

CITY OF VAUGHAN

EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 21, 2020

Item 11, Report No. 47, of the Committee of the Whole, which was adopted without amendment by the Council of the City of Vaughan on October 21, 2020.

11. REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY REVIEW

The Committee of the Whole recommends:

- 1) That consideration of this matter be deferred to a future Committee of the Whole (Working Session) meeting; and**
- 2) That Communication C1 from Ms. Cathy Ferlisi, Concord West Ratepayers' Association, dated October 9, 2020, be received.**

Recommendations

1. That the Registered Ratepayer/ Community Association Policy (Policy No. 06.1.01) be replaced by the Registered Ratepayer Association Policy (Policy No. 06.C.02) as attached to this report (Attachment 1);
2. That the policy is effective immediately for new Registered Ratepayer Associations;
3. That for existing Registered Ratepayer Associations in good standing, the policy will take effect at the next renewal date in 2021; and
4. That Staff be directed to communicate any changes to the policy to existing Registered Ratepayer Associations and the public through Corporate Communication channels.

Committee of the Whole (2) Report

DATE: Wednesday, October 14, 2020

WARD(S): ALL

TITLE: REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY REVIEW

FROM:

Wendy Law, Deputy City Manager, Administrative Services and City Solicitor

ACTION: DECISION

Purpose

The Office of the City Clerk has undertaken a comprehensive review and updates to the Registered Ratepayer/Community Association Policy as per Council's direction. This report provides a summary of the review and a revised Registered Ratepayer Association Policy for Council's consideration.

Report Highlights

- Council adopted a resolution on September 27, 2018 to refer the Registered Ratepayer/Community Association Policy to Staff for a comprehensive review and report back.
- LURA Consulting was retained by the City of Vaughan to implement various stakeholder engagement tactics from September to October of 2019 to obtain feedback from Staff, Council, Registered Ratepayer Associations (RRA) and members of the public.
- A revised policy is submitted for Council's consideration. If approved, the new policy will take effect immediately for new Registered Ratepayer Associations. For existing Registered Ratepayer Associations in good standing, the policy will take effect at the next renewal date in 2021.

Recommendations

1. That the Registered Ratepayer/ Community Association Policy (Policy No. 06.1.01) be replaced by the Registered Ratepayer Association Policy (Policy No. 06.C.02) as attached to this report (Attachment 1);
2. That the policy is effective immediately for new Registered Ratepayer Associations;
3. That for existing Registered Ratepayer Associations in good standing, the policy will take effect at the next renewal date in 2021; and
4. That Staff be directed to communicate any changes to the policy to existing Registered Ratepayer Associations and the public through Corporate Communication channels.

Background

At the June 12, 2019 Council Meeting, staff submitted a report regarding “Registered Ratepayer / Community Association Policy Review Update”. Staff was directed to “report back with the outcome of the review and any proposed changes to the current policy.”

1. Overview of Public Consultation and Engagement

LURA Consulting was retained by the City of Vaughan to implement a stakeholder engagement program to provide avenues for open dialogue, sharing of information and feedback with respect to the review.

The engagement program was implemented between September and October 2019. The target audiences for the engagement activities included: members of the general public, members of current Registered Ratepayer Associations, and Members of Council. The following table contains various engagement tactics implemented to achieve the engagement objectives and the number of participants involved.

Engagement Tactic	Implementation Timeline (2019)	Number of Participants
Public Online Survey	September 4 – September 25	84 participants
Interviews with Members of Council	September 23 - October 9	9 Mayor and Members of Council
Stakeholder Roundtable	October 3	9 participants
Public Forum	October 10	16 participants
118 participants total		

2. Communication Methods

All opportunities to participate in the engagement activities were promoted by City staff through various communication channels, except for the interviews with Members of Council. The communication tactics used included:

- Posts on the City of Vaughan's social media channels including Twitter, Facebook and Instagram;
- Paid social media advertisements on Facebook;
- Emails to main contacts of all 23 Registered Ratepayer Associations;
- Links to the survey provided to all City Councillors, with many sharing the survey in their e-newsletters; and
- Promotion of the public meeting on City Hall's electronic signs.

