



## THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING MINUTES

**DATE:** Wednesday May 25, 2022

**TIME:** 7:00 p.m.

**PLACE:** Virtual Meeting held by Zoom Webinar

**FILE:** Zoning By-Law Application D14/AUD – Audrey Meadows – Part of Lots 17, 18 and 19 Concession 8, Township of Puslinch

**MEMBERS:** Mayor James Seeley  
Councillor Matthew Bulmer  
Councillor Jessica Goyda  
Councillor John Sepulis  
Councillor Sara Bailey

**TOWNSHIP and COUNTY STAFF:** Chief Administrative Officer, Glenn Schwendinger  
Municipal Clerk, Courtenay Hoytfox  
Deputy Clerk, Jeff Bunn  
Manager of Planning and Environment, County of Wellington, 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/AUD – Audrey Meadows – Part of Lots 17, 18 and 19 Concession 8, Township of Puslinch**

#### **Presentation:**

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., agent for the property owner, provided an overview of the proposed zoning amendment, including:

THE PURPOSE AND EFFECT of the proposed Official Plan Amendment is to add a Special Policy area to Section 9.8 Puslinch Local Policies of the County of Wellington Official Plan and amend Schedule A7 Puslinch to facilitate residential development on private on-site services on approximately 14.5 hectares of lands abutting an existing Country Residential subdivision (Audrey Meadows).

The Zoning By-law amendment proposes to amend the Township of Puslinch new comprehensive Zoning By-law 23-2018 to rezone the subject lands from Agricultural (A) Zone to:

1. A specialized zone category (Rural Settlement Residential Zone (RSR)) to establish zone regulations specific to the proposed development.

We have had the opportunity to review the County Report and it is our respectful opinion that the Township needs additional lots to provide a reasonable amount of growth for the future and this balance growth is needed not just from a municipal tax-based perspective but also from a local employment perspective. There is a big multiplier effect associated with these types of construction projects and we think that the Township also needs this to satisfy the Provincial Policy Statement provisions for having available supply of housing lots for the future.



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We think this will check that box as well. My client has been in the housing business for several decades. He has had the opportunity to build a beautiful subdivision just to the south of the lands that we are talking about today and he knows that there are very few lots in the Township. We have reviewed housing lot supplies and we also think that there is a not just a need for it, there's a demand for it. There is a low supply and we think that this application will help to fill that gap for the township or partially fill the gap. My client has long tradition of building houses in the Township and in the County and he is simply requesting an opportunity for his family business to continue and to have the chance to build these additional houses that we are talking about now.

The proposal is for a 22 lot subdivision. It is similar in many characteristics to the existing type of development pattern in the local area. It is a large lot subdivision to be serviced by private wells and private tertiary septic systems. It is fronting on Victoria Road, and Victoria Road was improved by Mr. Good on the last subdivision. We have our Engineer who looked at the safety of the road and he has a report on that and this will also be looked at in more detail at the next stage of the development application. If we could bring up the conceptual plan that might help illustrate what were what we are talking about is that possible.

It's a 22 lot proposal there's an entrance on to Victoria Road and one of the key features here is that the development is well set back from natural heritage features. We also have a provision for a large storm water management block and then there is an area that could be used for open space systems and ecological enhancements. It is our view that the development respects natural heritage features, it is located on poor quality agricultural soils there is no livestock barns in proximity to the site. We think there would be no impact on adjacent agricultural operations and as I mentioned before, it will be serviced by private bedrock wells. That aquifer is known to be productive good source of good clean water and the aquifer is protected by a silty overburden with substantial thickness. This type of development is similar to what has happened in the Township and the reason for it is the Township does not have municipal services. If there were then we would ask to hook into municipal services but there is not anything like that available. We've identified potential for open space uses subject to the wishes of the Township. We have protected the environmental features and those will be zoned appropriately the natural environment, it is a protection zone.

