

COUNTY OF BRANT COUNCIL**SPECIAL MEETING RE: FIVE-YEAR OFFICIAL PLAN REVIEW**

Exhibition Centre
Paris Fairgrounds
October 26, 2006
7:00 p.m.

Present: Mayor Eddy, Councillors Wheat, Mulligan, Emmott, Peirce, Moore, Haggart, Atfield, Miller, Chambers (8:05 p.m.), Gatward, Garn, Coleman and Carver.

Regrets: Councillor Maertens

Staff: Fiebig, Brenneman, Johnston and Carman.

Mayor Eddy in the Chair. He welcomed the members of the public in attendance for this special Council meeting to consider the five-year review of the County's Official Plan.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Brant County Council agenda for the October 25, 2006 special meeting was approved as circulated.

FIVE-YEAR REVIEW OF THE OFFICIAL PLAN

Mayor Eddy advised that Section 26(1) of the Planning Act requires that each municipality have a statutory public meeting at least every five years to determine if there is a need to update the Official Plan. In addition, the new Provincial Policy Statements introduced in 2005 and the Provincial Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe require that the County review their Official Plan to ensure that it is consistent with their policies. The County has also identified a number of administrative concerns that should be addressed through the five-year review.

Mayor Eddy remarked that the County has already received approximately fifty written submissions on the Official Plan Review, and that the County would be hearing verbal presentations this evening from members of the public.

Chris Tyrell, Manager of Environmental Design at Marshall Macklin Monaghan, made a presentation on the purpose of the Official Plan Review, the issues to be considered and the three phases of the Review. Phase 1 of the Review will include discussion of the issues and options, the revised Official Plan will be prepared in draft form in Phase 2, and Phase 3 will entail preparation of the final Official Plan. Mr. Tyrell emphasized that public consultation will be involved in all three phases of the work program. The review will refine the existing Official Plan policy and bring it into conformity with other supporting plans and studies, including the Provincial Policy Statement, Places to Grow policies, Brant County Master Transportation Plan, Master Servicing Plan for the Paris Urban Settlement Area, Brant County population, household and employment projections, land needs assessment, etc. Some of the issues to be identified include provincial policy, growth management, land use designations, downtown revitalization, agricultural policies, healthy County and community design, affordable housing, natural heritage and flood plains, ground water protection, economic development and utilities and transportation corridors.

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In response to questions about the Cainsville area, it was noted that the Cainsville Lagoons Study will be taken into account to help evaluate the proper land uses and servicing requirements for that area. A concern was expressed that the meeting on the Cainsville Lagoons Study was poorly attended, because many people do not receive the Expositor. David Johnston advised that public consultations on the Official Plan Review would be advertised in local newspapers and posted on the County's website. In addition notices will be mailed to people who provide addresses for this purpose. The public meetings will also be held in various locations throughout the County.

DELEGATIONS

The following individuals made presentations on the five-year review of the County's Official Plan:

Jim Blumer, 495 Mount Pleasant Road

Jim Blumer presented a request that his 8.87 acre property located at 495 Mount Pleasant Road be designated to allow for two one-acre estate residential lots to be severed from the property along the west side of Mount Pleasant Road. He pointed out that there are already several estate residential lots along the stretch of Mount Pleasant Road between Conklin Road and Phelps Road, with his property being one of the two properties that are still zoned agricultural in this area. Allowing for the severance of two one-acre estate residential lots would maintain the current streetscape, increase the County's tax base and not substantially decrease the County's agricultural base. Mr. Blumer noted that he had submitted this proposal to the County a year ago.

Larry Davis, Ontario Federation of Agriculture

Larry Davis, the Brant County representative to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, advised that it would be in the best interest of agriculture and society if rural estate residential development was eliminated and if new technologies were implemented so that valuable farmland is not used for the expansion of landfill sites. Mr. Davis pointed out that agriculture is the most important industry in the County of Brant, with approximately 700 farmers. The highest and best use of arable land is for agriculture that produces food, fibre and fuel supply for the world.

Mr. Davis explained that there is only 1% prime agricultural land in Canada and half of this is Class 1. Fifty-two percent of this land is located in Ontario, and primarily in Southern Ontario. Over the past number of years, 19% of prime agricultural land has been lost due to development, which leaves less land for agricultural production. Development of rural agricultural areas leads to problems that need to be addressed – storm water management from developed areas, noise and odour complaints, impact with animals causing injuries and property damage, traffic interference with farm machinery movement and operation, trespassing on agriculture lands, etc. Municipal by-laws should respect, not regulate, farm practices. He suggested that an Agricultural Advisory Committee should be established to advise Council on agricultural land uses and policies. Industrial and commercial uses should not be allowed in agricultural areas, unless these uses are compatible and primarily related to agricultural uses. Recreational uses should not be allowed in agricultural areas and institutional uses should be limited. Planning policies should encourage industrial and commercial development in existing areas zoned for that purpose.

