

**STAFF REPORT:**

**Planning & Building Services Department**



**REPORT TO:** Planning & Building Services Committee  
**MEETING DATE:** June 6, 2011  
**REPORT NO.:** PL.11.47  
**SUBJECT:** Official Plan Amendment No. 25, Urban Design Guidelines  
**PREPARED BY:** Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Policy Planner

**A. Recommendations**

**THAT Council does hereby receive Planning Staff Report PL.11.47 Official Plan Amendment No. 25, Urban Design Guidelines; and**

**THAT Council direct Staff to finalize the Urban Design Guidelines; and**

**THAT Council direct Staff to finalize the proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 25, Urban Design Guidelines to the existing Town of The Blue Mountains Official Plan which will add policies that will provide for design guidelines to be established within the Town which will clarify the design objectives of the Official Plan and be considered by the municipality during the development approval process.**

**B. Background**

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the subject matter following the April 2, 2011 Public Open House and to seek Council's direction on moving forward with the implementing Official Plan Amendment and adoption of the Design Guidelines by By-law.

On February 7, 2011, Planning and Building Committee directed staff to hold a Public Open House prior to Council's consideration of the implementing Official Plan Amendment and adoption of the Design Guidelines wherein the Design Guidelines would be presented to the public and the public would be provided an opportunity to ask questions and provide input. The Public Open House was held on April 2, 2011 at which time the Design Guidelines were presented to the public by Kevin Muir of GSP Group Inc. – Planners/Urban Designers/Landscape Architects, being the principal authors of the document.

The public information session was attended by five members of the public. GSP Group Inc. presented on the Draft Design Guidelines followed by a detailed discussion related to the document. As a result, three submissions were submitted to the Town pertaining to Draft Design Guidelines.

The following written correspondence was received as a result of the public open house.

- 1) Letter dated April 2, 2011 from Victor Labreche, Labreche Patterson & Associates Inc. on behalf of A & W Food Services of Canada Inc., McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd., TDL Group Corp., Wendy's Restaurants of Canada Inc. and Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA).
- 2) E-mail dated April 14, 2011 from Jim Uram.
- 3) E-mail dated April 15, 2011 from Brian Nelson on behalf of the Napier-Victoria Residents' Group.

A chart outlining the public comments submitted as part of the above correspondence are outlined in Attachment 1. Copies of the public comments are attached as Attachment 2.

Council has already held the required Statutory Public Meeting for the Official Plan Amendment on January 17, 2011, at which time there were a limited number of comments received pertaining to the Design Guidelines.

As to how the Design Guidelines would exist, best practices in Ontario are reflective of a stand-alone document that is referenced in the Official Plan. This allows for revisions/ amendments to the Design Guidelines without an Official Plan Amendment involving outside agencies. That being said, Town staff are seeking direction from Council with regards to formally adopting the Design Guidelines by By-law and therefore amendments and/or revisions to the Design Guidelines would proceed on the basis of a Public Meeting and a subsequent By-law Amendment.

Implementation of the Design Guidelines would proceed on the basis of the processing of development proposals. Applications would be reviewed in the context of conformity with the Design Guidelines with it being understood that the Design Guidelines would provide flexibility to achieving compliance. In some instances, proposals would be referred to an outside peer review consultant specializing in design for review and comments.

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

1. Managing growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community.

### **D. Environmental Impacts**

The work pertaining to Design Guidelines, which incorporates sustainability strategies, will have a positive impact on the environment.

## **E. Budget Impact**

GSP Group Inc. have been retained at a cost of \$3,125 plus disbursements and HST. Additional costs associated with this project include Public Open House costs for venue rental and staff costs. These costs have been approved as part of the 2011 Planning Services Budget

## **F. Attachments**

1. Chart Outlining Public Comments Submitted as part of the April 2, 2011 Public Open House, Design Guidelines.
2. Public Comments Submitted as part of the April 2, 2011 Public Open House, Design Guidelines.

