

**Township of South-West Oxford
Minutes
SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee
September 5, 2023**

In Attendance: Mayor David Mayberry, Councillor Peter Ypma (Ward 2),
and Councillor Craig Gillis (Ward 6)

Staff: Clerk Julie Middleton, Clerk's Assistant Nicole Chambers
and CBO Howard Leaver

Regrets: Paula Beckett (community representative)

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 12:58 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Craig Gillis
Seconded by Howard Leaver

RESOLVED that the agenda for the September 5, 2023 meeting of the SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Peter Ypma
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the minutes of the June 6, 2023 SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

ARU By-law

The Committee reviewed the draft ARU questionnaire which was developed by Oxford County planning staff. This questionnaire is to be provided to anyone looking to construct an ARU on their property, prior to starting the building permit application process. A copy of this questionnaire has been posted on the Township's website. CBO

Howard Leaver requested that this be added as a featured news article to the website as well. Staff will continue to share information about ARUs to help clarify some misinformation (i.e., what “as of right” means and the requirement for a building permit).

Relocation of Library Space/Proposed Daycare/Land Swap

The Committee reviewed the RFP issued by Zorra Township relating to the construction of their new municipal office and attached child care space. It was noted that South-West Oxford has a long way to go before we reach this step – if Council does decide to add child care to Mount Elgin. Discussion took place regarding the relocation of the Mount Elgin library. It was noted that revised plan for phase 6 with an updated stormwater management plan will be provided to Council at their meeting on September 19th.

Market Reports

The Committee reviewed the June and July 2023 market reports and noted that results were as expected.

Correspondence

Stormwater Stroll

The Committee reviewed correspondence brought forward from the Environment and Energy Innovation Committee (Cathy Reeves). The municipality of Bluewater (Bayfield) is holding private tours of their stormwater management, which may be of interest to this Committee, Staff and Council. Councillor Gillis noted that residents in Mount Elgin may not understand their stormwater management, and he suggested that more information be circulated to help them better understand certain aspects, such as the easement.

CAO Mary Ellen Greb, in partnership with Rob Walton (Director of Public Works for Oxford County), is working on a stormwater management plan/proposal to bring forward to Council by the end of the year. The Township of Zorra applies a fee to property tax bills to pay for stormwater management over the long term. Clerk Julie Middleton noted that some municipal drains still exist in now-developed areas – these should have been abandoned and incorporated into storm sewer systems. This will take place in the future, anyone on that system will pay a flat fee for future maintenance and construction costs. The proposal will include all Mount Elgin subdivision phases. The alternative to applying a special levy for people using the system will be to charge all rate payers.

Discussion Items

Oxford County Water/Wastewater Master Plan

The Committee reviewed the draft Water/Wastewater Master Plan, which recommends that the focus should be on improving existing servicing and not expanding servicing to other settlement areas in the County. Oxford County is requesting to receive comments from area municipalities by the end of the month.

Discussion took place regarding the advantages and disadvantages of servicing another village in the Township. Currently, Mount Elgin is our only serviced village, and the water system could last many years at its max capacity. The County has a backup plan if something goes wrong or if development far surpasses the current official plan – which would be to run sewer pipe to Ingersoll, potentially picking up Salford along the way.

The Committee questioned the need for servicing. Is it for growth and development? Do we actually want more homes or need to house more people? Should servicing take place for environmental purposes? Considering the goals of the Committee, if the Township does not have any development or residential growth, we cannot have any input regarding density. Further discussion took place regarding pros and cons of servicing one or multiple villages within the Township.

One Serviced Village

Pros:

- Less of an impact on prime agricultural land – lower quality soil in north-eastern quadrant of Mount Elgin
- Focus on one village “hub” with a mix of housing, trails, parks, stores
- Central location prevents annexation of larger urban centres
- Prevents growth of other settlement areas – priority for many residents

Cons:

- Cost to expand servicing (pipeline to Ingersoll)
- Residents may feel that Mount Elgin is the priority

Multiple Serviced Villages

Pros:

- Growth, more houses and living spaces to our community
- Positive environmental impact (replacing failing septic systems)
- Cheaper to construct now versus the future
- Enables higher density in multiple areas

Cons:

- Higher impact on prime agricultural land
- Serviced rural land might “grow into” other urban areas – urbans could service these areas themselves
- Many existing villages do not have the capacity to grow (i.e., Beachville)

The Committee also discussed how, despite this master plan being in place, a large commercial development forced upon the municipality may change the landscape in the

future and create a different scenario. The Committee supported the continued growth of Mount Elgin as they do not want to lose prime agricultural land, but noted the crisis of having a lack of affordable housing.

Resolution No. 3 Moved by Craig Gillis
 Seconded by Howard Leaver

RESOLVED that the SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee recommend that the Council of the Township of South-West Oxford support and endorse Oxford County's 2024 draft Water and Wastewater Master Plan;

AND FURTHER THAT the SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee endorse the recommended servicing strategies outlined in the County's draft Water and Wastewater Master Plan to meet the Township's growth needs going forward to 2046, which includes focusing any future development within the Township's current serviced village (Mount Elgin), unless servicing becomes critically required by another village.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Directives

- Assist the Township and provide recommendation on taking a leadership role with respect to the consideration of various housing options within the Township and the County of Oxford;
- The SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee acts as a resource, information gathering and advisory body to Township Council on housing needs within the community;
- Monitor and obtain information on the local housing market and identify trends and emerging housing needs in the community and recommend action where appropriate;
- Provide advice and make recommendations regarding affordable housing initiatives and priorities within the community;
- Explore options for facilitating outside partnerships/involvement for new housing;
- The committee will not be directly involved in providing social housing within the community (this is an upper tier responsibility). However, may consider facilitating discussion in this regard should the opportunity arise with available land or interest from developers.

**Howard left the meeting at 2:50 p.m.*

Adjournment

Resolution No. 4 Moved by Craig Gillis

Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that the Committee adjourn at 2:51 p.m. to meet again on October 3, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried