

STAFF REPORT: Planning



REPORT TO: Mayor & Members of Council
MEETING DATE: May 23,2007
REPORT NO.: PL.07.66
**SUBJECT: Grey Sauble Conservation
Authority Planning Framework
Agreement**

**PREPARED BY: Peter Tollefsen - Director of Planning
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A. Recommendations

THAT Council does receive Planning Staff Report #PL.07.66, “Grey Sauble Conservation Authority Planning Framework Agreement”.

B. Background

In November of 2002, The Town of The Blue Mountains and Grey Sauble Conservation Authority entered into an agreement to describe the framework within which the Authority will provide Planning Act application review and technical clearance to the Town. Amongst other things, the Agreement identified Gray Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) fees for application review. The Agreement requires the Town to collect these fees from the Planning applicants and to forward them to the Conservation Authority.

The GSCA has proposed some minor revisions to the Agreement which would permit certain applications to be exempt from circulation to the Authority. The new clause can be found in attachment 2, Appendix A – Schedule 1.

In addition, a clause was added to the Agreement, if the proposed changes are to be implemented, indicating that the municipality accepts all liability for any application not circulated to the Authority. This clause can be found in attachment 2 section 2 (b) on page 2 of the Agreement.

Staff agree with the changes as it would streamline the review process in that not every application, especially small ones, has to go to the Conservation Authority for comment.

Through the screening process of receiving and reviewing all applications staff can pick out development that requires review by the Conservation Authority and therefore are comfortable accepting the liability clause.

There is a matter of concern related to review of development applications with regard to matters of natural heritage under the Provincial Policy Statement. Through the delegation of review from the Province, the County is responsible for matters of natural heritage and the Conservation Authority is responsible for matters of natural heritage. Through our existing agreement with the GSCA, we have them also providing comments to us on matters of natural heritage which has, on certain occasions, created a conflict. The main concern of the Town is that we are receiving the appropriate advice from a qualified professional. Town staff will be setting up a meeting to address this matter in the near future.

Staff would therefore suggest that Council defer the matter of signing the new Agreement until after staff have met with the agencies to clarify who does what. Appendix A – Schedule 2 of the Agreement deals with services to be provided by the Authority and may have to be revised as per the outcome of the discussions.

C. Strategic Plan

By signing this Agreement will help clarify the review process of development application with economic sustainability of public agencies. This will meet Goal #1 – *“Managing Growth to ensure the ongoing health and prosperity of the community”*.

D. Budget Impact

NIL

E. Attachment

1. Original Memorandum of Agreement dated October 16, 2006.
2. New memorandum of Agreement, including the proposed changes to the Agreement sent March 1, 2007.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Tollefsen, Director of Planning