Submitted by:

---

Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Policy Planner  
The Blue Mountains  
26 Bridge Street E., Box 310  
Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0  
Tel: (519) 599-3131, ext. 262  
Toll Free: 1-888-258-6867  
Fax: (519) 599-3018  
E-mail: [cwelsh@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:cwelsh@thebluemountains.ca)

---

David Finbow  
Director, Planning & Building Services  
The Blue Mountains  
26 Bridge Street E., Box 310  
Thornbury, ON N0H 2P0  
Tel: (519) 599-3131, ext. 246  
Toll Free: 1-888-258-6867  
Fax: (519) 599-3018  
E-mail: [dfinbow@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:dfinbow@thebluemountains.ca)

**Chart Outlining Public Comments Submitted as part of the April 2, 2011 Public  
Open House, Design Guidelines**

<b>#</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1	Letter – Victor Labreche, Labreche Patterson & Associates Inc. on behalf of A & W Food Services of Canada Inc., McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd., TDL Group Corp., Wendy's Restaurants of Canada Inc. and Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA)	April 2, 2011	Recommend adding minor text to ten (10) sections of the Urban Design Guidelines.  Section 2.13 Drive-through Facilities – based on the current wording, object to this section.  Section 4.6.6 Drive-through Facilities – based on the current wording, object to this section.
2	E-mail – Jim Uram.	April 14, 2011	Opined that the Draft Design Guidelines are significantly devoid of implementation tools.
3	E-mail – Brian Nelson on behalf of the Napier-Victoria Residents' Group.	April 15, 2011	In support of the Urban Design Guidelines.

Attachment 2

Comment #1



**Labreche Patterson & Associates Inc.**  
Professional Planners, Development Consultants, Project Managers

April 2, 2011

(Hand delivered to the Town)

Cindy Welsh, MCIP, RPP  
Senior Policy Planner  
Town of The Blue Mountains  
26 Bridge Street East  
P.O. Box 310  
Thornbury, ON  
N0H 2P0

Dear Ms. Welsh:

**Re: Draft Urban Design Guidelines (Town-wide) for Town of The Blue Mountains  
Public Open House on April 2, 2011 – L.E. Shore Memorial Library**

---

As we have previously advised, we represent A & W Food Services of Canada Inc., McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd., the TDL Group Corp., and Wendy's Restaurants of Canada Inc. as well as their industry group association, the Ontario Restaurant Hotel and Motel Association (ORHMA). We are providing this written submission to you on behalf of our clients after having reviewed the above noted Draft Urban Design Guidelines.

We recognize Urban Design Guidelines as an important development review document that is very beneficial to all existing and future stakeholders in the town to guide and greatly assist in achieving well designed and complementary developments in existing and future development areas of the town. While we have reviewed the entire draft document, our comments will concentrate on Section 2 - Commercial Design and Section 4 – Greenfield Design of this document. Based on our preliminary review of this document, it appears to us that the "Commercial Design" section is more geared to the traditional main street commercial areas of Thornbury and Clarksburg while the "Greenfield Design" is more suited to the newer and future commercial areas throughout the town. We will in some cases restate the entire specific guideline with suggested wording changes in bold italic with some commentary to explain our suggested revision or, simply suggest minor word changes to a particular guideline.

Section 2.2 – Scale and Proportion: g) "Design and situate new buildings to maximize the building frontage along the street, preferably up to 100% from side property line to side property where permissible, not including any frontage required for pedestrian connections, ***vehicle access points or complementary urban design/landscape features.***"

We believe, that in many circumstances, enhanced urban design and/or landscape features can work just as well or is better suited in some cases then requiring close to 100% building frontage particularly when the site abuts a parking (public or private) area, park/open space lands or a passive recreational gathering place.

Section 2.2 i) – suggest that the following words in italic be added to the beginning of i) ***Where possible and practical considering the context and surrounding built form of the areas...***

We believe that this would provide for an understanding that while a two storey height is desirable in many cases, not all cases are feasible or practical to require it.

Section 2.12 – Parking c) Where parking in the front yard is unavoidable ***or not practical given the context of the surrounding area...***

This revision is requested as not in all cases will a proposed development occur within a designated "main street" that contains shoulder to shoulder forms of development. The revised wording of this still recognizes the intent and desire of the guideline of avoiding front yard parking, in the appropriate context or setting.

