

October 13, 2010

PLANNING REPORT

RECOMMENDATIONS

THAT the Planning Report of Wellings Planning Consultants Inc., dated October 13, 2010 regarding Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 4 - Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan Conformity be received;

AND FURTHER THAT Council for the Township of Amaranth determines that no further notice of a Public Meeting is required regarding Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 4 pursuant to Section 17(15) of the *Planning Act*;

AND FURTHER THAT Council for the Township of Amaranth adopt Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 4 attached as **Schedule 5** to this report;

AND FURTHER THAT Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 4 be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the County of Dufferin for information.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to bring forth a recommendation to Township of Amaranth Council ("Council") regarding Proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 4 ("OPA No. 4") in order to address conformity between the Township of Amaranth Official Plan ("Official Plan") and the Provincial Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan.

BACKGROUND

The Official Plan was adopted by Council on December 15, 2004 and was approved on October 26, 2005 by the Province. On October 26, 2010, the Official Plan will have been in effect for five (5) years. It was previously recommended that the Five Year Review process occur in two phases – Phase One dealing with Provincial Plan conformity (Greenbelt and Growth Plans) with Phase Two being a more detailed review of the current policies.

Growth Plan

The Growth Plan was prepared and approved under the *Places to Grow Act, 2005*, and took effect on June 16, 2006. Section 12(2) of the *Places to Grow Act, 2005* requires that an official plan be amended to conform with the Growth Plan within three years of the Growth Plan coming into effect (June 16, 2009). The Act also provides the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure with the authority to provide a different date for the conformity exercise.

Dillon Consulting and Watson & Associates Ltd. undertook a Growth Management Study for the County of Dufferin which was completed in December 2008. Phase 1 of the study concluded that the County has a sufficient supply of employment lands to generate 6,000 jobs to meet the Provincial target of 27,000 jobs by 2031. Phase 1 of the study also concluded that the County's supply of housing units is 1,500 units short of the Growth Plan target of 10,000 units. Phase 2 of the study identified a preferred growth strategy with the bulk of growth concentrated in the three urban serviced municipalities of East Luther Grand Valley, Shelburne and Orangeville.

The lands currently designated in the Township Official Plan, for existing and future growth, have been included in the available land inventory used in the Growth Management Study. Through the adoption of the Greenbelt/Growth Plan conformity Official Plan amendment, the Township will be solidifying the status of its designated employment and residential lands.

Since the Greenbelt Plan provides for the continuation of employment and residential land use designations in the "Protected Countryside", provided such lands were designated prior to December 16, 2004, the Township has a sufficient supply of land for growth purposes. In essence, the Township of Amaranth Official Plan does not require the designation of any new Greenfield areas in order to comply with either the Growth Management Study or the Provincial Growth Plan.

In a letter dated May 13, 2009, the Township CAO/Clerk –Treasurer advised the Minister of Energy and Infrastructure that the Township would like to proceed with the Growth Plan conformity exercise as part of the Official Plan Review but were unable to do so due to the lack of Provincial feedback. In a letter dated July 2, 2009, the Minister granted this request and set a new deadline of June 16, 2010 for the Township to amend its Official Plan to conform with the Growth Plan.

By June 16, 2010, a response to the Growth Management Study prepared by Dillon Consulting and Watson & Associates Economists Ltd., had not been received from the Province. A further extension was requested on June 11, 2010 of the Minister by Township staff.

On August 13, 2010, a formal reply from the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure was received which is attached as **Schedule 1** to this report. The letter confirms the Growth

Plan population and employment forecast numbers to 2031 for all Dufferin County area municipalities including the Township of Amaranth. The Amaranth population forecast is 4,680 while the employment forecast is 810 persons.

Greenbelt Plan

The Greenbelt Plan was established under Section 3 of the *Greenbelt Act, 2005* and took effect on December 16, 2004. According to Section 9 of the *Greenbelt Act, 2005*, the conformity exercise is required to be carried out as part of the Official Plan Review process and Section 26 of the *Planning Act* provides the applicable legislation to guide this process. While this conformity exercise is not bound by the June 16, 2010 deadline, we believe it is appropriate to address both Provincial Plans in Phase One of the Official Plan Review.

Only a small portion of the southeast corner of the Township of Amaranth is affected by the Greenbelt Plan. All of Lots 1, 2 and 3, Concession 1 are designated "Protected Countryside" in the Greenbelt Plan, as well as Part of Lots 4, 5 and 6, Concession 1 and the easterly portions of Lots 1, 2 and 3, Concession 2. The "Protected Countryside" designation in the Greenbelt Plan is comprised of the Agricultural System and the Natural System. The Agricultural System is made up of specialty crop areas, prime agricultural areas and rural areas. The lands designated Protected Countryside are not affected by the Natural Heritage System.

The Greenbelt lands in the Township of Amaranth do not contain any lands that are designated as Agricultural. The lands designated "Protected Countryside" in the Greenbelt Plan are designated "Rural", "Extractive Industrial", "Estate Residential", "Environmental Protection" and "Employment Area" in the Official Plan.

