

**To: The Mayor and Members of Council
Town of the Blue Mountains**

From: Napier-Victoria Residents' Group

Contact: Brian Nelson (briannelson@sympatico.ca)
John Corrigan (corrigans@rogers.com)

Re: Councillor Martin's Notice of Motion for Official Plan Amendment (OPA)

Date: November 19, 2012

We support the above-referenced Motion for the following reasons:

1. The proposed OPA addresses a long-standing and very serious planning problem: There are virtually no planning controls in place for vacant lands within the Thornbury Urban Community that are designated 'RES' or 'DD' in the Official Plan. This problem has been acknowledged by both planning staff and consultants. Residents have asked Council on numerous occasions since the fall of 2010 for more specific Official Plan policies and Zoning Bylaw regulations for these areas.
2. We recognize that the five-year Official Plan review presents an opportunity to address this problem. However, this review is already taking longer than initially scheduled. Residents are justifiably concerned that it could take several years for a new OP to be approved, and in the mean time most of the decisions that will determine the future of our area will have been taken.
3. We also understand that Council's decision to not approve the Telfer proposal has been appealed to the OMB. We believe that the proposed OPA represents another clear statement from the community that the major planning issues and deficiencies in our area should be addressed before any large-scale development takes place.
4. Regardless of what happens with the current Telfer proposal, the proposed OPA will still be critically important in order to control development on nearby and adjacent vacant parcels in the area.
5. The Telfer Plan includes an unusual and potentially unsafe road configuration that is designed to suit the needs of a self-contained adult lifestyle village. It illustrates what might happen if one large property owner is permitted to determine the road pattern for an entire neighbourhood in the absence of any planning policies or guidelines. The OPA would allow the Town to put policies in place to ensure a more balanced and rational approach to road and traffic planning.
6. There are major infrastructure issues in this area, including drainage problems and a lack of pedestrian walkways. Large developments will simply exacerbate these problems unless major infrastructure plans and investments are made. The proposed OPA would give the community an opportunity to ensure that infrastructure is planned wisely and keeps pace with development.
7. Residents believe that the Telfer plan is not consistent with the "character" of our community and is therefore not in conformity with our current Official Plan. The OPA would provide an opportunity to put in place criteria that help to define character more clearly, and provide better guidance to Telfer and other developers in the future.