The details of the application are as follows: we have an Official Plan Amendment and a Zoning Bylaw Amendment, but we do not have a Draft Plan of Subdivision Application into the county. We did that for a specific reason to stage the approvals. So this is the first stage and it would set out the principle of development, and then the second stage would work on the refinements to the development through detailed lot alignments and detailed study and say of storm water management or and a well test things like that.

The purpose of the Official Plan Amendment is to recognize the subject lands as part of an existing rural settlement and to permit the development to infill and round out that rural settlement. The zoning by-law amendment would be to a rural settlement residential zone and that closely aligns itself with the provisions of the hamlet residential zone. A key feature of the zone is we've asked for a holding zone provision and that provision provides protection to the Township to ensure that all matters related to financial and servicing and environmental and any other requirements are completed to the Township satisfaction. That wouldn't removed until the Township is satisfied. I mentioned before the environmental lands will be protected in a special zone and that would have a setback on it as well.

In terms of uh precedent, we reviewed that County Official Plan and we noted that there are several site-specific approvals in the plan. Special policy area 7-6 recognizes the Lakes Adult Lifestyle Community, policy area 7-2 recognizes the Mill Creek Residential Area and Policy Aarea 7-3 recognizes the Reids Heritage Lake Area and there's a special policy for the Puslinch Lake



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Area as well. Throughout the County, there's also special provisions. We noted one up in Wellington North for recognizing rural clusters so this has happened in the past on special applications. For our proposal we've just used the term policy area 7-9, and it says that for the areas described as Part of Lots 17, 18 and 19 Concession 8 Township of Puslinch, notwithstanding any provisions in the plan to the contrary these lands may be developed for residential dwellings the dwellings shall be serviced by individual private water and wastewater services pursuant to policy 6.4.7. This development is deemed to be residential infilling of an existing rural settlement the development contributes to the fulfillment of the local municipal growth strategy and the development shall be implemented through zoning and applying a subdivision or plan a condominium. In terms of the issues, we have had substantial reporting and feedback from the Townships peer reviewers and in particular the Grand River Conservation Authority. To date, it is our view that we have satisfied the technical comments for this stage of the study and we've noted that there are additional requirements for the next stage of the study, that would be the draft plan approval stage. My client is committed to working with the Township and the Township staff and the peer reviewers to address any concerns and like I said, specific design standards will be set out at the next stage.

In terms of discussions with the public, Mr. Good has had discussions with the residents of the existing subdivision and we have included them in part of our water-testing program. Mr. Good has had an open door policy, I guess as open doors can get during the COVID, so someone addresses a concern to him he tries his best to get back them. We will continue to do that in the future.

The final thing that I'd like to conclude on here is that we had a good meeting with the Planning Advisory Committee and they passed a positive resolution subject to conditions and those conditions we would be addressing hydrogeology, traffic, consideration for rear lot buffering from the adjacent development, in conformance with provincial legislation. I think that the aspect of the rear lot buffering and the open space systems and all those things those would be matters that would be addressed by say a landscape architect at the next stage in the study process. Thank you that is our overview and like I said we are here to try to address any questions or concerns the public might have.

Mayor Seeley then invited members of the public to provide comments.

Jaclyn Gallina – 10 Elizabeth Place

What is the timing on this project if you receive other approvals when would construction start?

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

I would say we're at least a couple years to get the approvals in place and then after that I think they would like to get going as soon as they can. But we're still a few years away yet.

Jaclyn Gallina – 10 Elizabeth Place

You mentioned access from Victoria Road, are you also planning to have a road connecting Phase One and Phase Two?

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

That's one of the ideas that we'd bounced around in the concept plan. I think it would connect it well but it's conceptual. We, I think, would work with Township Council and Staff to determine what they would like to see as well.

Jaclyn Gallina – 10 Elizabeth Place

Obviously as current members of Phase One we worry about traffic increasing through our neighborhood, there's a lot of young children, so that's just one concern we have. Also along



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those lines, it is getting to be a pretty big subdivision. I am just wondering about amenities such as a park with a playground?

