The meeting was called to order.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
None declared.

2. MINUTES of the September 4 and September 13, 2007 Meetings
(Bruckler/Shurvin)
That the Minutes of the September 4, 2007 meeting be approved as presented.
CARRIED

(Bruckler/Shurvin)
That the Minutes of the September 13, 2007 meeting be approved as presented.
CARRIED

3. VERBAL PRESENTATION BY CHAIR ART SAMSON
Chair Samson introduced himself and the other members of the Task Force. He referred to the copy of the Task Force’s mandate which was distributed. He explained that with recent changes to the legislation, Councils are now able to establish community councils. He also briefly outlined the Task Force’s activities to date.

4. WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS
(a) Blank sheets available at meeting (distributed separately)
The Chair advised the members of the audience that blank sheets were available for their written comments.
(b) Written submissions from the following were acknowledged:

(i) Steven Leach, Hamilton

(ii) Arend Kersten, Waterdown

4. DELEGATIONS

(a) Ava Opalinski, Strathcona Neighbourhood Advisory Committee / Community Council

Did not attend.

(b) Dan Rodrigues, Hamilton

Dan Rodrigues introduced himself and indicated that he is the Chair of the new Clean City Liaison Committee, and a member of the Waste Reduction Task Force, the Property Standards Committee, the Provincial Gas Tax Transit Master Plan Steering Committee, and a member of the Chamber of Commerce. He advised that he did some research on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce.

Dan Rodrigues’ statements included but were not limited to the following:

- He provided a brief overview of some existing community councils in other Provinces.
- He researched what was happening in the United States, but because of their government system, it's hard to make a comparison.
- Winnipeg is similar in size and area to Hamilton.
- Winnipeg as has 15 wards, like Hamilton.
- It has Community Councils with 3 or 4 councillors on each.
- It is difficult to define a community – i.e.: Dundas is obvious, however, Ward 6 doesn’t have a downtown area, it is harder to define as a community.
- In his opinion, this proposal must be beneficial for all of Hamilton, not just the outskirts.
- The number of the Community Councils will eventually dwindle down as the Municipality becomes more experienced.
- For example, in 1972, Winnipeg had 50 Wards and 26 Community Councils; today it has 15 wards and 5 community councils.
- Constituents should make their voices heard through their elected representatives or by attending the meetings.
- In his opinion, any Community Council on the Mountain should have 3 councillors as members.
Trisha Branigan, Hamilton

Trisha Branigan introduced herself indicating that she lives on the east Mountain where she grew up. She was a nurse at the General Hospital and went back to school to study psychology and obtained her bachelor of science in nursing. She was a nurse for 30 years and now she is volunteering. She outlined various areas where she has volunteered her time. She is interested in writing and in heritage.

Trisha Branigan’s comments included but were not limited to the following:

- **Mandate:** she suggests appointing members who seek input from the public
- **Members must be residents of the community**
- **As elections are expensive and are prohibitive for the average person, members should be appointed within a certain earning bracket (i.e. not the rich)**
- **The members don’t need to be paid but should be volunteers**
- **Permissive powers:** may include roads, signage, taxi’s bus service, parks, cleanliness, sewers, and recycling
- **Suggests road repairs should be undertaken at night to avoid traffic jams and inconvenience to commuters**
- **She’s interested in helping**
- **Communication is important both ways**
- **The Community Council should be an advisory and educative type of body and should reflect the community being represented**

Heidi Hand, Winona

Heidi Hand introduced herself as a stay at home mom and advised that she has been pushing her Ward Councillor about establishing community councils. She’s a resident of Winona and they need a recreation centre and a new school. She was able to bring in recreation programs on her own.

Heidi Hand’s comments included but were not limited to the following:

- **In her opinion, residents can accomplish more than the councillors.**
- **Downtown Hamilton has resources; Winona doesn’t and must fight for what it needs.**
- **The issue of sidewalks is bigger in Winona as mounds of snow are not cleared and pedestrians cannot pass.**
- **Last year the volunteer fire fighters couldn’t get to the fire hall because the snow wasn’t cleared.**
- **The Downtown core gets cleared first.**
- **She’s feels strongly about every ward having its own community council to deal with local issues.**
• Finances shouldn’t prohibit any resident from getting involved.
• Her ward councillor is against community councils because he feels that this will allow residents to pursue their own agenda.
• The structure should be formulated for the benefit of everyone.
• If more people were involved, more could be accomplished.
• Her Ward Councillor is representing two former municipalities which is overwhelming.

General Discussion

A general discussion ensued which covered but was not limited to the following:

• Should Community Councils have autonomy?
• What powers could/would a Council delegate to a community council?
• Successful neighbourhood associations already exist. How would the establishment of Community Councils affect the neighbourhood associations? Memberships and the dynamics may change.
• Members of the audience expressed concerns that the neighbourhood associations would be disbanded as a result.
• Constituents should lobby through their ward councillors and not create another area of government.
• Examples of Community Councils in Scarborough – don’t have legislated powers.
• Example of effectiveness of Community Councils in Winnipeg – was successful in opposing the closure of a community centre.
• It was suggested that the Task Force research were residents get involved and consider those areas for delegated powers.
• Concerns with cost of community councils.
• Concerns with the decisions of community councils impacting the budget.
• The Task Force was requested to investigate the feasibility of area rating because the legislation has changed and area rating may affect the budget.
• Appointment vs election of members.
• Suggestion that members be elected even if it means waiting three years.
• Some members of the audience preferred election but most preferred appointment.
• Appointed citizens being granted permissive powers is a scary thought.
• Would the use of volunteers take away jobs?
• A representative from the Central Association of Neighbourhoods from Ward 2 stated that the association does not want to see an individual turned away by their ward councilor and referred to the community council.
• The number of ward councilors appointed to a community council will affect the number of citizens appointed - if there’s a cap on the total membership. (I.e. some community councils may have more councilors appointed than others.)
• Concern that a disproportionate amount of business operators or developers may become members of community councils.
• Autonomy was opposed at the beginning – may be considered later once the effectiveness of the system has been tried out
• Concerns were expressed that the general public are not aware of this proposal.
• Concerns expressed by those in attendance that they were not aware of these meetings and only became aware recently.
• Who’s going to advise the general public?

5. OTHER MEETINGS
The Chair noted the following additional public meetings have been scheduled:
(a) October 30 – Sir Winston Church High School, 7:00 p.m.
(b) November 6, 2007 – Former Town of Glanbrook Council Chambers, 7:00 p.m.

6. ADJOURNMENT
There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Samson, Chair
Community Councils Task Force