



Staff Report

Legal Services

Report To: Committee of the Whole
Meeting Date: October 6, 2020
Report Number: FAF.20.162
Subject: Parking By-Law Update
Prepared by: Will Thomson, Director of Legal Services

A. Recommendations

THAT Council receive Staff Report FAF.20.162, entitled "Parking By-Law update" for information; and

THAT Council endorse the expiration of Schedules -F- of the Parking By-law.

B. Overview

At the August 25th Committee of the Whole, Council directed that Staff bring a report to Council advising of any changes which would or could be made to the Parking By-law (2003-11, amended by 2020-40).

C. Background

By-law 2003-11 is the comprehensive by-law regulating parking in the Town. By-law 2020-40 was an amending by-law introduced in repose to the COVID-19 pandemic and which amended 2003-11 by added Schedules E & F to prohibit or limit parking on certain roads throughout the Town from June 30, 2020 to October 31, 2020. One such road was Wards Rd. on which no parking is currently permitted at any time.

D. Analysis

When the COVID-19 pandemic limited travel and indoor recreational opportunities for residents of southern Ontario, many were left searching for outdoor pursuits in an effort to stay busy, active, and engage in responsible social interactions. The Town of the Blue Mountains, as popular four-season retreat, became an increasingly popular destination for those looking to "get out of the city" and those seeking outdoor recreational opportunities. It quickly became clear that without restrictions, the Town's limited waterfront areas would not be able to accommodate the crowds and maintain reasonable physical distancing between parties. In light of this reality, the Town took several steps to help protect the users of our waterfront and recreational areas and minimize any conflict between the users of public waterfront accesses and beaches, and the neighbouring private properties. As Council is aware, to accomplish this

Staff hired 6 seasonal by-law officers and restricted parking in many of the popular waterfront and recreational areas which could not accommodate unlimited crowds.

One such area was Wards Rd. a small water access point with private property on both sides. Staff elected to restrict parking in this area to prioritize the use of the water access for local residents who could access on foot or by bike; similarly, users may have been dropped off at the area, and parked elsewhere. Unfortunately, being unable to police all water access points in Town, limiting parking is one of the only and best tools at Staff's disposal to limit beach and water access use and crowds.

Staff knew that these may be imperfect solutions, but the intent was and is to implement these changes only until October 31, 2020, after which the changes will expire, and parking restrictions will return to the pre-COVID status quo. The lessons learned from this summer will be analyzed and the public will be consulted, over the fall and winter months to help guide any potential new parking restrictions for Spring/Summer 2021, which would ultimately be the subject of a further Staff Report in the New Year.

Some questions that Staff will consider this off-season:

- Which areas of Town faced the greatest pressure from crowds?
- Should Staff introduce time-limited parking in more areas?
- How can Staff identify accessible-parking areas in informal parking zones?
- What enforcement resources will be required to regulate the rules?
- How can the restrictions permit access while limiting public-private conflict?
- How can any rules or restrictions be communicated to residents and visitors?

Keeping in mind that the state of the COVID-19 in Spring 2021 remains a major unknown, the reality of which will guide any Staff recommendations on this issue.

It is Staff's recommendation that no change be made to the parking restrictions at this time, that they be allowed to expire, as planned, at the end of October, 2020 and that Staff return to Council with possible revised parking measures or restrictions ahead of the May 24 long weekend in 2021.

E. The Blue Mountains Strategic Plan

Goal #2: Engage Our Communities & Partners

Objective #1 Improve External Communication with our Constituents

Objective #2 Use Technology to Advance Engagement

Objective #3 Strengthen Partnerships

Goal #3: Support Healthy Lifestyles

Objective #1 Promote the Town as a Healthy Community

Objective #3 Manage Growth and Promote Smart Growth

F. Environmental Impacts

NA

G. Financial Impact

NA

H. In Consultation With

Shawn Everitt, CAO

Ryan Gibbons, Director of Community Services

Shawn Carey, Director of Community Services

Wayne Dewitt, Supervisor By-law services.

I. Public Engagement

The topic of this Staff Report has not been subject to a Public Meeting and/or a Public Information Centre as neither a Public Meeting nor a Public Information Centre are required. Comments regarding this report should be submitted to Will Thomson, directorlegal@thebluemountains.ca

Respectfully submitted,

Will Thomson
Director of Legal Services

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