

**Township of South-West Oxford
Minutes
SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee
May 2, 2023**

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

Staff: Clerk Julie Middleton and Clerk's Assistant Nicole Chambers, CBO Howard Leaver (1:03)

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:01 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Peter Ypma
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the agenda for the May 2, 2023 meeting of the SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee be approved, as amended (Provincial Policy Statement).

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Paula Beckett
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the minutes of the February 7, 2023 SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Business Arising from the Minutes

HS 2023-05 – My Second Unit Program Updates

The My Second Unit Program, established by Oxford County, aims to provide funding to eligible homeowners seeking to construct a secondary affordable rental unit on their property. County Council made some changes to this program at their last meeting. The program now includes the following parameters:

- The second unit will be permitted in the primary residence or an accessory building on the property (i.e., above a detached garage), in accordance with Area Municipal requirements.
- A financial contribution of up to \$30,000 will be provided to support the creation of an affordable second unit.
- Family members currently living in the County are now eligible tenants.

The Committee questioned how can we promote this to South-West Oxford residents? Julie noted that we have been sharing Oxford County's social media posts regarding this, but we have not been promoting it due to the current unknowns about ARUs in rural areas. There is not currently an ARU policy in place for South-West Oxford as we do not have any "fully serviced" settlement areas – ARUs are not permitted as a right. Currently, residents must still apply for a zoning by-law amendment (application fee is \$650). A public meeting regarding ARUs has been scheduled for June 20th and 21 days after this meeting the new policy will be in place. A building permit will still be required for any construction. The Township has not received a draft policy yet for review, so we can only speculate what will be permitted based on the draft policies provided to other rural Oxford municipalities. Julie has requested the draft policy from Meghan House at Oxford County.

The Committee reviewed the changes to the My Second Unit program to which David noted that the County only has enough funding for 20-30 units per year. Funding will be available on a first-come, first-serve basis. Rental rates have to be a set price at the rate of affordable housing for a minimum of 10 years. If you do not want to rent the unit, you have to pay the money back. These restrictions prevent individuals from purchasing housing as an income (rental) property. Craig noted this will put more ownership on the property owner to rent to a responsible tenant.

Paula asked if there was a potential for Phase 6 houses to have the option to include a second unit. Howard noted that the current proposed builder wants to work with the Township to create affordable housing and we should discuss this option with them as it would be a great opportunity to bring more housing to the village.

Market Update

The Committee reviewed the March and April 2023 Market Reports. Housing prices have decreased almost 29 percent.

Mount Elgin Housing Proposal

The Committee continued a previous discussion regarding the development of the former "Layton property" on Peggy Ave into blocks of townhome units. This property is currently owned by E & E McLaughlin Ltd., but will be developed by Kirby Heckford. The

Committee discussed the potential of one 6-plex block to house the library on the ground floor, with housing above and below (ARUs). It was discussed how housing projects should be geared to the \$15-25 per-hour range of individuals who are seemingly left behind by the current market.

The Committee discussed how they can get developers to build affordable housing projects – has the County ever considered an incentive program? What kind of dollar value could encourage a developer to build simple, basic homes for a certain income range for people to purchase? The Committee discussed partnering with companies who are seeking housing for their employees.

Discussion took place regarding the capacity of the sewer system in Mount Elgin. David noted that 24 units have already been allocated for by Oxford County to add to the existing system. Howard will contact Brian Graydon regarding his proposal to construct an 8-plex on the historical Elgin Hall property.

The Committee discussed the potential for a reduction in development charges for the construction of “affordable” units – but a definition still has yet to be provided by the province regarding this.

Correspondence

Request for Sharing of Information: Accessible/Universal/Aging in Place Housing

The Committee asked if they could review the findings of this inquiry into steps or incentives that municipalities have to foster the development of accessible units/housing in their communities. Nicole will contact Lynda Lawson, Accessibility Program Coordinator at the City of Oshawa to request if she could share her findings.

AMO Policy Update: Helping Homebuyers, Protecting Tenants Plan

The Committee reviewed this policy update and did not provide comment.

County Council: Affordable Housing Workshop

The Committee reviewed the workshop presentation that Council received in April – it stemmed from a discussion regarding how they can address density in a fair way across the County.

Discussion Items

Provincial Policy Statement

David requested that the Committee review the new provincial policy statement that was released on April 6, 2023. Ontario announced new components of its Housing Supply Action Plan, which seeks to encourage the construction of 1.5 million homes by 2031. The Committee noted that the one area that stuck out was under agriculture – the statement proposes to make significant changes to policies related to the development of lands in prime agricultural areas. A principal dwelling associated with an agricultural operation would be permitted as an agricultural use. Subordinate to the principal dwelling, up to 2 additional residential units would be permitted, provided certain conditions are met, including compliance with minimum distance separation formulas and the appropriate provision of sewer and water services (among other requirements). The additional residential units established can be severed – meaning up to 3 lots may be created provided they meet certain conditions and have existing access and appropriate frontage for egress. They also must be adjacent to existing non-agricultural land uses. Julie noted this is a large change in terms to lots on agricultural lands and expansion of settlement boundaries. She anticipates Planning Staff will prepare a report and circulate it to Council to be added to an upcoming meeting agenda.

Brainstorming Re: Direction of Committee

The Committee was directed to brainstorm their goals and achievable projects. They continued their discussion regarding possible partnerships with local organizations which have been directly impacted by this housing shortage (like ASB Greenworld, the Salford Group, Oxford Hills and ROEDC).

Craig noted that we need to push the envelope of density and highlighted the importance of making the ground level accessible for those who need it.

The Committee requested that Howard inquire with Brian Graydon regarding the possibility of donating land to Habitat for Humanity.

Discussion took place regarding the recent direction from Council to staff regarding exploring options to expand or relocate the municipal office and the land-swap. They discussed multiple options:

- Moving the Township Office to Mount Elgin Community Centre lands (constructing new)
 - Office would be the main floor
 - Housing above and below
 - Daycare could be included on the property
 - Dereham Centre Office could become affordable housing
- Renovating the existing Mount Elgin Community Centre to become the Municipal Office
 - Office would be the main floor with housing above and below
 - Daycare would be the library space

