



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Wednesday March 23, 2022

TIME: 7:05 p.m.

PLACE: Virtual Meeting held by Zoom Webinar

FILE: Zoning By-Law Application D14/HUT – James and Sharon Hutton
– 6547 Wellington Road 34, Rear Part Lots 2 and 3, Concession 2

Zoning By-Law Amendment D14/HOM – Township of Puslinch
Initiated Zoning Amendment Relating to Home Industry
Provisions

MEMBERS: Councillor Matthew Bulmer – Chair
Councillor Jessica Goyda
Councillor John Sepulis
Councillor Sara Bailey

**TOWNSHIP and
COUNTY STAFF:** CAO, Glenn Schwendinger
Municipal Clerk, Courtenay Hoytfox
Deputy Clerk, Jeff Bunn
Senior County Planner, Zach Prince
Manager of County Planner, Meagan Ferris

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. The purpose of this Public Meeting is to inform and provide the public with the opportunity to ask questions, or to express views with respect to development proposals. The Councillors are here to observe and listen to your comments; however, they will not make any decisions this evening.

Zoning By-Law Application D14/HUT – James and Sharon Hutton – 6547 Wellington Road 34, Rear Part Lots 2 and 3, Concession 2

Presentation:

Matthew Robson, Robson Development Consulting, agent for the property owner, provided an overview of the proposed zoning amendment, including:

THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT of the application is to amend the Township of Puslinch Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw 23-2018 from Agricultural (A) Zone and Natural Environment (NE) Zone to:

1. Site Specific Agricultural (A-) to permit one 86m² home business (office) within a detached structure; and
2. Site Specific Natural Environment (NE-) to permit an existing detached accessory structure to be converted to a 206m² detached Additional Dwelling Unit (ADU).

Chair Bulmer then invited members of the public to provide comments. The Clerk, Courtenay Hoytfox, read a written statement submitted by Thomas Marko, Madorn, Snyder LLP, on behalf of Simon Poladian. There were no questions from members of the public.

There were no questions from members of Council.

Zoning By-Law Amendment D14/HOM – Township of Puslinch Initiated Zoning Amendment Relating to Home Industry Provisions

Presentation:



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Zackary Prince, Senior Planner, County of Wellington, provided an overview of the proposed Township Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment, including:

THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT – The Township has undertaken a review of the existing zoning provisions related to Home Industries (Section 4.12) and are considering changes to provisions within Zoning By-law 023/18 related to this use. The proposed changes include but are not limited to: the minimum lot sizes permitted to have a home industry; outdoor storage; setbacks including from abutting dwellings; scale and maximum area. This is a Township initiated amendment that affects all lands in the Township of Puslinch where home industries are a permitted use (unless otherwise specified).

The Chair requested if there was anyone in attendance that wished to express his or her views on the Township Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment.

Marc Reid – Wellington Federation of Agriculture

Major concern really is just around we'd like to see some language where it's going to identify that home industries and home businesses are not, and should not, in any way prohibit agricultural related uses as they're defined by OMAFRA or on-farm diversified uses.

Zachary Prince – Senior County Planner

The document you're referring to is the publication by the Ontario government, the Permitted Uses in Prime Agriculture, that talks about on-farm diversified agriculture related in our opinion for the most part these home industries would be considered on farm diversified uses. Generally, the examples provided as a welding shop or a carpentry shop would fall under a similar farm diversified use. In our mind, by allowing the home industries in the manner that we have, we're really not changing anything for a larger agricultural lot. Really, we're trying to address more concerns around smaller lots or residential lots, kind of when there's more concentration of residential uses. So we haven't introduced any language related to agricultural related or on-farm diversified uses, but that that's because our opinion is that the home industry would mostly fall under that on-farm diversified use category.

Marc Reid – Wellington Federation of Agriculture

That's our concern if it falls into that home industry then it would fall under this rule, so if it's something prohibited or the size of operation or for example you're proposed accessory building must be a hundred percent that use, if a farmer has a welding shop for his equipment in their storage barn, a section of it, that's going to now be prohibited which should not be because it on the farm on farm to diversified use is protected by OMAFRA, or supposed to be.

Zachary Prince – Senior County Planner

I understand your concern and I think that's a good point to clarify as well too. Assuming that someone is meeting the existing provisions for a home industry in the Zoning By-law, we can look at how this interacts more so with an agricultural property. Again we've been looking at it more so in the agricultural area on a residential type lot. I do understand your concern, that's something that we'll have to discuss a little bit further thank you.

Meagan Farris – Senior County Planner

Mr. Reid I'm hearing your concerns that if we boiled it down to some of the provisions, and not necessarily the broad perspective that you may be speaking of, are you in part concerned that maybe it would be limited to just one building versus a portion of a barn is that kind of the crux of the concern?



