

COMMUNICATION 131070

Received From Joanna Bowes, Manager of Development Services
Addressed To Committee of the Whole
Date May 26, 2020
Topic Proposed Changes to the Fee By-law 120-2019 For Consultations

SUMMARY

As seen in the January -April 2020 pre-consultation and application figures presented at the May 12, 2020 meeting, growth and development continues to increase for the Town of Carleton Place. These numbers presented do not accurately reflect work being completed by the current two (2) person department. We have assigned one (1) pre-consultation per address when in fact, in many cases there are more often than not, 2-3 pre-consultation meetings (often for clarifications of sections of the by-law, or small to large modifications of the original plan presented). All these meetings are reflected as one (1) pre-consultation in the chart.

COMMENTS

The Planning Department has a fee for any additional **pre-consultation** meetings (in person, by email or phone) after the first two (2) meetings. The fee is set at \$50/hour to offset administrative costs. Often, this charge has not been used in an effort to provide the public and developers with access to information because the Planning Department is a public service. Unfortunately, it has been noted that in many cases Staff is repeating information or being brought into debates as to how the developer should move forward. This compromises Staff because they should not be the planner on the file they are approving.

Substantial time is also spent once the Planning Department receives an application and circulates it for two (2) rounds of comments. Again, in some cases the file goes smoothly, and no substantial effort is required by the Planning Department. Other times, there are back and forth consultations between Staff and the developer on the comments themselves, questions regarding how comments can be dealt with, multiple reviews of drawings to name a few. There is no fee in place for excess time spent during the **application circulation** period. Some complex files that come to mind include McArthur Island Development, Subdivisions, and some smaller more politically contentious files.

Lastly, in rare cases, there is significant disagreement over what clauses should be included in a development permit agreement, or ultimately the approval of "final" drawings. The Planning Department can spend significant time sorting through the details at the **drafting of the agreement** stage. There is also no fee associated with this stage in the process.

Staff recommends a revision to the wording of the Fee By-law to be changed from “Additional pre-consultation meetings (additional meetings after the second in person, email, or phone meetings), \$50.00 per hour, min ½ hour fee, recovery of administrative costs” to

“Additional consultation meetings (in person, by phone or email) fee schedule as follows at a cost of \$50.00/per hour, min ½ hour fee for recovery of costs.

*Pre-consult Stage: two (2) pre-consult; charges begin after second pre-consult
Application/Circulation Stage: four (4) consultations; charges begin after fourth consult
Drafting of Agreement Stage: two (2) consultations; charges begin after second consult”*

The Planning Department has reviewed files that have gone smoothly and believe that the above number of Planning Department consultations that are required even for a reasonably complex file. It should be noted that the hope is that this will ensure that the developers are driven to use their own experts’ knowledge rather than rely too heavily on Staff.

It should also be noted that the City of Ottawa charges \$637.00 for the first pre-consultation on any development project. This pre-consultation does provide significantly more detail than the Carleton Place Planning Department can provide given time constraints and includes information from Conservation Authorities, Engineering Department and others. While we do our best to hold pre-consultation meetings with the Engineering Department to ensure the applicant has all the information required, a detailed report is not provided due to the time and effort this would require with minimal staff. In addition, this level of detail is provided during the first and second round of circulation prior to the application being deemed complete.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

THAT By-law 120-2019 be amended to include provisions for consultations at various stages of the Development Permit Application process as follows:

“Additional consultation meetings (in person, by phone or email) as follows at a cost of \$50.00/per hour, min ½ hour fee for recovery of costs:

*Pre-consult Stage: two (2) pre-consults; charges begin after second pre-consult
Application/Circulation Stage: four (4) consultations; charges begin after fourth consult
Drafting of Agreement Stage: two (2) consultations; charges begin after second consult”*