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The creation of new residential lots in agricultural areas should be discouraged unless recommended by the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Urban areas should only be able to expand to agricultural lands when all vacant urban areas are utilized or on lower class agricultural lands, and only in areas where sewer and water services are available. The new Minimum Distance Separation guidelines that come into effect in January 2007 should be implemented in the County's Official Plan.

Residential development in rural agricultural areas limits farmers' future expansion plans and leads to nuisance conflicts with large farm operations. Retirement lot severances should not be allowed as past practice indicates that these lots only stay with the retired farmer for an average of 3.5 years before they are sold. There is no re-investment in farm infrastructure once it is taken out of agricultural production. In order to prevent farmers from being lured to sell their land to developers, Mr. Davis suggested that farmers should be compensated for not selling their lands for development so that it remains in agricultural production.

Dianne Wojtasik, St. George Fitness Club

Ms. Wojtasik advised that she and her mother, Ann Thompson, have developed a fitness club as a home occupation in St. George, noting that there are over 150 home occupations in the County of Brant. She requested that the restrictions on outdoor signage for home occupations be changed to allow larger signs to be installed on residential properties that are zoned for home occupations.

Oliver and Para Watts, Paris

Oliver Watts presented general comments and concerns about the Official Plan and the future of the community, noting that because they live in Paris, this influences their point of view.

This is a critical time for the community because the Green Belt and Places to Grow policies will have a profound impact. There is general unease about what Paris will look like in ten years, as most people would prefer to be in the Green Belt than in a development area. The Official Plan is a social and economic plan, since development directly affects the quality of life for all residents. There needs to be a balance between residential, industrial and commercial uses and growth that needs to be enforced. Paris should not become a bedroom community. They are glad to see mixed use areas where feasible, and that the character of downtown Paris will be taken into account. Heritage features need to be recognized and protected in the community.

Industrial development is welcome, but emissions and waste standards must be enforced. The Official Plan policies, once implemented, must be defended, and should not be flexible depending on who you are or how much power and money you can pay. The Official Plan should explicitly state that protecting wildlife and protected areas is important, as is the protection of agricultural lands. The Official Plan should recognize that if the community is to grow significantly in the future, there are major energy and environmental challenges that must be addressed. Compact higher density housing should be considered to preserve our natural and agricultural lands and to make public transit more feasible, which could be developed with the City of Brantford, since it appears they are expanding to the boundary of Paris. Shopping and recreational services need to be placed where they can be accessed by people by walking, bicycle or public transit. The County of Brant does not exist in isolation, and huge global issues must be considered with local issues in the Official Plan. Although we do not know what the future holds, we know that our present way of life will be affected, and the Official Plan should help our community to adapt to implement best case scenarios.

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Larry Clarkson, Bishopsgate Road

Larry Clarkson, 670 Bishopsgate Road, advised that he owns 19 acres in the Falkland area. A number of houses have been built in that area, and he would like to see the hamlet area extended so that his agricultural lands could be designated for hamlet residential development.

Joe Cohoon

Although Mr. Cohoon was not present, it was noted that written documentation for estate residential or hamlet residential designations has been submitted on behalf of the following County residents:

- John Sharp, Scenic Drive/Cloverlea Crescent
- Bill Sharp, McLean School Road and East River Road
- Stuart Sharp, McLean School Road
- Edward Stevens, West Quarter Townline Road
- Giovanni Difelice, Langford Church Road
- Philip DeMunck, Mill Street

Bill Green

Bill Green, a Planner with the GSP Group, made a presentation on behalf of landowners in the Watts Pond Road area of north-end Paris who wish to develop their properties.

Mr. Green advised that Ray Brandt had submitted a letter on behalf of these clients requesting authorization to proceed with a privately-funded area plan for North Paris, noting that this area is entirely within the designated settlement boundary. Council approved a resolution on September 19 to defer the initiation of any County-initiated area study and the approval of any privately funded area study. He suggested that Council did not answer Mr. Brandt's request and questioned whether Council could commit to authorizing the initiation of a privately funded area study.

In relation to the Official Plan review, Mr. Green advised that the County needs a better understanding of what type, density and form of development that can be accommodated within North Paris or the whole community. Although the County can talk to the Province about growth targets, it is important to understand the capacity of the existing community to accommodate growth before redefining growth targets and before urban expansion proposals are considered. Mr. Green suggested that there should not be a deferral of their request to carry out a privately-funded area study in North Paris, as the proponents are willing to fund the study and approach other landowners in the area (approximately 200 acres) to participate.

Dave Thomson, St. George

Dave Thomson, representing the Village of St. George Citizens Association, noted that their mission statement is to preserve the distinctive character and qualities of St. George and the surrounding South Dumfries/Ward 1 area by encouraging responsible growth. They want to be consulted on the Official Plan and want to ensure that public consultation meetings will be held in St. George. Mr. Thomson suggested that information on the Official Plan Review needs to be updated on the County's webpage to be current.

