

AND THAT Council approve a study of the use of commercial accommodation in the Core Commercial C1 zone, as an amendment to the Thornbury Zoning Bylaw 10-77 as amended, instead of a site specific use involving individual properties.

Carried.

A Public Meeting regarding the matter was held on September 12, 2016. The following issues were raised during that meeting:

1. Parking – Concerns were raised regarding overnight parking and whether that parking would be accommodated on the street, in municipal parking lots or on private lands;
2. Affordable Housing – Presently some business provide residential apartments as an accessory use. The concern was raised that these uses could be replaced with an Inn use;
3. Inn vs STA – Would an Inn be considered an STA use?
4. Licensing – Would Inns be licensed?

D. Analysis

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014)

Planning decisions made by municipal councils must be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Within the PPS, the subject lands would be considered part of the Town's Settlement Area. The PPS notes that it is in the interest of all communities to use land and resources wisely, to promote efficient development patterns, protect resources, promote green spaces, ensure effective use of infrastructure and public service facilities and minimize unnecessary public expenditures. To this end, the PPS also notes that settlement areas, given the fact that they possess existing supporting infrastructure and economic drivers, shall be the focus of growth and development, and their vitality and regeneration shall be promoted. Additionally, the long-term economic prosperity of settlement areas should be supported by promoting opportunities for economic development and community investment-readiness, and maintaining and, where possible, enhancing the vitality and viability of downtowns and main streets.

The inclusion of commercial accommodation spaces within the downtown core of Thornbury provides additional opportunities for economic development and promotes tourism in an already established business area utilizing existing infrastructure and structures. Accordingly, staff are satisfied that the proposal is consistent with the PPS.

Official Plans

County of Grey Official Plan (CGOP)

The County of Grey Official Plan places the villages of Thornbury and Clarksburg within a Primary Settlement Area. The County Plan notes that land use policies and development standards in areas designated Primary Settlement Areas will be in accordance with local Official Plans and/or Secondary Plans. Additionally, the County Plan promotes the development of

Primary Settlement Areas for a full range of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational, and institutional uses. They will also be the focus of a majority of the growth within the County.

Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan

The 2007 Official Plan designates the Thornbury Commercial core lands as Commercial “Com” in the Thornbury Urban Area. The predominant use of land in the commercial designation shall be for all forms of retail and service commercial uses, business and professional offices, restaurants and places of entertainment, public administration buildings and other uses that would not interfere with the primary purpose of the area as a place of commerce.

The Town’s Official Plan also recognizes that the Bruce Street area is the historical commercial core of the Town. The scale of the uses is limited by the size of the existing buildings and a general lack of parking in the area. It is the intent of the Town’s Plan that this perceived core function be retained and that the functions of commercial, residential and other uses that exist be contained in a manner that will retain the small town feel and attractiveness.

The 2016 Official Plan designates the commercial core lands as “Downtown Area”. The “Downtown Area” designation permits a mix of commercial uses that include hotels, motels, inns and related conference and convention facilities, as well as accessory residential uses.

After review of the relevant policies staff are satisfied that the proposal is consistent with the County and Town Official Plans provided that matters relating to scale and parking are addressed in the implementing zoning by-law.

Town of Thornbury Zoning By-law 10-77, as amended

The Town of Thornbury Zoning By-law 10-77 as amended, identifies the subject lands as Core Commercial C1. The C1 zone permits:

- a) Retail stores, business and professional offices, service commercial uses, restaurants, financial institutions, institutional uses, minor parks and open space areas.
- b) Residential uses ancillary to those uses permitted in Clause (a).
- c) Uses, buildings and structures accessory to those uses permitted in Clauses (a) and (b), but excluding open storage.

The C1 Zone also provides additional regulations for accessory residential uses recognized under subsection (b) above. Those regulations provide:

- 1) Location: in the second storey only
- 2) Maximum number of units: one of each 278 square metres of lot area to a maximum of three units for each commercial use.
- 3) Minimum Floor Area/Unit

- i. (1) Bachelor: 40 square metres
- ii. (2) One Bedroom: 55 square metres
- iii. (3) Two Bedroom: 65 square metres

The minimum floor area shall be increased 10 square metres for each additional bedroom.