Section 2.12 j) ***Where possible and practical, do not exceed the zoning minimum number of parking spaces.***

Section 2.13 – Drive-through Facilities: a) We do not know what is meant by this guideline – please clarify for us. Based on its current wording we object to it at this time.

Section 2.13 b) ***Where ever possible and practical, particularly when the site is not within a Highway Commercial area, locate...***

This recognizes the fact that in highway commercial areas it is not practical given the surround context of the areas to require the drive-through stacking and pick up lane to be located behind the building.

Section 2.17 – Service Areas and Equipment: b) at the end of this guideline after the last word "building" add: , ***or in a properly screened portion of the side yard.***

Section 4.6.4 – Parking: a) To the beginning of this guideline add - ***Where ever possible...***

After guideline b) in this section the following new guideline be added and the remaining ones in this section be re-numbered according. ***"Where parking in the front yard is unavoidable or not practical given the context of the surrounding area, screen such parking areas with fences/walls and the landscaping to minimize the visual impact on the streetscape.***


Section 4.6.6 - Drive-through Facilities: a) We do not know what is meant by this guideline – please clarify this for us. Based on its current wording we object to it at this time.

Section 4.6.6 b) add to the beginning of this guideline – ***Where ever possible and practical, particularly when the site is not located in a Highway Commercial area, locate...***

Section 6 – Sustainable Design - we believe that there needs to be a statement added to the opening of this section that specifically states something to the effect that ***"while it is understood that the Ontario Building Code specifies the minimum requirements to obtain a building permit, builders are encouraged to meet the following guidelines where ever possible and practical."***

The above represents our comments at this time on this draft document. We look forward to discussing our comments with you at the open house as of the date of this letter. Thank you for your attention to this letter and we request your response to us on the above comments and to be notified of any future consideration of this matter by Town Committee or Council on this matter.

Yours truly,  
**Labreche Patterson & Associates Inc.**



**Victor Labreche, MCIP, RPP**  
**Senior Principal**

VL/

Copy:            *Corina Giles (via e-mail: [cgiles@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:cgiles@thebluemountains.ca))*  
                     *Town Clerk*

*David Finbow (via e-mail: [dfinbow@thebluemountains.ca](mailto:dfinbow@thebluemountains.ca))*  
                     *Director, Planning & Building Services, Town of The Blue Mountains*

*Michelle Saunders (via e-mail: [msaunders@orhma.com](mailto:msaunders@orhma.com) )*  
                     *ORHMA*

*Michael Polowin (via e-mail: [michael.polowin@gowlings.com](mailto:michael.polowin@gowlings.com))*  
                     *Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP*

*Susan Rosales (via e-mail: [rosales\\_susan@timhortons.com](mailto:rosales_susan@timhortons.com))*  
                     *The TDL Group Corp.*

*Leslie Smejkal (via e-mail: [smejkal\\_leslie@timhortons.com](mailto:smejkal_leslie@timhortons.com))*  
                     *The TDL Group Corp.*

*Scott Dutchak (via e-mail: [scott.dutchak@ca.mcd.com](mailto:scott.dutchak@ca.mcd.com))*  
                     *McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd.*

*Paul Hewer (via e-mail: [paul.hewer@ca.mcd.com](mailto:paul.hewer@ca.mcd.com))*  
                     *McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd.*

*Susan Towle (via e-mail: [susan\\_towle@wendys.com](mailto:susan_towle@wendys.com))*  
                     *Wendy's Restaurants of Canada*

*Darren Sim (via e-mail: [dsim@aw.ca](mailto:dsim@aw.ca))*  
                     *A & W Food Services of Canada Inc.*

## Cindy Welsh

---

**From:** JIM URAM [uramjim@rogers.com]  
**Sent:** April 14, 2011 10:47 AM  
**To:** Cindy Welsh  
**Cc:** David Finbow; Duncan McKinlay; Michael Martin  
**Subject:** Design Guidelines

Hi Cindy

I would apologise for missing the open house regarding the above however would appreciate your indulgence with respect to some comments that I have regarding the Guidelines.

