



Southwold Economic Development Committee

Agenda

Thursday, July 25th, 2024 at 8:00 am
Township Council Chambers – Municipal Office Fingal

1. Call to Order
2. Approval of the Agenda
3. Approval of the June 20th, 2024 Minutes
4. Development and Infrastructure Updates
5. Elgin County Updates
6. Southwold Business Networking Event Planning
7. Review of Implementation Plan – Priorities to Work On
8. New and Other Business:
9. Next meeting date, time and location
10. Adjourn



Southwold Economic Development Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday June 20th, 2024 at 8:00 a.m.
Council Chambers/Webex Meeting

Voting Members

Present: Deputy Mayor Pennings
Councillor John Adzija
Steve Bushell
Barry Harrison
Michelle Hoffsuemmer

Regrets: Grayden Laing

Guest: Henry Dryfhout, Chair, Dutton Dunwich EDC

Staff/Resource: Lisa Higgs, CAO/Clerk
Aaron Van Oorspronk, Director of Infrastructure and Development
Christie Kent, Planner
Tanya Wilson, Elgin Business Resource Centre
Carolyn Krahn, Manager of Economic Development and Strategic Initiatives

1. Call to Order

Deputy Mayor Pennings called the meeting to order at 8:00 am.

2. Approval of Agenda

The Committee approved the agenda for the June 20th meeting.

3. Approval of the May 9th Minutes

The Committee approved the minutes as drafted from the February May 9th, 2024

meeting.

4. Development and Infrastructure Updates

a. Shedden and Fingal Wastewater Servicing Updates

Director VanOorspronk provided a report on the Shedden and Fingal Water and Wastewater service update, indicating that design work is underway and construction and access to wastewater servicing is anticipated in fall of 2025.

b. Talbotville EA Addendum Completion & Next Steps

Director VanOorspronk indicated that the first EA addendum is wrapping up and a subsequent EA to ensure an assimilative capacity study is completed to expand plant capacity to accommodate industrial growth is planned.

c. Planning Department Personnel

Christie Kent, the new Township planner was introduced to the committee.

5. Elgin County Updates

a. BR & E Status Update

Manager Krahn reported that 92 businesses were interviewed during the process with a wide range of industries being represented.

Some of the key themes that have come out these interviews are:

- Community development resources
- Business climate is positive in Elgin
- Challenges with development and building permit processes – simple guide with development approvals processes requested
- Work force – there were challenges noted in attracting and recruiting staff in the work force, especially noted in the manufacturing industry.
- Business resources; it was noted that many organizations welcomed the opportunity to network in the

Manager Krahn reported that the full report will be available shortly and will be circulated to the Committee once it is complete.

b. Elgin County Tourism Signage Program Update:

Manager Krahn provided an update on the Elgin County Tourism sign program and spoke to the various options that were available. A suggestion for a mapping app should be added to the department and incorporating digital wayfinding was discussed by the committee.

c. Investment Attraction Package

Manager Krahn reviewed the Investment Attraction Package with the committee.

6. Southwold Business Networking Event Planning

Steve Bushell offered his property as a venue for the Networking event for Southwold and suggested that a Tuesday or Wednesday is the best option for his business.

Carolyn Krahn recommended that the events that she has typically attended include social discussions, entertainment, facilitated discussions, and a draw to bring the community together. It is really up to the Committee as to what is featured in the event.

Staff were tasked with bringing a report back to the committee to discuss a possible event that featured information on:

- Elgincincentives program, Elgin County programs available to new businesses; review of the Elgincincentives program
- Southwold staff members to attend to answer questions
- Resources – new tourism signs being launched
- Programs in the municipality, needs to be something new – there needs to be a draw to bring people out to the event
- Purpose to bring people to the event; have a purpose, have a prize, have a draw to the event. Proposed suggestions of the committee included information on cybersecurity, digital marketing, land severances and farm succession planning.

Elgin County indicated that they would assist with this event.

7. Items for Sale Strategy

The sale of the first 4 signs was a success. Another sign will be auctioned off at the Canada Day Celebration.

8. Southwold's 175th Anniversary Planning – 2025

The Southwold 175 Planning Committee has been appointed and will hold its inaugural meeting on July 5th, 2024.

