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Windsor, Ontario December 9, 2009

A meeting of the **Small Business Advisory Panel** is held this day commencing at 3:00 o'clock p.m. in the Town of Walkerville Meeting Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, City Hall, there being present the following members:

Dr. Alfie Morgan, Chair  
Councillor Alan Halberstadt  
Don Larkin  
Norm Marcoux  
Charlie Regan (arrives at 3:27 p.m.)  
Vicky Smith  
Jim Williams

**Guests in attendance:**

Chris Edwards, Executive Director, Downtown Windsor BIA (DWBIA)  
Michael Jagatic, TD Price Waterhouse  
Mark Boscariol, owner of several local restaurants

**Regrets received from:**

John Millson

**Also present are the following resource personnel:**

Diane Bertolin, License Commissioner  
Lee Anne Doyle, Executive Director/Chief Building Official  
Michael Chantler, Manager of Business Administration, Licensing & Enforcement  
Rose MacLachlan, Business Improvement Area Development Officer  
Thom Hunt, City Planner  
Karen Kadour, Committee Coordinator

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Chair calls the meeting to order at 3:04 o'clock p.m. and the Panel considers the Agenda being Schedule "A" **attached** hereto, matters which are dealt with as follows:

**2. MINUTES**

Moved by D. Larkin, seconded by N. Marcoux,  
That the minutes of the meeting held November 18, 2009 **BE ADOPTED** as presented.

Carried.

3. **DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT**

None.

4. **PRESENTATIONS**

4.1 **Chris Edwards, DWBIA**

Chris Edwards, Executive Director, DWBIA provides an overview relating to the challenges the downtown core has faced and the future direction. The salient points of the discussion are as follows:

- In recent years concentration in the downtown core has focused on cleanliness and safety issues
- Storefront vacancies have greatly increased
- Weak U.S. dollar and the requirement for a passport resulting in less visitors
- Department stores such as Kresge's and Woolworth's disappeared with the advent of malls

C. Edwards refers to the following four key pillars:

1. **Labour Market**

Extremely high unemployment rate in the City of Windsor. By the year 2020, 65% of the labour force will be retired.

2. **Commercial and Residential Real Estate**

By focusing on the commercial and residential real estate component, can attract investment to the downtown core.

3. **Targeted Incentive Program**

The best practice model is the City of London., They created Main Street London to allow eligibility for non-profit funding via endowments or Trillium grants to bring businesses to the core.

4. **Business Incubator**

The "business incubator" is a tool to assist small business owners to fulfill an idea or to assist those who are floundering.

In response to a question asked by Councillor Halberstadt regarding how to encourage incentives, T. Hunt indicates this can be accomplished through the establishment of a Community Improvement Plan.

Councillor Halberstadt advises that the Panel fully supports the efforts of the DWBIA.

Moved by D. Larkin, seconded by N. Marcoux,

That Chris Edwards, Mark Boscarior and Michael Jagatic **BE INVITED** to attend the Small Business Advisory Panel meeting to be held on January 20, 2010 to present a plan relating to the incentive program including the development incentives for the downtown core.

Carried.

#### **4.2 Mark Boscarior**

The presentation by Mark Boscarior is distributed and *attached* as Appendix “A”. He states that the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) at its meeting held on December 3, 2009 reviewed the updated Land Needs Analysis Report and the Commercial Land Use Policy. He notes that several developers were present at the meeting and they stated that “preventing them to build more big box plazas on greenfield sites is an anti-business measure.” He indicates that the Walker/Provincial Road big box stores are “pedestrian unfriendly developments.”

T. Hunt states that there are designated sites in the Official Plan for commercial businesses to locate. He advises that rezoning of a property is allowable provided the land is designated.. He states that the recommendation that went to PAC was to receive the Study and Council will also be asked to receive the Study.

T. Hunt indicates that there has been moderate commercial development due to the lack of job growth and population growth.

The Chair states that the ideal situation is a synergistic co-existence between big box developments and small business.

The Chair thanks Chris Edwards and Mark Boscarior for their presentations. He adds that it is important to hear “real life” stories relating to small business owners.

### **5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

#### **5.1 Small Business Advisory Panel Subcommittee Report**

Councillor Halberstadt reports that a meeting of the Subcommittee was recently held to draft the following three reports for City Council:

1. Report regarding incentives (including other cities best practices)
2. Report regarding tax arrears
3. Report regarding tax reduction

Councillor Halberstadt states that the taxes in the City of Windsor are very high as compared to Lakeshore, Lasalle and Amherstburg.

J. Williams refers to a local industrial plant originally listed for sale at \$1.2 million with an annual tax rate of \$81,292.00. He states that the plant is currently listed at \$575,000.00 but the taxes remain at \$81,292.00. He reports that a client is interested in purchasing the property; however, the taxes are exorbitantly high. He distributes a document entitled "Properties Currently For Sale – Windsor and Surrounding Areas", ***attached*** as Appendix "B". He indicates that taxes are 20 – 30% higher in Windsor than in the County.

J. Williams asks if a recommendation can be brought to Council to request that commercial and industrial properties be assessed every year rather than every four years. Councillor Halberstadt states that in speaking with a representative from the Municipal Properties Assessment Corporation (MPAC) a submission can be made to the Minister of Finance to shorten the cycle of assessment for Windsor.

Moved by Councillor Halberstadt, seconded by J. Williams,  
That the Minister of Finance **BE PETITIONED** to consider the City of Windsor cycle of reassessment for commercial and small industrial properties **BE ADVANCED** by two years effective January 1, 2012 to be pegged at January 1, 2010.  
Carried.

**Clerk's Note:** An explanatory report from the Subcommittee Panel will accompany the foregoing Committee report.

## 6. **NEW BUSINESS**

L. Doyle refers to Item 6.3 which reads as follows:

"Review the processes by the Building Department regarding time frames and different interpretations by administration which result in placing unreasonable demands and confusion for small business owners."

L. Doyle asks if the foregoing pertains solely to the Building Department processes and she asks that case studies be provided.

The Chair directs that an e-mail be sent to James Marsh to request that he respond to L. Doyle.

D. Bertolin refers to Item 6.5 which reads as follows:

"Health By-laws for Restaurants"

D. Bertolin asks if there is something specific that should be addressed by Licensing and Enforcement.

The Chair directs that an e-mail be sent to James Marsh to request that he respond to D. Bertolin.

7. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, January 20, 2010 at 3:00 o'clock p.m. in Room 407, 400 City Hall Square East.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting is adjourned at 4:50 o'clock p.m.

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CHAIR

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COMMITTEE COORDINATOR