In providing these comments I have reviewed the circumstances of a number of other jurisdictions that have guidelines in place and have some experience in implementation. It is my opinion that TOTBM Draft Guidelines are significantly devoid of implementation tools. Section 1.4 of the draft is partly entitled "Application" however the application would appear entirely voluntary. I would strongly suggest that the Town pursue a much stronger approach to the design considerations similar to those used by Collingwood, Kitchener and London as well as many other communities. The guides are intended to be a primary tool under the official plan to achieve a community that all of the residents and businesses can be proud of. They are intended to implement the community's sustainable path as well as act as an economic development tool. In turn the Town has the tools of the zoning bylaw, sign bylaw, property maintenance and occupancy bylaws and other tools to supplement the directions that the guidelines are attempting to promote.

The guidelines contain many suitable individual directions. Each of the directions needs to be reviewed in relation to the best available method of implementation, whether that be in the subdivision review and agreement process, site plan process, imposition by zoning or urban engineering standards or through use of a design committee or team that has suitable expertise to consider the ultimate implementation tools to be used. I would also suggest that the official plan amendment or update contain an explanation of what is to be achieved by implementing a design philosophy and where the design philosophy is taking the look of the community over the next twenty years.

When I first arrived in Thornbury over thirty years ago, I found a community that reflected the Ontario Rural urban design theme with an eclectic mix of architectural styles, heights, landscape elements and development forms. I believe that the ensuing 30+ years of development, including condominium forms and changes in land use areas has maintained and enhanced the essence of that community. With new technologies and new planning priorities that are emerging from Provincial Growth plans there is an urgency to place suitable tools in place to ensure that, as much as possible, we can continue to maintain that direction and the implementation of the direction is as important as the directional guides. I believe that the primary example of the controls necessary to achieve a continuing theme can be seen at the Village at Blue (although their adherence to style may be a bit draconian for the rest of the Town)

Jim Uram  
69 Duncan Street  
Thornbury

## Cindy Welsh

---

**From:** Brian Nelson [briannelson@sympatico.ca]  
**Sent:** April 15, 2011 8:46 AM  
**To:** Cindy Welsh  
**Cc:** John Corrigan; David Finbow; Duncan McKinlay  
**Attachments:** Design Guidelines.PDF

Hi Cindy,

Comments from our group expressing support for the Urban Design Guidelines are attached. Please add this to the record, and acknowledge receipt so we know we have made the deadline.

We regret that representatives from our group were unable to attend the recent open house on April 2. Since then, however, we have had an opportunity to review the presentation slides and the Urban Design Guidelines. It is our intent to do a much better job raising awareness of open house events and other opportunities to discuss these issues in the future.

Thank you,  
Brian

**To: Cindy Welsh**  
Senior Policy Planner  
Town of the Blue Mountains

**CC: Duncan McKinlay**  
Chair, Planning and Building Committee  
**David Finbow**  
Director, Planning and Building Services

**From: Napier-Victoria Residents' Group**  
Contact: Brian Nelson ([briannelson@sympatico.ca](mailto:briannelson@sympatico.ca))  
John Corrigan ([corrigans@rogers.com](mailto:corrigans@rogers.com))

**Re: Official Plan Amendment No. 25 – Urban Design Guidelines**

**Date: April 15, 2011**

We would like to express our support for the Urban Design Guidelines. We urge Council to adopt Official Plan Amendment No. 25 as soon as possible and, further, to ensure that these Guidelines are incorporated into our new Official Plan.

These Guidelines help to fill a significant gap in the Town's framework of planning and development policies. They address many of the concerns that have been raised by residents in our area concerning the critical importance of streetscapes, open spaces, neighbourhood connectivity, diversity of buildings, and many other fundamental design issues.

It is our recommendation that, as these Guidelines are implemented, the unique visual and functional character of the Thornbury-Clarksburg settlement area is recognized and enhanced.

We would like to thank you and your colleagues on staff, the consultants, members of Council and other contributors to this project. We recognize the major effort that has gone into the development of these Guidelines and look forward to their rapid and effective implementation.