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Mr. Thomson noted that farmers should be protected against complaints from estate residential property owners, and that farmland should be used for growing crops, not houses. The current settlement boundaries of St. George can accommodate more than 500 houses, which should be sufficient for the next 10-15 years, without expanding beyond the settlement boundaries.

Robert Kaufman, 135 West River Road

Robert Kaufman requested that the land between the Paris Grand Golf Club to his property on West River Road be changed from restricted agricultural in order to allow for a lot to be severed for residential development so that they can build a smaller house. Mr. Kaufman was requested to provide his request in writing to Planning staff.

Josef Unger, 476 Big Creek Road

Joseph Unger suggested that more emphasis should be placed on residential development and less on preserving agricultural land, in order to generate more tax revenue to provide an education to our children so that they can enter the labour force. He requested that the zoning on his property be verified, as he understood it was zoned residential but was recently informed the land was zoned agricultural. He questioned whether the zoning on his property could be changed without his consent.

Roger Cairns, 76 Capron Street, Paris

Roger Cairns requested that given the restrictive zoning on this property and the Low Density Residential Official Plan designation, increased latitude be considered in the review to permit a broader range of commercial uses on the site.

Murray MacDonald, 52 Blossom Avenue

Murray MacDonald, 52 Blossom Avenue, referred to a presentation made by the Concerned Citizens of Cainsville as the result of a workshop held in February 2005. He noted that Cainsville residents have concerns about the process for reviewing the Official Plan, as this will decide the future of development in the County. Although no decision has been made to develop the Cainsville area, KMK is recommending expansion of the sewage lagoon capacity. The County doesn't have the ability to provide water to Cainsville, so this must be done through the City of Brantford who may not wish to deliver water if they are interested in expanding in another area instead. The citizens feel land preservation is important and that the heavy industrial designation should not be expanded.

Mr. MacDonald noted the need to better publicize and explain the purpose of public meetings so residents can easily understand (e.g. do not refer to "Brant East", but to Cainsville). Councillor Carver provided an explanation of why the Cainsville Lagoon Study had been initiated.

Paul Poirier, 432 Branchton Road

Paul Poirier advised that when the Official Plan was first approved, the designation of his property was changed to Agricultural without his knowledge. This land is incapable of supporting any crops, including trees. He requested that this small parcel of land be rezoned so that he is able to subdivide the property for residential uses.

In response to a question, it was noted that individual property owners will not be

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advised if the designation of their land is being changed. There will be at least ten public meetings on the Official Plan held in various locations throughout the County to allow residents to view proposed changes and provide input. Notices of public meetings will be advertised in local papers and on the County's webpage, and notices will be mailed to people who have requested to be on the mailing list. Mr. Johnston pointed out that the Official Plan designates land uses, and that rezoning applications are required to change the zoning of a particular property and that this is a public notice process.

Councillor Haggart, as Chair of the Planning Advisory Committee, thanked the public for their input at this meeting, and noted that more public meetings will be held if a need is demonstrated.

Moved by – Councillor Haggart

Seconded by – Councillor Emmott

Whereas Section 26(1) of *the Planning Act* R.S.O. 1990, c.P.13, as amended from time to time, requires that the Council of a municipality hold a special public meeting to determine the need for a revision to the Official Plan;

And whereas the County of Brant Official Plan was adopted November 7, 2000;

And whereas the Deputy Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing approved the County of Brant Official Plan on September 5, 2001, which was subsequently approved by the Ontario Municipal Board on September 25, 2002;

And whereas the Provincial Policy Statement was revised in March 2005;

And whereas the Province implemented the Places to Grow Legislation (Bill 136);

And whereas under the Places to Grow Legislation, a growth plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, of which Brant County is a part thereof, was implemented;

And whereas the County of Brant has identified numerous requests for policy and land use changes from residents;

And whereas Council has held the required meeting under Section 26(1) of the Planning Act and based upon the results of this meeting and matters noted above deems it advisable to conduct a scoped review of the County of Brant's Official Plan;

Now therefore the Council of the County of Brant formally authorizes a scoped five-year review of the County of Brant Official Plan, with the Planning Advisory Committee being designated to act on behalf of Council in the hearing of delegations and the review of background material to justify any changes that may be recommended;

That the Planning Advisory Committee be charged with the responsibility of holding appropriate public meetings or open houses to solicit public input prior to the drafting of any amendments to the Brant County Official Plan;

And that the Planning Advisory Committee be charged with the responsibility to report

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back to Council with a final recommendation with respect to revisions on the Official Plan in Official Plan Amendment form having held all statutory meetings.

. Carried

NEXT MEETING

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m. to meet again on **Tuesday, November 7, 2006 at 7:00 p.m.** in the Council Chambers, Paris.

Mayor

Date Minutes Approved

Clerk