ottawa Street. Watermains will be flushed and re-lined to return back to service capacity.
- New lanes and turning lanes:
 - Building up shoulders, adding lanes and turning lanes to improve traffic flow in front of Bannon's Gas Bar - Intersection of James Street and City Road.

The Chair shared the following question received via email from a Resident:

I reside on a road (Caspian Street) that has needed significant repair since I moved here in 2001 (sewer grates significantly above road level, poor water drainage, crumbling road and curbs, etc). Each year we are

told it is in future city plans, it has now been 23 years of waiting. When will this road be addressed;

And, in light of the increased development and road use in the area, when will the main roads to the area (15th side road, Mountain road) be addressed for improvements to meet the need of the increased traffic and pedestrian flow?

The Chair provided the following information:

- Street repair is discussed during budget deliberations each year.
- Caspian Road is in terrible condition, and other roads in the City are in terrible condition:
 - a significant amount of the street repair budget would be needed to cover the repairs at this location, and other locations would also require the same.
 - the City's 3-year plan doesn't include Caspian Road at this time, and not aware when this will be scheduled for repair.

Mike Vogrig provided the following information:

- many factors are considered when determining project priorities:
 - budget.
 - traffic volume.
 - condition of the road.
 - budget required.
 - expected service life after rehabilitation/reconstruction.
- the goal is to spend money where it will benefit the most people and last the longest.
 - arterial and collector roads are a higher priority based on the above noted criteria.
- In areas where base failures are a factor, it is addressed within the budget where possible.
 - Caspian Road is one of the locations requiring substantial work and money, it is part of the road review.
 - there is a backlog of similar projects across the City.

- Hinton Avenue off of River Street, having similar issues as Caspian, have been addressed when able.
- priority is also given to areas where other infrastructure work is required, Hinton off River is an example.

The Chair shared the following question received via email from a Resident:

When will the Street lighting on Parkdale Boulevard from Porcupine to Muskrat be installed?

Project Manager Aaron Ward provided the following information:

- This section of the development has not been turned over to the City by the Contractor, it is still in the control of the contractor.

A Resident asked the following question:

Where is Lacewood in the City's 3-year maintenance/renewal plan?

Mike Vogrig provided the following information:

- Administration will review and follow up with Councillor Johnson.

9. West Arthur Secondary Plan Update

The Chair provided an overview relative to the above noted.

Project Engineer Aaron Ward provided a PowerPoint presentation relative to the above noted and responded to questions.

Aaron Ward provided an overview of the progress of the above noted development to date, projected timelines, and the following information:

- A Secondary Plan is a detailed plan prepared at a neighbourhood or community scale to guide growth and development within a specific area.
- West Arthur Secondary Plan was previously referred to as the Parkdale Secondary Plan.
 - re-branded to clarify the study area.
- 4-Stage approach, each having deliverables related specifically to the requirements of each stage:
 - Background Assessment Report.
 - Analysis of Alternatives.

- Creation of preferred land use and road plan.
- Creation of the Secondary Plan and financial strategy.
- The study area is large, almost 3000 acres.
 - is consistent with Provincial Policy, and the Northern Growth Plan for Ontario:
 - achieve density targets, promote mixed uses, protects natural heritage features (wetlands, Williams Bog).
 - must comply with the Planning Act and the Environmental Assessment Act.
- Stage 1 - Background Assessment Report - Completed and available to view on the City's Get Involved web page.
 - feedback was provided by the residents in the area.
 - likes, dislikes, desired improvements helped to advise visioning statements and future concepts.
 - information relating to Williams Bog.
- Stage 2 - Preliminary Alternative Options - In progress.
 - Environmental Impact Study (Natural Heritage Study) - Completed Fall 2023.
 - required permission from landowners.
 - determined species and vegetation requiring protection.
 - 615 hectares of Provincially significant Wetlands.
 - 76% of the Study Area is designated Natural Heritage System.
 - Phase 1 - Archeological Assessment – Completed
 - Thunder Bay area has been inhabited since 7000 B.C.
 - 10 known archeological sites within 1 km of the Study Area.
 - 1 known site within the Study Area.
 - identified areas that will require a Phase 2 Archeological Assessment.
 - Community Engagement - Completed 2023 - results can be found on the City's Get Involved web page.

- Key Stakeholder Consultation of first layout options - In progress.
 - EA Problem & Opportunity Statement - In progress.
- Preferred Options - next steps:
 - technical and service reviews.
 - detailed traffic study.
 - public consultation - Summer 2024.
- Secondary Plan & Financial Strategy – future.

A Resident asked the following question:

Does the plan align with the City's priority to increase density in areas where services are currently available?

Aaron Ward provided the following information:

- The City's Official Plan drive's the Study and has identified the area for urban development.
- There is infrastructure in place, but the plan has to be financially feasible, and this work is being completed as part of the study.