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

I do not think there's any plans in the existing subdivision for a park or a playground. But we had set aside an area within this conceptually for open space features, so that is a possibility. We would certainly like to talk to staff and Council about that and work with our landscape architect too to come up with something that is nice and safe.

Jaclyn Gallina – 10 Elizabeth Place

There are a ton of children in the neighborhood already and then with 22 new houses, of course there's sure to be more and we also get a lot of people walking through our neighborhood from the surrounding area. That is it for me, thank you.

Joel Sherwood – 88 Old Ruby Lane

My question has to do with the the overall septic performance and groundwater and surface water concerns in the area. Notably there is some septic issues currently at hand that need resolving outside of the builder and the engineering design, which is a burden on the homeowners. I wonder if this will bring on more burden to these groundwater, surface water and then storm water management in Phase Two and how this might affect us in Phase One.

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

Mr. Mayor, through you, I do not know how to address that question because I am not aware of the septic performance issues. I have my own septic system and every year there is a requirement for getting it maintained. But I don't know what your setup is there, so maybe that's something that we would be best to follow up with the resident and try to hammer out the concerns and how it can be addressed, if it can be addressed.

Joel Sherwood – 88 Old Ruby Lane

Thank you. Overall, I think the size of the lot in the irrigation the landscape design will lend itself to a lot of developed land and so I think there is some concerns overall but thank you for addressing that.

I have a number of neighbors that are subject to a lot of flooding every spring with a lot of standing water in their backyard which is a bit of a hazard because it is quite deep with the young children. I am wondering if existing grading in the area will be addressed as part of Phase Two?

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

Through you Mr. Mayor, we are aware of that and we have our engineers at the next stage they are going to be looking at that, and mechanisms to deal with the water on the site. So yes, we are aware of the issue and we are going to try to deal with it.

John Slood – 4726 Watson Road

I am a resident of Puslinch Township, I work in this Township, and my first job was 16 years old when I started in this Township. I have lived in this Township for 37 years. I am owner and operator of Slood Construction Limited in Guelph, and I have built a lot of homes in in Puslinch.

I've been blessed that I've been able to work basically in my backyard.

I've never had to commute, I don't know what that is so it's been a blessing for me and my company. It's been a blessing for me and my family. I would like to thank Rob for his comments and I would totally agree, 100%, that this Township needs more access to more available land. I think it's good that if there's land here that we can build on, that we can live in, and work on. I think it's good for everybody. It's good for the County and supports the schools and supports



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the infrastructure. It is good for the Township. It is a good tax base support. But it's also good for local citizens. It creates jobs, and just like I said, a job like mine, a job that is close to home, which is basically what we all want. Nobody really wants to commute. Like I said I've been blessed. I have been able to do that. I have family, my immediate family lives in the Township. To me that is not normal, but again I am blessed.

I would like to encourage that it can become a norm and that our young people today can live and work in their own community rather than have to go somewhere else. That is becoming far harder to do because there is nothing here. So I'm support of this subdivision. I would like to remind Council and all the citizens of the of Puslinch that there is a little village called Arkell. I am a little passionate about Arkell. That is basically where we live. I have supported this Township and I have supported Arkell for many years. I would like to remind that in 2006 we put a planned expansion for the hamlet through the County. Through the County planning process, we have gone through the proper channels and we are still waiting for a blessing or approval. I cannot understand why this is happening and why it is installed for so long. I agree 100% with what Mr. Good is trying to do. We need more not less. I just do not want to have people forget where we have been waiting for 18 years to get to the point where now. You are trying to do it again and I would bless this 100%, but let's do things properly and in the right order.

I have a few questions, but it is my biggest concern is that we do not forget about existing hamlets. I would like to remind everybody this is a Plan of Subdivision, it is not considered a hamlet and yet we are trying to call it a hamlet but really it's not a hamlet. I want to be supportive. We need more support for continued expansion of our Township because I think it is good for all. When I first started my business years ago, I looked forward to the future and I have been blessed because I've been able to support myself, my family, the people that work for me, the local trades that work for me, they're all local people they're not outside of people.