The participation rate of the engagement activities was very positive. Due to the volume of comments and materials received from the consultant, staff requested additional time to report back to Council in Q1 of 2020. Updated timeline was posted on the City's website and communicated to RRAs. In Q4 of 2019, a summary of the Public Online Survey Results was shared with the RRAs and posted on the City's website. In Q1 of 2020, the reporting process was further postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Previous Reports/Authority

June 4, 2019 Committee of the Whole, Item 36

[REGISTERED RATEPAYER / COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION POLICY REVIEW UPDATE](#)

Analysis and Options

1. Overview of the Existing Policy Framework

The existing Registered Ratepayer/ Community Association Policy (CCO-010) was last amended in 2004 as attached to this report for reference (**Attachment 2**). The 2020 renewal deadline for RRAs was extended from March 31, 2020 to May 1, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of September 1, 2020, there are twenty-three (23) RRAs under the current policy. Highlight of current policy are as follows:

- As part of the initial registration requirement, the applicant must submit a list of membership, including a minimum of twenty-five (25) members for urban area and a minimum of ten (10) members for rural area.
- There are no restrictions on the size of association boundaries.

- For the annual renewal requirement, one (1) General Meeting must be held no less than once every three (3) years.
- The City does not recognize the formation of other Ratepayer Associations within the boundaries of an existing Association that is in good-standing.
- RRAs have the benefit of:
 - one (1) free meeting space to hold an annual general meeting at City/Library facility.
 - Consultation and Notices of various issues within the boundaries.
 - Qualify as Community Service Organization (C.S.O.) with service-in-kind opportunities.
 - Recognized Status as an Association at Committee Meetings.
 - Hard copies of Agendas and Minutes provided free of charge for pick up, upon written request.

2. Summary of Public Consultation and Engagement

A summary of findings and analysis of the feedback received are contained in the report provided by from LURA Consulting. The results were posted online and shared with the Registered Ratepayer Associations ([Link to Summary Report](#)). We received a total of 84 survey responses with representation from all wards. Majority (57%) were not aware of the policy prior to taking the survey, 27% of respondents were general members of the public or former RRA members, and 11% respondents were from existing RRA members. The following are highlights of concerns and suggestions for consideration:

- Need for online RRA registration and renewal process.
- Majority of existing RRA members support geographic exclusivity. Former RRA members and the general public were neither strongly against nor supportive.
- Review or limit association boundaries to ensure effective representation.
- Expand current policy for more clarity, accountability, transparency and support for RRAs.
- Interest from the general public to start an RRA dropped from 31% to 24% after presented with existing registration requirements.
- Remove outdated provisions regarding delivery of paper Agendas and Minutes.
- More transparency and information on the City's website about RRAs.
- More training and education from City Staff for RRAs regarding planning and LPAT process.
- Clarify the purpose of RRAs and their relationship with the City.
- Single-issue groups that become inactive once the issue is resolved. Concern that some associations are not active.
- Strong support for more free and subsidized meeting space.

3. Municipal Best Practices

Staff has conducted a jurisdictional scan for best practices from other municipalities. Only four (4) other Ontario municipalities have a similar policy: Aurora, Markham, Oakville and Toronto. A high-level summary of the characteristics of each policy is included as **Attachment 3** of this report.

4. Proposed Policy Framework

Staff is proposing a revised policy framework to address concerns by Members of Council, existing RRA members and members of the public:

4.1. Summary of Key Changes

	Current	Proposed
Eligibility Requirements	Minimum of 25 members in an urban area and 10 in a rural area	Minimum of 25 members within each Concession Block covered by the Association's boundary, regardless of urban or rural area.
Renewal Requirements	A meeting held no less than once <u>every three (3) years</u>	A meeting held no less than once <u>every twelve (12) months</u>
Renewal Deadline	Not specified (current practice is March 31 of each year)	March 31 of each year
Rights	One free meeting room space at City Facility/ Library per year	One free meeting room space at City Facility/ Library <u>twice</u> per year

- Geographic exclusivity provision remains status quo.
- Policy Statement includes recognition of the value of RRAs. It also clarifies that the City does not prohibit or regulate non-registered Ratepayer Associations in the community.
- The purpose of this policy is to maintain a record of active RRAs for public and corporate access; and to provide a platform to encourage neighbourhood engagement and involvement.
- Definition section is added.
- The *Planning Act* provides that appeals to Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) may be filed by "persons". Groups or associations, such as residents or ratepayer groups that are not incorporated, may not be considered "persons" for purposes of the appeals made under the *Act*. The policy provides greater clarity that the City does not provide any advice on LPAT appeals or anything related to

incorporation for Registered Ratepayer Associations. As well, registration with the City as a Registered Ratepayer Association does not confer status before the LPAT, which is governed by other legislation.