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Marc Reid – Wellington Federation of Agriculture

That was just a specific example I could think up off the top of my head. What our concern is, from the Wellington Federation of Agriculture's point of view, is this not conflicting with any currently allowed and protected use of farming operations that are going on. So, that was just one I could pick out. But we understand the need for this, and Mr. Prince had said it, it's for your smaller lots that are technically zoned agricultural, but they're not agricultural, like a two acre lot – it's not agricultural, though zoned like that for some reason, so yes, there needs to be some rules. So our concern, or thought, was you just simply say well either a) any property greater than a certain number doesn't get included in any of this, there's one simple way to do it or, b) if it's an agricultural related use or on-farm diversified use as defined by OMAFRA again that does not fall within these provisions.

Meagan Farris – Senior County Planner

Okay and I can understand that, and we can take a look at that in a little bit more detail. I think the way we looked at it is that we weren't necessarily intending to infringe on that because really, from the perspective that the PPS clearly states that these are permitted uses with respect to primary Agricultural areas, then it provides the guidelines that explain how these uses can be considered. Then the other layer is how are they ingrained in a by-law itself. I'm thinking maybe we'll just have to look at some of the provisions a little bit more from the context of an agricultural use, and I think you made a good point about if there's a need to exclude like certain sizes – so put maybe a range in there for a lot sizes. But at the end of the day, I guess it's kind of like how the Township deals with home industries, whether you're a residential lot or an agricultural use, you're going to be limited to what the potential provisions might end up being. I guess we would just have to make sure, really crystal clear, on whether we meet those guidelines, because the guidelines talk about if you're an on-farm diversified clearly being on an actual agricultural operation you're secondary to the use so that comes into the scale of the actual operation. And making sure there is limited impacts in terms of the surrounding uses. So I guess from our perspective, we wouldn't necessarily be offending those policies. But I can see where you're saying that perhaps it provides some restrictions that maybe impact one scenario maybe indirectly when we're kind of focusing more on potential areas where there's more conflicts. So we'll take that back and review that a little bit more.

Kathy White – 540 Wellington Road 35

One concern that I do have, and I mentioned forever ago, was the definition of a small scale and that's always been in the eye of the beholder. We've talked about these little businesses and they grow and then they move on. But they don't always move on. I don't know how you would define small scale, but it's going to be different to everyone and until there's a complaint, that small scale business could be pretty big so that concerns me as a neighbor having to actually complain about the size of a business. I'd like some thought put into a small scale again if that's possible because they grow. Why wouldn't you work from your backyard rather than buying a lot in the business park or an industrial area? The other thing that I was going to say to Marc Reid, was that the example that he used of repairing your own equipment isn't the business. It's something that you're doing for you, maybe you just thought about it in the spur of the moment, but things that you're doing to repair your own equipment on the farm, for instance in the welding shop, if it's not a business that you're working for someone else, then this wouldn't apply, does that make sense.

Chair Bulmer

I'm not going to open up a discussion.

Kathy White – 540 Wellington Road 35

I'm not discussing what he was saying. The difference here would be if you're doing something for your own purposes, you're not in a business of selling something or producing something, so there's a distinction there I think.



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Chair Bulmer

To a degree I believe Mr. Reid was also speaking from the perspective of the Wellington Federation of Agriculture and many farmers who have this on-farm diversified use. It is part of their existing business, I think, so I wouldn't want to characterize it as not being part of a business if it's just part of a farm, if that provides some clarity too.

Kathy White – 540 Wellington Road 35

Yeah okay that's fine – yes, I get it. I just wanted some clarity around that because I didn't see that as being something you were directly selling.

Barclay Nap – 4402 Concession 11

Home industry/home business is very important. As it was mentioned, I believe by the previous speaker, opportunity for someone to try out having their own business at home, and slowly expanding, this is doing it in a rural setting, it gives a great opportunity for it. I believe Puslinch is a great place to have an entrepreneurial development of a business. Looking at Corwin Tool Manufacturing, Rutham's Gourmet Preserves, and Sweet Temptations who now have a commercial site over by the Old Brock Road School. Starting and giving yourself an opportunity, I think is very important. Trying to fill a need, or a void, one of my suppliers for my produce growing business, they started in a portion of their father's machinery shed, and they just started selling supplies to other produce growers and greenhouse growers in the Elmira area. They couldn't afford their own building. Eventually, they were able to grow and then they were told they needed a commercial building and they're currently growing in that commercial building as well in Elmira. I think Puslinch has a very fair and straightforward Zoning By-law for home industries. Seeing it become overly restrictive may discourage some people. Starting a business in Puslinch, I know looking at what Guelph-Eramosa had for their proposal for redoing their zoning by-law for home industries, it seemed very restrictive. So I would like to support, or just mention the support that a lot of people starting out now or realizing that they don't like their jobs and they would like to try something that is their passion, should be supported. I appreciate this being looked at by council and staff.

There were no further questions from members of the public in attendance or from members of Council.

Adjournment:

The meeting adjourned at 7:59 PM.