But what I've come to realize, that I never even thought of before because I've always been looking to the future, but what's happening now is that there's a new generation of young people coming through. These that are people that used to work for me when I first started and now those same people are starting on their own they're looking forward to the future and they're have the same dreams and goals that I had 40 years ago and we can't deny these guys by just not allowing future development. I never thought of that before. But in order to keep the young people in our own community, to keep our children here, our grandchildren here, we have to create work and access the available work for them. So that's what I'd like to say. In closing two things basically: let's keep the doors open for the future, and let's not forget about some of the hamlets that approvals have been waiting for a long time. Thank you.

Jaclyn Gallina – 10 Elizabeth Place

Part of the beauty of living in Puslinch is having a big open space and having lots of room. I do not want to see us being developed into lots of communities. That is just a comment to the last comment.

There were no further questions from members of the public in attendance. Members of Council were asked if they had any additional questions.

Councillor Mathew Bulmer

Thank you Mr. Stovel. I appreciate your presentations – I always enjoy your presentations by the way. I just had a to address some of the concerns and I have a question about a better process as well. I think you would probably recognize that future councils did recognize the need for growth in the Township. Which is why during the update of the previous of the current zoning by-law, large amounts of land within the hamlet of Aberfoyle were zoned for future development to ensure there was still some capacity within that hamlet. So I think that concern is not going missed here in the Township to make sure there are lands available for future





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development. I appreciate you mentioning all the similar examples of policy area such as Mini Lakes, which was to convert a trailer park into a plan of condominium, and these sort of things. I am glad you are making everybody aware of other examples in the Township. I have a question about the process you have chosen to use here. The County is going through a comprehensive review of the Official Plan and updating it and expanding it and looking at hamlet expansions. Personally, I always support first an expansion of existing hamlets. I'm just wondering why you chose to do a site-specific Official Plan Amendment as opposed to working through the municipal comprehensive review process to have this recognized as a settlement area and this expansion area as part of that settlement area. Maybe you can help me understand why this process versus the extensive public process that is in place as part of the updated Official Plan.

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

Through you Mr. Mayor, I guess that goes back in time a little bit. We have been bouncing this idea around for quite a while probably. I do not know if it was in advance of the MCR, when we started, maybe I can't remember. But there were so many uncertainties that were going on at the time with provincial legislation and with COVID and other things too that we just decided that it was the best business decision to get something in sooner as opposed to later. It is a kind of a timeline thing too like how long will it take for these MCRs to get approved and so there's a lot of uncertainties there. This was one way, at least for us to get a little bit of a hand on a certainty. I do not know if that's a very good answer for you but that's my recollection of it.

Councillor Mathew Bulmer

Thank you that is very helpful because it's always important for us on this side of the situation to understand the challenges that you face on your side. Helping me understand that part of that decision was the unknowns, you have enough unknowns to deal with, that was just another unknown. If I could just give you a one parting gift for today with regard to any concerns that come up with ponding of water on the existing development. You may recall as you and I were both there, you can put some of that on our shoulders. That was part of the plan that I think both you and the municipality thought might work well was to recreate the natural conditions the natural storm water infiltration conditions there to try and make the development as natural as possible. So if you'd like please feel free to share the burden of that responsibility with the municipality in terms of thinking it was a good idea at the time and if it's not working now then we'll certainly have to be involved in coming up with a solution with you on that.

Rob Stovel, Stovel and Associates Inc., Agent for the Property Owner

I think that we have options. We have good technical assistance on our team to be able to help us work with the Township's consultants to find probably a good solution to the water situation and also to help promote infiltration. That is what the next goal I think is going to be. We are well aware of it and I think we are eager to get moving forward on it too to try to address those things.

Mayor James Seeley

My only comment would be that it is a young neighborhood and I do not want the proposal to assume that the municipality would want the parkland dedication fees versus open space and parks. That is important if this is a little bit removed from the Aberfoyle hamlet that you know parks, things like that for young families, are important.

There were no further questions from members of Council.

### **Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 7:43 PM.



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