5. Proposed Policy Implementation

If Council approves the revised policy proposed by Staff, it is recommended that the new policy becomes effective immediately for any new Registered Ratepayer Associations. To allow existing RRAs to transition and adjust to the new policy, it is recommended that the current policy will continue to govern existing RRAs that are in good standing. However, all RRAs must comply with the provisions of the new policy by the next renewal date in 2021, being March 31, 2021.

6. Other Actions

To address public feedback on improving online registration and renewal, Office of the City Clerk has re-designed and simplified prescribed forms to streamline the process. The City's webpage on Registered Ratepayer Association has also been updated to include a list of contact information of all RRAs.

For long term actions, Office of the City Clerk will work with Corporate and Strategic Communications; and Planning and Growth Management to organize and provide Education Sessions regarding general municipal governance, planning process and Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) appeals to RRAs and members of the public.

Financial Impact

None.

Broader Regional Impacts/Considerations

None.

Conclusion

Based on the comprehensive review by staff and LURA Consulting, the proposed policy addresses concerns about the size of association boundaries, effective representation, inactive Associations, more free meeting room spaces, and online registration/ renewal processes. Proposed changes help to define a clear purpose, policy statement and renewal deadline. It removes outdated provisions about hard copies of Agendas and Minutes. The provision of geographic exclusivity remains status quo based on public feedback.

Staff also identified other actions outside of the policy framework to improve transparency, public education and community engagement to encourage more effective public participation of RRAs. If the proposed policy is approved, Office of the City Clerk staff will work with Corporate Communications to ensure all RRAs and members of the public are informed of the policy changes and implementation strategy.

For more information, please contact Todd Coles, City Clerk x 8281

Attachments

1. Proposed Registered Ratepayer Association Policy (Policy No. 06.C.02)
2. Existing Registered Ratepayer/ Community Association Policy (Policy No. 06.1.01)
3. Comparison Chart of Municipal Best Practices

Prepared by

Isabel Leung, Deputy City Clerk & Manager, Administrative Services, extension 8190.

Approved by



Wendy Law
Deputy City Manager
Administrative Services & City Solicitor

Reviewed by



Jim Harnum, City Manager



CITY OF VAUGHAN

CORPORATE POLICY

POLICY TITLE: REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY

POLICY NO.: Policy number to be assigned by Policy Coordinator.

Section:	Council & Committees		
Effective Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.	Date of Last Review:	Click or tap to enter a date.
Approval Authority: Council	Policy Owner: DCM, Administrative Services & City Solicitor		

POLICY STATEMENT

1. The City of Vaughan recognizes the value of Ratepayer Associations in facilitating the exchange of information and ideas in the community.
2. The City supports Registered Ratepayer Associations by the provision of various services.
3. The City does not prohibit or regulate the formation of Ratepayer Associations that do not register with the City.
4. Every member of the public has equal rights to address Council as individuals or as a group at Committee/ Council meetings in accordance with the City's Procedure By-law.

PURPOSE

1. To define a framework for the administration of Registered Ratepayer Associations in the City of Vaughan in order to maintain a record of active Registered Ratepayer Associations for public and corporate use.
2. To provide a platform for the public to access information relating to the City's Registered Ratepayer Associations and to encourage neighbourhood engagement and involvement.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the Registered Ratepayer Associations in the City of Vaughan, and City Staff involved in the administration of Ratepayer Associations.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

None.

POLICY TITLE: REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY

POLICY NO.: Policy number assigned by Policy Coordinator.

DEFINITIONS

1. "City Clerk" means the City Clerk of the City of Vaughan or the Deputy City Clerk or designate.
2. "Community Service Organization (C.S.O.)" is a City approved Vaughan-based, not for profit community organization run by an elected and volunteer board of directors whose prime purpose is to provide recreation, cultural, leisure or community services to the residents of Vaughan, in accordance with the City's Community Service Organization Policy.
3. "Concession Block" means a block divided and numbered by the City of Vaughan as identified in the Ratepayer Association Map in the application package.
4. "Executive Officers" mean the President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer elected at a Registered Ratepayer Association's General Meeting. All Executive Officers must reside within their Association's boundaries.
5. "Member" means a person, resident and/or landowners who reside or own properties within a geographically bound area that come together to address issues affecting their neighborhood.
6. "Registered Ratepayer Association" means a group formed by Vaughan residents and/or landowners within a geographically bound area dedicated to addressing issues affecting their neighbourhood, which are recognized by the City of Vaughan.

