



Minutes

The Blue Mountains Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting

Meeting Date: November 16, 2016
Meeting Time: 2:30pm
Location: Town Hall, IPW & P&DS Meeting Room
Prepared by: Heather Drane, Clerk Receptionist, Infrastructure and Public Works

A. Call to Order

- **Present:** James McKinlay, Lynn Vail, Grant McMurchy, John Ardiel, Shawn Postma and scribe Heather Drane
- **Regrets:** Jim Farmilo, Al Lockhart
- **Approval of Agenda**
- **Moved by:** Lynn Vail **Seconded by:** Grant McMurchy

THAT the Agenda dated November 16, 2016 be approved as circulated, including any items added to the Agenda, Carried.

- **Previous Minutes**

Minutes are circulated and approved by the Agricultural Advisory Committee, using electronic mail. Minutes of the October 12, 2016 meeting were included in the November 28, 2016 Council meeting.

B. Deputations, Presentations, Topics

B.1 Correspondence

B.1.1 Information from Shawn Postma regarding "Summary of Proposed Modifications to September 2014 Adopted Official Plan".

Shawn Postma attended the meeting and gave a brief presentation regarding the modifications made to the September 2014 Adopted Official Plan and what applies to agricultural areas.

Shawn noted the Official Plan is now in full force and is on The Town of the Blue Mountains website. There were few appeals in the process and the majority were property specific appeals only.

Shawn showed the land use map with the colour coded areas applying to Agriculture. The grey zone is Rural area and can still be farm land although not ideal, the brown zone is Agricultural Lands and yellow is Special Agricultural. Areas of good Agricultural land is protected for long term use.

The modifications to the Official Plan include the establishment of small scale, diversified uses on farm properties. Diversified uses that are allowed now may include small scale uses, related to agricultural land such as a wood shop, welding shop, cidery, winery, home occupation and a home based business such as agri-tourism. These diversified uses are under strict control, restricted in sizing, has to be small scale and remain small scale. A farm winery would need 5 acres planted out and an estate winery would need a minimum 20 acres planted out. Fruit stands are allowed on the farm within the Agricultural or Special Agricultural designations. Agreements will be in place for site plan control and is enforceable. Enforcement is public complaint generated.

Shawn noted the 2014 adopted Plan also permits Medical Marihuana Production Facilities to be located in the rural areas of the Municipality, not to be located on good farm land such as Agricultural or Special Agricultural designations. Medical Marihuana Facilities are typically warehouse and or greenhouse type structures with everything grown indoors and do not require prime agricultural land. Permitted use will be directed to commercial, industrial or rural areas.

Committee member, John Ardiel joined the meeting at 3:10.

B.1.2 Information from Shawn Postma regarding “Niagara Escarpment Plan Review”

Shawn Postma reviewed mapping of the main areas of change the NEC has proposed. The NEC is development control, they are the approval authority for new development. They are the approval authority for about 50% of Blue Mountain lands. The NEC is looking to re-designate lands that are currently designated ‘Escarpment Recreation Area’, making them more restrictive and can severely limit development opportunities in those areas. Green areas which are areas preserved in their natural state and are no touch zones, are being expanded.

The second change is adding a lot of new areas to the Niagara Escarpment Plan and into Niagara Escarpment Development Control. This expansion would include lands in Ravenna, Redwing and active Agricultural and Specialty Agricultural Lands. Another new area of expansion is along the northwest boundary of Blue Mountains and into Meaford, which includes a significant portion of active Agricultural and Specialty Agricultural lands. Shawn noted if the proposed changes of these expansion areas were approved it could result in lengthy times to obtain a permit to build.

Shawn noted The Town of the Blue Mountains got together with fifteen local municipalities and passed a unified motion that the consultation process has not provided enough information or detailed mapping for municipalities and landowners to comment on these changes or to fully understand the impact this would have if these

changes were approved. The Town requested an extension to the comment deadline until a collaborative consultation process has been completed.

Shawn received a report that NEC will be going ahead with part of the plans but have put the brakes on the new dark blue zones (proposed area expansions). For copies of the Proposed Niagara Escarpment Plan Revisions Grey County NEC mapping, Shawn suggested Committee members go to the County website at: [NEC Expansion Map on County website](#)

B.1.3 Closure of the 10th Line Bridge, restricting route for Agricultural Vehicles and Equipment

John Ardiel requested discussion on the 10th Line Bridge closure affecting the re-routing of agricultural vehicles and equipment.

John Ardiel noted for many years, farmers have used Grey Rd 13 to the 10th Line through Clarksburg to Thornbury to transport their goods and farm equipment until the Clendenan Bridge on the 10th Line, was closed to vehicle traffic, due to structural failure. Since this critical artery for farmers closed, their alternative route is to go through residential streets with their farm equipment. John is concerned about the growing unhappiness with the residents. The extra farm traffic going through residential sections has upset many residents and spurred a group of people, last summer to take up a petition. The Committee agreed they want to start the process of re-opening the 10th Line Bridge.

Jim McCannell was then invited by Committee members to join the meeting to give some background information on the Clendenan Bridge. Jim noted every other year a bi-annual bridge inspection is done by Consulting Engineers. When the inspection of the Clendenan Bridge showed that a significant portion of the bridge abutment failed, the bridge was rendered unsafe for traffic. Jim noted the Slabtown Bridge is the sister bridge to the Clendenan Bridge, which cost one million dollars to repair. Jim noted there is nothing in the budget to start the process of reopening the bridge.

The Agricultural Advisory Committee has recommended the following to Council:

Moved by: John Ardiel **Seconded by:** Grant McMurchy

THAT the Agricultural Advisory Committee request Council review and explore the feasibility of reopening the 10th Line Bridge at the Clendenan Dam, Carried.

C. Adjournment

Moved by: Lynn Vail **Seconded by:** Grant McMurchy

THAT this Committee does now adjourn at 4:15 p.m. to meet again January 18, 2017, Carried.