9. New and Other Business

Barry Harrison asked questions about availability of Hydro Capacity in the Talbotville industrial lands and whether rumours about hydro availability in Talbotville are being met. There was also a discussion on the general servicing in the area, of which Director VanOorspronk noted that there was significant progress in the discussions.

10. Next Meeting date, time and location

The next meeting was scheduled for June 20th 2024 at 8 am.

11. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:57 am.

Chairperson, Justin Pennings

Staff Resource, Lisa Higgs



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

Report to Economic Development Committee

MEETING DATE: July 25, 2024

PREPARED BY: Lisa Higgs, CAO/Clerk

REPORT NO: CAO EDC 2024-02

SUBJECT MATTER: Economic Development Committee – Rural Business Networking Event

Recommendation(s):

That the Committee receive this report as information and provide feedback on the proposed agenda and format for an EDC sponsored rural business networking event.

Purpose:

This report provides an update to the Committee on plans for a Rural Business Networking Event.

Background:

Included in the 2020 Southwold Township Community Economic Development Plan, the Implementation Plan included “Establish a committee to host a special event” and “Host small business networking events”.

During the 2024 Elgin County-Led Business Retention and Expansion program, many rural Southwold businesses cited a desire to have a “business after five” type event that was geared specifically for Southwold and rural businesses.

At the May and June meetings of the EDC, the Committee tasked staff with bringing a report back to the Committee to discuss a possible event that featured information on:

- Elgincentives program, Elgin County programs available to new businesses; review of the Elgincentives program
- Southwold & Elgin County staff members to attend to answer questions
- Resources – new tourism signs being launched
- Programs in the municipality, needs to be something new – there needs to be a draw to bring people out to the event
- Purpose to bring people to the event; have a purpose, have a prize, have a draw to the event. Proposed suggestions of the committee included information on cybersecurity, digital marketing, land severances and farm succession planning.

In the discussion at the EDC, there was discussion that the event could be a shared event with the Dutton Dunwich Economic Development Committee.

Comment:

Staff are recommending that the following be scheduled for the event:

- Hosted at Nature's Oasis on Second Line in Southwold
- The event could be helmed by Elgin County Economic Development (Carolyn Krahn/Abigail Moore) with support from a small committee of members from West Elgin EDC, DDEDC and Southwold EDC.
- To take place during the last two weeks of September – date to be confirmed.
- An estimated total budget of \$2,500 could be allocated for the event (from Elgin County).
- Staff recommend a Catered Event – would recommend a Southwold-based caterer, such as "Made with Love", "The Streeterly", "Royal Oak" etc.
- Cash bar – need to find someone to host this?
- Should there be Décor/Theme?
- Should there be entertainment (a band or similar) – maybe even locally Cole Higgs, Nick Ewanick, or Connor Wilson just to play music during networking?
- Possible Agenda Items:
 - o Commercial Downtown Redevelopment in Shedden, Fingal, and Talbotville (20 minutes)
 - Director of Infrastructure to present on investment coming to Fingal for streetscape improvements
 - Vision from business community – what do they see for the future of downtown.
 - o Land Use in a Rural Municipality (20 minutes)
 - Local/County Planner to present on overview of planning hierarchy, land division in general, tips for a farm surplus severance, process for approvals, timelines.
 - Discuss on-farm diversified uses, agritourism, home industry, agribusiness – depending on progress of policy development, an opportunity for businesses to provide feedback on potential policies or to share draft updates to the Zoning By-Law to reflect new policy direction
 - o Thriving in the Digital Economy (30 minutes)

- Digital Marketing and Social Media –expert to speak (topics to include online sales options, advertising, using social media to business advantage, tips for social media clicks, building an effective website, etc.) Possible experts: Will Heeman, Angela DeVries
- Cybersecurity –expert to speak to ways to improve cybersecurity for a business, insurance options for cybersecurity. Possible experts: markIT ((<https://markit-techsolutions.com/>)
- Live Auction/Draw for a Municipal Entrance Sign

Financial Implications:

Staff recommend a total budget of \$2,500, with funding provided by Elgin County Economic Development.

Respectfully Submitted by:
Lisa Higgs, CAO/Clerk
"Submitted electronically"

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

Updated: 2023-10-05

Red, Bold, Italics indicates an update since the last review.