POLICY

1. Registration and Renewal Requirements of Ratepayer Associations

- 1.1 Upon initial registration, a completed Registered Ratepayer Association Registration Form must be submitted to the City Clerk with the following information:
 - a) A list of the Association's Executive Officers duly elected;
 - b) A statement of purpose and/or the Association's Constitution;
 - c) A list of the Association's membership showing a minimum of 25 members within each Concession Block covered by the Association's boundary as identified on the City's map, and that the list include names, addresses and signatures; and
 - d) The boundaries of the area that the Association represents. The proposed boundaries shall not overlap with existing registered ratepayer associations that are in good standing.
- 1.2 All renewing Registered Ratepayer Associations must:
 - a) have held one (1) meeting in the preceding 12-month period; and
 - b) renew their registration annually by submitting a completed renewal form no later than March 31 of each year, confirming all requirements have been met.
- 1.3 Registered Ratepayer Associations are responsible for notifying the City Clerk regarding any changes to the Association's Executive Officers, statement of purpose, membership, and the boundaries.

POLICY TITLE: REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY

POLICY NO.: Policy number assigned by Policy Coordinator.

- 1.4 Registration with the City does not provide special status for the purposes of Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) appeals made under the *Planning Act*. Registered Ratepayer Associations should seek their own advice on LPAT appeals or other matters related to incorporation.

2. Rights of Registered Ratepayer Associations

- 2.1 Recognized status before Council as an Association rather than an individual or group of individuals.
- 2.2 Formal listing on the City of Vaughan's Official Registry of Ratepayer Associations with the Office of the City of Clerk and inclusion on the Registered Ratepayers Association map on the City's Website.
- 2.3 Consultation and Notice of various issues within the boundaries being represented by the Registered Ratepayer Association (e.g. land use, traffic, parks, planning, etc.)
- 2.4 On a "space available" basis and in accordance with the City's policy, provision of meeting room space at a City/ Library facility for two (2) meetings per year at no cost to the Association.
- 2.5 Qualification as a Community Service Organization (C.S.O.) under the category "Ratepayers Association" with resulting services-in-kind opportunities, including the ability to use City and Library public meeting rooms at the C.S.O. preferred rate.

3. Authority of the City Clerk

- 3.1 The City Clerk shall be authorized to:
- a) Review and approve Ratepayers Association applications and renewals; and
 - b) Remove from the City of Vaughan's Official Registry of Ratepayer Associations those associations that do not comply with this policy.

4. Policy Implementation

- 4.1 This Policy is effective immediately for new associations, upon Council adoption. Former policy will continue to govern existing Registered Ratepayer Associations that are in good standing.
- 4.2 All Registered Ratepayer Associations must comply with the provisions of this policy by March 31, 2021.

ADMINISTRATION

Administered by the Office of the City Clerk.

Review Schedule:	SELECT If other, specify here	Next Review Date:	Click or tap to enter a date.
-------------------------	----------------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------

POLICY TITLE: REGISTERED RATEPAYER ASSOCIATION POLICY

POLICY NO.: Policy number assigned by Policy Coordinator.

Related Policy(ies):	Community Service Organization Policy
Related By-Law(s):	N/A
Procedural Document:	
Revision History	
Date:	Description:
Click or tap to enter a date.	
Click or tap to enter a date.	
Click or tap to enter a date.	

**CITY OF VAUGHAN
POLICY MANUAL**

SECTION: LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES	POLICY NO.:06.1.01
---	---------------------------

CNL: 86.02.03(32)

AMENDED CNL: 95.05.08(1)

AMENDED CNL: 98.09.14

AMENDED CNL: 04.06.14 (51/14)

DEPARTMENT: CLERK'S	SUBJECT: REGISTERED RATEPAYER/COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION POLICY (RECOGNITION OF RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATIONS-RECEIPT OF AGENDAS AND MINUTES)
-------------------------------	---

Every member of the public has the right to address Council on his/her own behalf (or in the case of an agent, on behalf of his/her principal) at Committee of the Whole meetings and with unanimous consent at Council meetings, however duly elected representatives of groups of citizens registered with the City of Vaughan as Ratepayer or Community Associations may address Council as spokespersons on behalf of such associations.

