



THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH  
JULY 10, 2024 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING  
VIRTUAL MEETING BY ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION  
& IN-PERSON AT 7404 WELLINGTON RD 34

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**MINUTES**

**DATE:** July 10, 2024

**TIME:** 7:00 P.M.

The July 10, 2024 Public Information Meeting was held on the above date and called to order at 7:00 p.m. via electronic participation and in-person at 7404 Wellington Rd 34, Puslinch.

**1. CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER**

**2. ROLL CALL**

**ATTENDANCE:**

Mayor James Seeley – Chair  
Councillor Sara Bailey  
Councillor Russel Hurst  
Councillor Jessica Goyda  
Councillor John Sepulis

**STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:**

CAO, Glenn Schwendinger – Absent  
Interim CAO, Courtenay Hoytfox  
Interim Municipal Clerk, Justine Brotherston  
Interim Deputy Clerk, Sarah Huether  
Director of Finance/Treasurer, Mary Hasan  
Director of Public Works & Roads, Mike Fowler  
Chief Building Official, Andrew Hartholt  
Fire Chief, Jamie MacNeil  
Consultant, Nancy Neil – Watson & Associates

**3. DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None

**4. PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC MEETING**

**Mayor Seeley read the following statement:**

This is a public meeting of Council being held under Section 12 of the *Development Charges Act* 1997 as amended. The purpose of the meeting is to give the public an opportunity to ask questions, provide comments and make representations on development charges background study and proposed by-law. Council will not be taking any action this evening on this report or by-law.

The Township requests that you notify by email Mary Hasan at [mhasan@puslinch.ca](mailto:mhasan@puslinch.ca) or by phone at 519-763-1226 ext. 222 if you wish to be on record regarding this matter.

Please note the meeting is video and audio recorded and all electronic meetings are uploaded to the municipality's YouTube page. By attending this meeting in person or by registering to participate in the meeting by electronic means, you are consenting to have your likeness and comments recorded and posted on YouTube.



Any person or organization may appeal to the Ontario Land Tribunal under Section 14 of the Act in respect of the Development Charges By-law by filing with the clerk a notice of appeal setting out the objection to the by-law and the reason for the objection. You may wish to talk to Township staff regarding further information about the appeal process.

The format of this Public Meeting is as follows:

- Nancy Neil (Watson & Associates) will present the proposed Development Charges By-law.
- Following this, the public can obtain clarification, ask questions and express their views on the proposal.
- Members of the public are permitted 10 minutes each to ask questions and express their views. This time limit is imposed to provide each member of the public an opportunity to speak.
- Staff will attempt to answer questions or respond to concerns this evening. If this is not possible, staff will follow up and obtain this information.
- Prior to receiving the public comments we will ask our consultant, Watson & Associates Economists to do a brief presentation to the findings of the study.

#### **5. PRESENTATION BY NANCY NEIL, WATSON & ASSOCIATES REGARDING PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT CHARGES BY-LAW**

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Good evening Members of Council, the public and those online. I am going to walk you through a brief presentation of the high-level findings of the Development Charges background study. This is, as you noted, a mandatory requirement to host a public meeting that the *Development Charges Act* sets out. There are some timelines that we must meet for the public process. That includes, releasing the background study and proposed draft by-law at least 60 days prior to your consideration of passing that by-law. That study also had to be available at least two weeks prior to this evening's meeting, and there was a minimum of three weeks' notice prior to this evening's meeting that had to be given. All of those timelines are met in the process that we have laid out here.

We are hoping to get public input, as well as, Council's input so that when we come back in a couple of months for your consideration of the by-law you would be able to consider any refinements to policies or anything else you may want put into that by-law prior to the final passage.

To give you a brief overview into the process that we have been undertaking, we have been working with staff since early this year. We have been going through all the background calculations that we have to undertake, putting forth a growth forecast that is anticipated that we are going to have to provide increased needs of additional Capital infrastructure for and pulling together policies and other matters in the background study that was released on June 24<sup>th</sup>.

We did hold a special council meeting to bring you up to speed on where our draft findings were with the study on June 14<sup>th</sup> and we made some refinements based on that meeting and then as noted released the background study officially on June 24<sup>th</sup> it is on the Township's website. Tonight is our formal public meeting and then we anticipate that on September 3<sup>rd</sup> you will back to consider passing the new by-law. It is noted that your existing Development Charges By-law also expires the same day.

As a brief overview of what development charges are for. They are a charge that is put in place on new developments to recover capital costs associated with incremental infrastructure that is



required to be put in place to service that growth. Municipalities are empowered to use *Development Charges Act* to recover those costs so that growth is paying for those growth costs to the extent possible that is laid out in the Act.

The capital costs that we include in the development charges are in addition to local service costs which are direct developer responsibility costs within or just surrounding their specific developments. So if we think of a subdivision for example, the developer would be required to do those internal roads, sidewalks, streetlights, that type of work. Those are not what we consider in the background study and charges. What we put in are the broader based projects which benefit multiple developments throughout the Township.