March 12, 2010 Staff Report Recommendations

A planning report addressing the Official Plan Review process was presented to Council on March 17, 2010. Council adopted the following recommendation:

THAT the Report of Wellings Planning Consultants Inc., dated March 12, 2010 regarding the Official Plan Review – Provincial Plan Conformity be received;

AND FURTHER THAT in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act* Township staff and its consultants be authorized to initiate a comprehensive review of the Township Official Plan ("Five Year Review");

AND FURTHER THAT Township staff and its consultants be authorized to undertake the comprehensive review in two phases; The Phase One review will bring the Township Official Plan into conformity with the Greenbelt Plan, 2005 and the Growth

Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2006; Phase Two will address additional matters of provincial interest, provincial policy statements and matters of local interest;

AND FURTHER THAT in accordance with Section 26 of the *Planning Act*, Council authorize a Public Meeting to be held on Wednesday May 19, 2010 at 8:00 pm to discuss revisions that may be required to achieve conformity with Provincial Plans;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure as the Township's response to the request for the provision of a Growth Plan conformity work plan;

AND FURTHER THAT a copy of this report be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and the County of Dufferin.

A copy of the Council's resolution dated March 17, 2010 is attached as **Schedule 2**.

SECTION 26 PUBLIC MEETING – MAY 19, 2010

Section 26(1) of the *Planning Act* states that not less frequently than every five (5) years the Council of a municipality must revise the Official Plan to ensure that it:

- “(i) conforms with provincial plans or does not conflict with them as the case may be,
- (ii) has regard to the matters of provincial interest listed in section 2, and
- (iii) is consistent with policy statements issued under subsection 3(1);”

A Section 26 Public Meeting was held on May 19, 2010 to commence the Official Plan Review process. The focus of the Section 26 Public Meeting was on revisions to the Township Official Plan to establish Provincial Plan conformity (i.e. Growth Plan and Greenbelt Plan) which is considered Phase One of the Official Plan Review process.

It is anticipated that a further report will be forthcoming in early to mid-2011 requesting authorization to proceed with a further Public Meeting under Section 26 of the *Planning Act* for Phase Two of the Official Plan Review.

The Minutes of the May 19, 2010 Public Meeting are attached as **Schedule 3**. There were several residents who signed the attendance register for this meeting.

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE – SEPTEMBER 29, 2010

The Public Open House held on September 29, 2010 was attended by seven (7) residents. Information was provided to these residents along with draft copies of OPA No. 4.

PUBLIC MEETING – OCTOBER 6, 2010

The Statutory Public Meeting was held on October 6, 2010. There were three (3) property owners/residents in attendance.

Mr. Glen Broll, Planning Consultant, spoke on behalf of the Westside Commerce employment lands. Mr. Broll was concerned with the timing of the processing of their Official Plan Amendment and Rezoning application and wanted some assurance that the existing Employment designation affected by the Greenbelt Plan could be implemented through the proposed policies of OPA No. 4.

In response, Mr. Broll was advised that the intent of OPA No. 4 is to implement the existing approved land use designations in the Official Plan. It was noted that while Section 7 of the *Greenbelt Act* requires all planning decisions to conform with the Greenbelt Plan, Section 5.2.1 of the Greenbelt Plan states:

“Where an official plan was amended prior to December 16, 2004 to specifically designate land uses(s), this approval may continue to be recognized through the conformity exercise addressed in section 5.3 and any further applications required under the Planning Act or Condominium Act, 1998, to implement the official plan approval are not required to conform with this Plan.”

The Employment designation is within the adopted and approved Official Plan and the policies of the Greenbelt Plan permit such designations to be carried forward through site-specific applications. It was further noted that these designations are important in achieving the aforementioned Growth Plan targets that provide the Township with limited growth/assessment.

Mr. Broll further asked if the population and employment numbers are targets or maximums. It was indicated that the numbers were targets.

Mr. Winston Uytendogaart enquired as to the rationale for the Greenbelt Plan boundary not following property lines as well as the potential to expand the Greenbelt Plan boundary.

In response, it was explained to Mr. Uytendogaart that the Greenbelt boundary followed the boundary of the Credit Valley Conservation watershed. Further, it was noted that although the Province allows for consideration of expansions to the Greenbelt Plan boundary, there has been no interest at this point in the Township. Very few municipalities have decided to embark on this Provincial initiative.

There was concern whether the Greenbelt Plan boundary could lead to annexation. This is not the intent of the Greenbelt Plan and the matter of annexation would be a completely independent process.

Council enquired as to whether this was the opportune time to review the redesignation of other lands in the municipality. Council was advised that The Phase Two process would be the more appropriate process to consider this matter.

CIRCULATION LETTERS RECEIVED

Notice of the aforementioned Public Open House and Public Meeting along with draft OPA No. 4 was circulated to various public agencies on September 3, 2010. The Township received two (2) letters from Credit Valley Conservation and Grand River Conservation Authority with respect to draft OPA No. 4 which are contained within **Schedule 4**. Both Credit Valley Conservation and Grand River Conservation Authority have no concerns with Proposed OPA No. 4.

CONCLUSIONS:

It is recommended that Council adopt Proposed OPA No. 4 attached as **Schedule 5** to this report and further that the amendment be forwarded to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing for approval. The draft amendment clarifies the lands affected by the Greenbelt Plan and identifies the growth targets intended to achieve conformity to the Growth Plan. The policies of OPA No. 4 integrate the policies of the Greenbelt Plan with the current approved Official Plan policies to enable existing growth related land use designations and associated policies to be implemented thus establishing conformity with the Growth Plan.

Once conformity with the Provincial Plans has been completed through the Provincial approval of OPA No. 4, Township staff and its consultants will address Phase Two of the Official Plan Review. This phase will identify other matters of provincial and local interest. A second public meeting under Section 26 of the *Planning Act* may identify other policies of concern which Council may consider amending, if deemed appropriate and in the public interest. A second Section 26 Public Meeting will occur in early to mid-2011.

Respectfully submitted,
WELLINGS PLANNING CONSULTANTS INC.



Glenn J. Wellings, MCIP, RPP