- 1) That upon initial formation of the Association, the following be submitted to the City Clerk:
 - a) A completed Ratepayer/Community Associations Registration Form;
 - b) A list of the Association's membership showing a minimum of 25 members in an urban area and 10 in a rural area and that the list include names, addresses and signatures;
 - c) A statement of purpose and a copy of the Association's Constitution and/or By-laws; and
 - d) The boundaries of the area that the Association represents;
- 2) That all Ratepayer/Community Associations register on an annual basis and at that time any changes in Executive Officers be provided;
- 3) That the City Clerk be notified within 30 calendar days of any changes to the contact information provided on the Registration Form (name of contact person/address/phone numbers);
- 4) That the Association's Executive Officers be duly elected at a General Meeting in accordance with the respective Association's Constitution, but no less than once every three (3) years, and that all executive officers reside within their Association's boundaries;
- 5) That minutes of the General Meeting at which the Executive Officers have been elected be filed with the City Clerk;
- 6) That notification of the General Meeting to elect Executive Officers be provided in accordance with the Association's respective Constitution;
- 7) That once a year, if required, at the discretion of the Ratepayers' Association, and for the purpose of holding an annual General Meeting, that they be permitted to use a City/Library facility at no cost to the Association;
- 8) That the City will not recognize groups wishing to form a new Registered Association within the boundaries of an existing Association that is in good standing;
- 9) That Association's who have requested the Agenda/Minute delivery service and do not pick-up the documents for three (3) consecutive weeks will have this service suspended without further notice and the service will only be resumed upon written request to the City Clerk;
- 10) That the City Clerk shall be authorized to delete from the City of Vaughan's Official Registry of Ratepayer/Community Associations those Associations that do not comply with the Policy outlined in this report; and
- 11) That this Policy replace the current policy effective immediately.

The City of Vaughan recognizes and supports Registered Ratepayer / Community Associations by the provision of various services.

The benefits of being recognized as a Registered Ratepayer / Community Association in the City of Vaughan, are as follows:

- 1) Consultation and Notice of various issues within the boundaries being represented by the Ratepayer / Community Association (e.g. land use, traffic, parks, planning, etc.)
- 2) Qualification as a Community Service Organization (C.S.O.) under the category "Ratepayers Association" with resulting services-in-kind opportunities.
- 3) Ability to use City and Library public meeting rooms at the C.S.O. preferred rate.
- 4) Deputation status before Council as an Association rather than an individual or group of individuals.
- 5) Hard copies of Agendas / Minutes free of charge for pick-up at a Library or Community Centre if a written request is received by the City Clerk.

	Eligibility Requirements	Annual Renewal Requirements	Rights	Free Meeting Space	Geographic exclusivity	Restriction on boundaries
Aurora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent not less than 10 households, or at least 20 individual members The name is reflective of the area or concern being represented 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held one meeting in the preceding 12-month period Submit completed Renewal Form confirming requirements have been met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of Ratepayer Association Status at Council/ Committee meetings Listing in the Town Resident's Guide, Town website and any other communication channels 	One per year	No	Catchment area does not exceed one concession block in size
Markham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent a min. of 10 households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Specified Associations should commit to their Articles of Incorporation and agreed upon with the City. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognition of Ratepayer Association Status at Council/ Committee meetings Listing in the City Resident's Guide, City website and any other communication channels Free hard copy Agenda, Minutes and/or reports 	One per year	No	No
Oakville		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not Specified. Will be notified by email of the annual renewal requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified in the public listing maintained by the Clerk's department and posted to the town website Included on town notification mailing lists, Appropriate town staff may be made available to speak at public information meetings of residents' and community associations 	No	No	No
Toronto	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent not less than 25 households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hold a general meeting at least once every 12 months Hold an annual general election of officers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All correspondence received are stamped to indicate they are a "Registered Ratepayer Associations" 	No	No	No

All require completed application form, including a list of executive officers, membership list, statement of purpose and a map or description of boundaries that the group represents.