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**STAFF REPORT:**

**Planning & Development Services – Planning Division**



**REPORT TO:** Committee of the Whole  
**MEETING DATE:** June 27, 2016  
**REPORT NO.:** PDS.16.89  
**SUBJECT:** Thornbury C1 Zone –  
 Commercial Accommodation  
**PREPARED BY:** Michael Benner, MCIP RPP  
 Director of Planning and  
 Development Services

**A. Recommendations**

THAT Council receive Staff Report “PDS.16.89 Thornbury C1 Zone – Commercial Accommodation for information purposes.

**B. Background**

In March, 2016 Randy Litchfield of The Corner Cafe & Grill and Casey Thomson of the Cheese Gallery met with the Director of Planning and Development Services to discuss Short Term Accommodation use within the commercial core of Thornbury.

Further to that discussion, Mr. Litchfield and Mrs. Thompson appeared as a delegation before the Committee of the Whole on Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> to ask Council to consider a revision to the Town of Thornbury Bylaw, Commercial Core C1 Zone, to permit commercial accommodation as a permitted use.

Given the nature of the request, and its important impact on the commercial core of Thornbury, at it’s meeting of April 18<sup>th</sup> Council passed the following resolution:

Moved by: Michael Martin                      Seconded by: Michael Seguin

THAT Council receive Staff Report PDS.16.37 Zoning By-law Amendment – Thornbury Commercial Resort Units”;

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.

The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the Whole of the result of additional research on this matter and next steps to be followed.

## **C. Planning 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 Plans**

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 2014 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
  - (1) Bachelor: 40 square metres
  - (2) One Bedroom: 55 square metres
  - (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 Municipalities**

The proposal, as presented by the Thornbury business owners, would be for shorter term accommodation geared more towards the travelling and touring public. This and similar uses are already permitted in the downtown cores of other municipalities across the province. Several examples are cited below:

### Stratford

Stratford's historic downtown is zoned as Central Commercial C3 and includes a wide range of commercial uses including hotels and inns.

An Inn is defined in the Stratford Bylaw as “a building used for the purposes of supplying temporary living accommodation to the public, for a fee, and containing a maximum of ten (10) guest rooms, dwelling units or combination thereof wherein such dwelling units are not restricted to occupancy by a person as his principal residence and may include one (1) accessory dwelling unit for the owner or operator thereof.”

The Stratford Bylaw permits 1 parking space per guest room plus 1 per dwelling unit.

### Niagara on the Lake

Niagara on the Lake's historic downtown is zoned as QUEEN PICTON COMMERCIAL (QPC) ZONE permitting a range of commercial uses including hotels.

### Elora and Fergus (Centre Wellington)

The historic downtowns of the Elora and Fergus communities are zoned Commercial C1 similar to Thornbury and provide a range of commercial uses including hotels, bed and breakfast establishments and accessory residential uses.

## **Commercial Resort Units and Short Term Accommodation Uses**

The intended uses of commercial accommodation in the Commercial C1 zone for Thornbury do not fit the definitions of either the Commercial Resort Unit (CRU) or Short Term Accommodation (STA) uses defined in either 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 use of commercial accommodation 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.

## **Next Steps**

The next step in this process will be to hold a public meeting on the proposed amendment to solicit comment from the local residents and business owners. Staff envision this meeting to be held in late August. Following that meeting, staff will bring a second report, detailing the results of the public meeting, and a draft by-law amendment for consideration as a standalone amendment or inclusion in the new comprehensive zoning bylaw presently under development.

### **D. The Blue Mountains' Strategic Plan**

The recommendation in this staff report is consistent with the Strategic Plan and supports the Goal of Creating Opportunities for Sustainability by Promoting a Diversified Economy.

### **E. Environmental Impacts**

None.

### **F. Financial Impact**

None.

### **G. In Consultation With**

Bruce Street business owners

PDS staff

Stratford, Collingwood, Meaford, Niagara on the Lake and Centre Wellington Planning staff.

### **H. Attached**

None

Respectfully submitted,

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Michael Benner, Director of Planning  
and Development Services

For more information, please contact:  
Michael Benner, MCIP RPP,  
Director Planning and Development services  
[mbenner@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:mbenner@thebluemountains.ca)  
519-599-3131 extension 246