A Resident asked the following question:

Regarding emergency access, Parkdale to Highway 61 Route, is there another access route coming in the future?

Aaron Ward provided the following information:

- level of traffic service at the intersection of Arthur Street and Parkdale Boulevard is operating within Service Standards.
- an advanced left signal was added and is working well.
- access to Highway 61 is not being driven from a level of service perspective.
- initial consultation determined that Ministry of Transportation requires support through a Municipal Class Environmental Assessment to grant access via Highway 61, as a controlled access corridor.
 - if approved it would be presented to Council during budget for consideration.

The Chair asked what is the timeline for development to begin west of Parkdale?

Aaron Ward provided the following information:

- The Study should conclude not later than the beginning of next year.
- if the results indicate that future development, west of Parkdale, is financially feasible, the timeline would be driven by future developer(s).

10. Ward and City Issues

10.1 Subdivision Development Updates

The Chair requested a progress update on the following developments: Parkdale Stage 7 Plan, Mount Forest Stage 6 Plans.

Project Manager Aaron Ward provided the following information:

Parkdale Stage 7 Development:

- named Bruin Crescent.
- located at the Northeast corner of Wyler Boulevard, off of Cougar Crescent.
- 55-60 new lots - single and semi-detached development.
- all underground services have been completed.
- 1 house is complete.
- lots are ready for development.

Mount Forest Area:

- named Rock Cliff Drive.
- located east of Mount Forest Boulevard.
- 25 lots - single detached development.
- 1 - 2 houses in development.
- lots are ready for development.

A Resident asked for updates relating to the following developments: 20th Side Road, next to the railroad tracks; a new development, having recently

been cleared; and a property located on the opposite side of the railroad tracks.

Aaron Ward provided the following information:

Property located at the northwest corner of the railroad tracks, south of Nova Drive, off of Lacewood Drive:

- Draft Plan Approval, approved by Council in 2018.
- approximately 25 lots.
- to date, not all conditions to the application have been met.
- to date, no construction, only site preparation.

Property located on 20th Side Road on the southeast corner of the railroad tracks:

- no Planning Act application has been received to date.
- when a Draft Plan of Subdivision application is submitted, it is a requirement of the application that Government Agencies, for example the 3 School Boards, are notified of the application.

A Resident asked for an update relating to repairs being completed in the White Gates area?

Project Engineer Mike Vogrig provide the following information:

- due to the age of the infrastructure, some watermains are being replaced.
- preventative maintenance is also taking place in this area.
- Administration determines priority replacement/maintenance of infrastructure based on the expected service life and regular review of service and reporting logs.

A Resident asked if there is an opportunity to use the development in the Lacewood area as an opportunity for a refurbishment of, examples: the surface of the road, ditches, shoulders; and

Will development in an area play a roll in advancing the priority of these types of maintenance?

Aaron Ward provided the following information:

- It is not a City of Thunder Bay Development; it is a private contractor.
- The City of Thunder Bay's Budget, which can be found on the website, identifies where money has been budgeted to complete work.

10.2 Neebing Bus Route - Saturday Service - Cancelled

The Chair provided an update relative to the above noted:

- after several attempts to preserve the Neebing Bus Service - Route 4, Saturday service will no longer be provided.
- last day for service on Saturday's will be May 18, 2024
- public service announcements are being shared to inform users, via social media, the website, Transit App and the Media.

10.3 Recreation Trails

The Chair shared the following question received via email prior to the meeting:

Greg, you ran on an issue of increasing recreation trails and walking areas which many of us agree with...in light of all the development in the area and the loss of the unofficial trails that we have had in this area for the past few decades, what are you doing to address the loss of these trails and to increase / create new recreational opportunities for South Neebing?...Community Safety is a priority to residents - with the increase in development in the South Neebing area what community safety infrastructure will be occurring to address the increased needs in the area (ie policing, fire, ambulance services and visibility)?

The Chair provided the following information:

- Currently in communication with South Neebing Community Centre administration with respect to the land north of the Community Centre, and land south of the Community Centre.
 - the land north of the South Neebing Community Centre is of interest to the Blacksheep Mountain Bike Club, wishing to develop trails in this area.

- the land south of the South Neebing Community Centre, awaiting follow up information to be provided.
- Scheduled to meet with the West Arthur Community Centre in the coming weeks.
- There is an opportunity to extend the trail to various streets in the area of North Neebing Park.
- \$85,000 has been allocated in budget for new trail development.

10.4 Quarterly Update

The Chair provided the following information:

- quarterly Neebing Ward updates will be provided via email.
- if you would like to receive updates or have any questions, please contact:
 - email: greg.johnsen@thunderbay.ca
 - or by phone: 807-707-9973
- the next Neebing Ward meeting will be scheduled in late June 2024 or early July 2024.

11. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:34 pm.