Goal 1	Community Engagement				
Objective	Leverage resident and business volunteer efforts to implement Southwold's economic development plan				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date. Identification of a current priority.
1.1	Recruit additional economic development committee members	Immediate	High		Attempted earlier in 2020. Posted to website and social media. Reached out to several possible candidates. No applications submitted. Will review applications on an ongoing basis if any come forward. Committee members will continue speaking with prospective members. 2020-10-19 Graydon Laing appointed to Committee by Council 2021-02-22 Hiba Arabi appointed to Committee by Council - brings membership to 7 2023-08-02 Michelle Hoffsuemmer appointed
1.2	Establish 2 to 3 priority economic development projects per year	Short	Medium		2023-10-05 - Report on Priorities on Agenda
1.3	Develop a Southwold business retention and expansion program	Immediate	High	High	Possible EBRC Assistance Does this warrant a EDC sub-committee - 2023-10-05 - Elgin forming a committee
1.4	Establish a volunteer event committee to host clean up days, a community picnic and/or night market	Medium	Medium		2023-08-02 Farmers Market identified as possible initiative - additional background information provided to Committee 2023-10-05 - Draft marketing post card circulated to committee for soliciting community input
1.5	Establish a committee to host a special event	Medium	Medium		Evaluate further post COVID-19
1.6	Create a welcome committee for new residents and businesses info on local businesses	Long	Nice to do		
1.7	Encourage the hosting of community events in the four corners area	Medium	Medium		Evaluate further post COVID-19
1.8	Host small business networking events	Medium	Medium		Evaluate further post COVID-19 Possible EBRC Assistance 2020-09-24 EBRC connected marketing/social media person with Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services (Library) to ensure updates for EBRC programming are available throughout libraries.
1.9	Ensure the library has small business resources and workshops	Short	High	Low	Possible EBRC Assistance 2020-09-24 EBRC connected marketing/social media person with Brian Masschaele, Director of Community and Cultural Services (Library) to ensure updates for EBRC programming are available throughout libraries.

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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1.10	Open one of the vacant buildings in Shedden's four corners for pop-up business or shared offices	Long	Medium	Med	<p>Possible EBRC Assistance</p> <p>Committee indicated interest in touring the facility at some point. An outdoor opportunity at the location may also be possible.</p> <p>2020-08-18 - Peter, Justin, Steve, Ken & Corey to view building and parking area - report back to September 22 meeting</p> <p>2020-10-15 staff to track down additional information from Library Committee and determine whether there is potential for a 2nd unit - determine access to hallway/washroom</p> <p>2023-08-02 - identified for further review - report for 2023-09-07 meeting - 2023-10-05 - Inspector Report on Committee Agenda</p>

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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Goal 2	Investment Readiness				
Objective	Provide the required elements to facilitate investment				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date. Identification of a current priority.
2.1	Compile economic development data to share on the Southwold website and with Elgin County's Economic Development Department	Medium	High		
2.2	Create a small one-page lure brochure with links to the Southwold and Elgin County economic development website	Medium	High	Med	Complete after Branding Exercise 2021-02-12 Updated Economic Development Information will be included on the website update
2.3	Compile data on the former Ford lands including status, environmental conditions, servicing, brownfield programs and potential funding programs	Medium	High		Ford Land information is up to date. The site was submitted to the Provincial Job Site Challenge. If one of three sites selected, it would be marketed world-wide by the Province. The County and Township continue to pursue all leads and potential development opportunities for the site.
2.4	Prepare a database of commercial and industrial land and buildings in Southwold	Medium	High		Feature properties information on County Progressive By Nature Site https://www.progressivebynature.com/FeatureProperties The County is hoping to complete a thorough inventory when staff are no longer needed for the County COVID-19 Response 2023-10-05 - Southwold database under construction and presented at previous meeting.
2.5	Use local business ambassadors to help make the case for investment.	Long	Medium		Possible EBRC Assistance