Although the C1 zone does allow for accessory residential uses on the second floors of existing commercial businesses, it would appear that these uses were intended to be used for long term residential accommodation; a typical apartment use.

Other Matters to be Considered

Additional matters to be considered were brought forward during the September 12th Public Meeting. These matters are discussed below:

Parking

Parking for accessory residential apartments and Inns, by necessity, needs to be considered to be overnight parking as a minimum. Accordingly, such parking is and will be required to be accommodated on-site with one parking space provided per unit. This will be reflected in the zoning provisions for the proposed Inn use and will be controlled through the Site Plan approval process for new Inn proposals.

Affordable Housing

At present there may be as many as 9 apartment uses located within the C1 zone along Bruce Street from Arthur Street to Louisa Street. Although the conversion of these existing apartments into Inn uses may be a possibility, the commercial entities housing these apartments may not all desire to operate an Inn given the varied natures of their businesses. Additionally, the introduction of secondary suites within the residential areas of Thornbury should provide additional opportunities for affordable housing in close proximity to the commercial core.

Inns vs. Short Term Accommodation Uses

The intended introduction of an Inn as an accessory use in the Commercial C1 zone for Thornbury does not fit the definitions of either the Commercial Resort Unit (CRU) or Short Term Accommodation (STA) uses defined in the Thornbury Zoning Bylaw or the Township of Collingwood Bylaw. Although both the CRU and STA uses are a form of commercial accommodation, their mode of operation and the method of rent do not fit the intended Inn use envisioned for Thornbury's downtown area. CRUs and STAs are primarily purpose built residential units that are not associated with a main commercial use. Additionally both forms of accommodation are generally part of a larger rental pool or fractional ownership business or are located in existing mixed residential neighbourhoods. The nature of accommodation envisioned for the Thornbury C1 zone is more reflective of the traditional inn or hotel/motel use.

Licensing

Licensing is typically required to address matters of interest to the municipality, such as human health and safety, economic impact, and taxation. The Town presently does not license hotel/motel or Inn uses in other parts of the municipality. Licensing for Inns is, therefore, not envisioned for the Thornbury area. Matters regarding health and safety and property standards will be addressed through the Site Plan Control and Building Permit approval processes.

Inns as an Accessory use in the C1 Zone

From the above analysis it would appear that the introduction of an Inn as an accessory use in the C1 zone is supported by provincial, county and local planning policy. However, the operation of an Inn unit and its impact on matters such as parking could prove to be problematic unless controls are introduced through the Zoning By-law, Site Plan Control, and Building Permit approval processes.

To ensure that Inns are properly controlled through the zoning by-law the following additions are proposed:

1. That the following definition of an Inn is included in the By-law.

“INN means a building, or a portion thereof, used for the purposes of supplying temporary accommodation to the travelling public, for a fee, and containing guest rooms not intended for occupancy by a person as their principal residence except for the inclusion of one (1) dwelling unit for the owner or operator thereof.”
2. That the C1 Zone provision includes an Inn as an accessory use.
3. That the Inn accessory use includes the following provisions”
 - a. That guest rooms /dwelling unit associated with an Inn are located on the second floor only;
 - b. That one (1) parking space is provided on the property containing the Inn use for each guest room/dwelling unit;
 - c. Minimum Floor Area/Unit:
 - i. Bachelor: 40 square metres
 - ii. One Bedroom: 55 square metres
 - iii. Two Bedroom: 65 square metres
 - d. That the introduction of an Inn use is subject to Site Plan Control.

In summary, it would appear that the introduction of an Inn as an accessory use in the C1 zone for Thornbury may be permitted subject to provisions contained in the above noted proposed zoning provisions. Additionally, the introduction of an Inn use should be subject to Site Plan Control and applicable building permits. Accordingly, staff recommend that Inn uses be included in the C1 Zone of Thornbury through the new Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #1: Create opportunities for sustainability
Objectives #2,3: Attract new Business, Promote a Diversified Economy

F. Environmental Impacts

N/A

G. Financial Impact

N/A

H. In consultation with

PDS staff

I. Attached

N/A

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Benner, MCIP RPP
Director of Planning and Development Services

For more information, please contact:
Michael Benner, Director of Planning and Development Services
mbenner@thebluemountainins.ca
519-599-3131 extension 246