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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Goal 3	Branding/Marketing				
Objective	Establish professional branding, marketing tools and messages to share Southwold's value proposition for residents and businesses				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date. Identification of a current priority.
3.1	Update Southwold's branding to reflect the changing economy and future opportunities	Medium	High	Med	<p>Funding options to be provided, determine exact scope of work, direction to prepare an RFP</p> <p>2020-08-18 Recommendation to Council to proceed with RFP for Township Branding Exercise</p> <p>2020-09-14 Council adopted recommendation, draft RFP submitted to EDC for 2020-09-22 meeting for review</p> <p>2020-10-15 Branding and Marketing RFPs due date - 12 RFPs submitted</p> <p>2020-10-20 EDC deferred reviewing Branding and Marketing RFPs to November 17 meeting</p> <p>2020-12-08 EDC Recommends Cinnamon Toast</p> <p>2020-12-14 Cinnamon Toast engaged by Council</p> <p>2021-02-12 In Progress - Interviews, survey completed, summary report for EDC</p> <p>2021-03-22 Presentation to Council</p> <p>2021-04-26 In progress - 2nd Presentation to Council</p> <p>2021-05-10 - Brand concept approved by Council</p> <p>2021-06-14 - Brand tag lines approved by Council</p> <p>2021-08-06 - Launch coordinated with new website for August 17, 2021</p> <p>2023-06-19 - Signage with new Brand being developed. Park and Community/Township signs would be the initial priority</p>
3.2	Establish consistent, key messages targeting prospective and existing residents, and prospective and existing businesses	Medium	High	Low	<p>Home Occupation brochure being developed.</p> <p>2020-08-20 Updated with comments from Committee. Printed and Published</p> <p>Complete</p>
3.3	Build on the strengths and opportunities in the community (safe, affordable, family, friendly, open spaces, proximity to larger centres, available property)	Long	Medium		
3.4	Compile Southwold's community profile data (demographics, business profile, servicing, resources)	Short	High		<p>Some information currently available from County Progressive by Nature Site</p> <p>https://www.progressivebynature.com/ComparativeStats</p>

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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3.5	Update the Southwold Township website to include resident and business attraction info with links to Elgin County	Short	High	Med	Southwold.ca website update included in 2020 budget Possible EBRC Assistance 2020-11-09 Council approved updating website with eSolutions Group - timing will tie into branding update project - likely launch Q2 2021 2021-02-12 Website project well under way, staff training complete, updated pages being created - on target for Q2 launch 2021-08-06 - Launched August 2021
3.6	Establish an inventory of Southwold businesses (include home-based and small businesses)	Immediate	High	Low	In progress. Obtaining information from County Business Database. Possible EBRC Assistance 2020-08-21 Draft based on Township listing and County Listing sent to staff for review/update. 2020-09-24 EBRC provided contact info for interactions over last 5 years to cross reference with Township Business Listing
3.7	Develop a shop local program featuring home-based and small businesses	Long	Medium		Possible EBRC Assistance
3.8	Profile success stories on the Southwold website	Long	Medium		Possible EBRC Assistance
3.9	Celebrate a local business leader of the year.	Long	Nice to do		

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

Updated: 2023-10-05

Goal 4	Business Development				
Objective	Bring increased commercial and community activity to Fingal and Shedden. Attract and support a diversified business base. Expand Southwold's tourism product offering.				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date. Identification of a current priority.
4.1	Establish a downtown development taskforce to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify required improvements, e.g. Sidewalks, roads, planters, signage, street furniture Host special events to increase traffic Organize farmers' markets, night markets, food truck events and/or entertainment 	Medium	Medium		2023-10-05 - Committee reviewing report from Director Re: Streetscape in Fingal
4.2	Establish regular business visits (BR&E) trouble-shoot, provide info on funding, business supports	Short	High	Low	Committee Members have committed to conduct business visits. Possible EBRC Assistance Township business listing updated - can be used to track visits and information gathered 2020-09-22 County business questions to be modified for Township use - staff will revise and also develop online form to complete questionnaire, in addition to hard copy 2023-10-05 Elgin County Ec Dev developing a leadership team
4.3	Bring additional activity to Shedden's four corners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term rental for November/December Scouts/4H to sell Christmas trees, cider, gift wrapping service Food trucks Establish a cycling rest or rally spot with parking, picnic tables, repair centre, bike rack, maps 	Medium	Medium	Med	Possible EBRC Assistance Ongoing discussion about options for Former Library Building
4.4	Update and share market threshold analysis data	Long	Medium		
4.5	Target existing businesses located elsewhere to open a branch in Southwold	Long	Nice to do		
4.6	Profile available properties on Southwold and Elgin County websites <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prepare sales sheets for available properties (for website and realtors) Develop window décor (with high school, elementary school students), provide contact info Wi-Fi in library to extend to downtown 	Long	Medium		2023-10-05 - Key Investment Ready sheets on agenda
4.7	Host a workshop for alternative accommodation with Elgin County and SWOTC	Medium	Medium		Elgin County Alternative Accommodation policy delayed due to COVID-19; Recommend to be hosted following successful adoption of Official Plan Amendment and Re-Zoning

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

Updated: 2023-10-05

Goal 5	Enhanced Infrastructure				
Objective	Support business and residential infrastructure needs				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date
5.1	Work with broadband providers to expand offering in Southwold	Medium	High	High	<p>2020-07-21 Recommendation to Council That Council support funding of the “final mile” for internet connectivity for as many households and businesses as possible in Southwold.</p> <p>2020-08-10 Adopted by Council Justin Pennings has applied to be on the County Connectivity Committee</p> <p>2021-03-19 - SWIFT Funding Announced for Elgin - includes some area in Southwold - information on 2021-03-23 EDC Meeting Agenda</p> <p>2021-04-23 - Staff Discussions on expanding broadband taking place</p>
5.2	Support the Southwestern Integrated Fibre Technology (SWIFT) initiatives	Ongoing	Medium	High	<p>2020-07-21 Recommendation to Council That Council support funding of the “final mile” for internet connectivity for as many households and businesses as possible in Southwold.</p> <p>2020-08-10 Adopted by Council Justin Pennings has applied to be on the County Connectivity Committee</p> <p>2021-03-19 - SWIFT Funding Announced for Elgin - includes some area in Southwold - information on 2021-03-23 EDC Meeting Agenda</p> <p>2021-04-23 - Staff Discussions on expanding broadband taking place</p> <p>2023-06-19 - Eh!Tel completing fiber project in northwest corner of the Township, Shared Tower is adding Fibre north of Port Stanley</p>
5.3	Develop an infrastructure investment strategy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify priority areas for infrastructure enhancements • Prepare preliminary estimates and funding application info to be incorporated into future funding programs • Assemble business testimonials on the potential for Southwold with infrastructure enhancements • Share infrastructure requirement information with local MPP, MPs 	Medium	High	High	
5.4	Research private/public partnership examples for future infrastructure investment	Long	Medium	Med	

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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Goal 6	Other projects, activities and initiatives identified by EDC				
Objective	Projects, activities and initiatives that support Economic Development and may not be specifically listed as actions above				
	Actions	Time Frame	Priority	Level of Difficulty	Notes on activity and action to date
	Alternative Accomodation Policies			Med	<p>in progress with County - Delayed due to COVID, 2020-10-15 waiting for draft policies for public consultation, Planner and/or consultant to attend meeting to review policies with committee when ready 2020-11-13 Planner was scheduled to attend November 17 meeting, but Draft OP not released yet 2021-02-12 recommendations made to Council - will be considered during OP review currently taking place 2021-03-19 - EDC recommendations have been submitted to Council, Township Planner, County Planner - all area aware of EDC recommendations, EDC to continue to advocate for desired policies, actively take part in Official Plan Reviews, especially the County - County OP review as started - https://www.elgincounty.ca/planning/officialplanreview/ 2021-08-06 County OP ongoing 2023-06-19 County OP should be nearing completion, staff following up to determine if Township requests will be addressed in final plan 2023-09-07 - Recommendation for OP Amendment 2023-10-05 Committee reviewing draft text</p>

Southwold Community Economic Development Plan - Action Items

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	Industrial/Residential OP and Zoning			Med	<p>in progress with OP Update Consultant</p> <p>2020-10-15 waiting for draft policies for public consultation, Planner and/or consultant to attend meeting to review policies with committee when ready</p> <p>2020-11-13 Planner was scheduled to attend November 17 meeting, but Draft OP not released yet</p> <p>2021-02-12 recommendations made to Council - will be considered during OP review currently taking place</p> <p>2021-03-19 - EDC recommendations have been submitted to Council, Township Planner, County Planner - all area aware of EDC recommendations, EDC to continue to advocate for desired policies, actively take part in Official Plan Reviews, especially the County - County OP review as started -</p> <p>https://www.elgincounty.ca/planning/officialplanreview/</p> <p>2021-08-06 County OP ongoing</p>
	Updated Business Listing				<p>created , on 2020-09-22 agenda for review</p> <p>can be used by members to track business visits</p> <p>2020-10-15 Business listing to be maintained and updated as required by staff</p>
	Business Questionnaire - create based on County - online and hardcopy				<p>2020-10-15 - in progress</p>