We do want to note that as of June 6<sup>th</sup> there was another change to the *Development Charges Act*. The regulations to the *Development Charges Act* were just updated July 1<sup>st</sup>. However, everything that was anticipated in that regulation change, as well as, everything that was put in place on June 6<sup>th</sup> has been embraced in the background study and the draft by-law.

The growth forecast that we have included looks at a ten-year forecast of your growth with a net population increase of 962 people and a gross population increase in new units of just under 1050 units. The difference between that gross and net is of course in the net, we take into consideration that within existing households there is a natural decline as children grow up and move out. There is a bit of costs freed up there.

Those additional residential units, that population, we are anticipating will be in about 350 residential units. Most of which are going to be low density, so single and semi-detached homes. However, there are a little bit in high density which really are more for apartments in additional residential units to exist in low density homes and a couple additional institutional residential units.

What that looks like over the forecast period is an average of about 35 units per year. Historically, if you look at the graph on the left side you will see that you were averaging just around 40 units a year over the last 10 years. We are anticipating, based on the developments that you have in the planning process right now and your land supply, slightly less than what you have been doing on average over the last 10 years.

On the employment side or non-residential growth forecast, there is approximately 740 additional employees anticipated in various sectors. What you will notice on the right hand column is that for the work at home and no fixed place of work employment they do not generate new building space the same way that industrial, commercial, institutional and primary do. We are anticipating just over 585,000 sq feet of new non-residential buildings over that 10 year forecast period.

To give you an overview of the services, there are 21 services that if, municipalities provide those services and they have growth related needs, could be included in the development charges. There are five areas that we have included in your background study. They are:

1. Services related to a highway (includes Public Works Facilities and Fleet, Road infrastructure)
2. Fire Protection Services
3. Parks and Recreation Services
4. *Provincial Offences Act* including By-law Enforcement
5. Growth-Related Studies (Class of Service) (relating to above four services)

What the development charge calculations produce is a calculated rate for a single or semi-detached home of just over \$8,200 per unit. You will see that for other types of units, if there



were multiple such as a townhouse, they would be paying just under \$6,500 per unit. Then for apartments we have differentiated them based on the number of bedrooms. An apartment with two or more bedrooms would be just under \$5,000 and apartments that are one bedroom or bachelor would be just under \$3,600 per unit.

On the non-residential side, those industrial, commercial and institutional buildings would be paying \$1.62 per square foot at the full rate.

As a comparison to where your current rates are, based on that single family home which is what the majority of your residential growth will be, currently there is about a 9% increase over what your current rates are at just under \$7600 going up to that \$8238. On the non-residential side of things, right now that charge is \$2.33 and that would actually be decreasing down to the \$1.62 per square foot.

To give you a bit of a comparison of other surrounding municipalities' development charges and rates, you will see that the two bottom lines is where Puslinch lands in comparison. We do want to note that all other municipalities provide municipal water and wastewater services. Some of which are provided at the upper tier, some of which are provided at the single tier and some of which that are split between the upper and lower tier municipalities. Right now, your current rate is that bottom line of the \$7569 for a single family home and you would be moving up slightly to that \$8238. If you exclude the water and wastewater services to get down more to apples to apples comparison, then you would rank a little higher than the others, but still on the latter part of the comparisons.

We've provided a similar comparison for commercial developments. Again, we've separated both water and wastewater charges out so you can see where you would compare to other municipalities if they weren't providing those municipal services. Currently, our charge is higher right now than what it will be with the new by-law, so you will be reducing down. Just to note on these comparisons as well, we have provided upper tier charges from the County, as well as, any education development charges that are in place that the developer/builder coming to the counter would have to pay that total charge. We've also provided a comparison for industrial because there are some municipalities that discount or fully exempt industrial development and so a slightly different ranking for those municipalities but still, you are still on the bottom of the comparisons. Your rate for that is a blended rate, same for commercial as industrial and so will be decreasing.

This slide highlights that there have been extensive statutory exemptions added to the *Development Charges Act* in the last few years since your last by-law was in place, some as recently as last month. Some have been there for years. The industrial building expansion exemption to allow for a one-time 50% expansion of their space has been in place for years and continues to be there. Additional residential intensification, you can expand your house without paying a development charge. That has been there for years. As well, if you are building a new fire station, a rec centre, community centre, the County and the School Boards wouldn't charge you their development charges. If they were building something in Puslinch, you would not charge them your development charge. So, there is a local government exemption that has been around for years.

Some of the new changes over the last five years have been, an exemption for those additional residential units and you can have up to two additional units added to an existing home or when you are applying for a new home, you can also add those two residential units. They can be within the existing unit or ancillary to that existing unit. The newest one is the affordable and attainable residential housing which became effective as of June 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. There is a bulletin that has been released by the Ministry that sets out the thresholds that you would



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measure against to determine whether or not a residential unit falls into that affordable housing definition and if so it would be fully exempt. Attainable residential units we are still waiting for a little more of a definition on. Currently, the Act says that it is not an affordable unit nor is it a rental unit but there isn't a lot of other direction right now so we are still waiting on a little bit of regulation around that and definition to assist municipalities with changes to the regulations.

Affordable units, if you have imposing zoning by-law, and they are defined differently than what the province defines affordable units as would also be fully exempt, as well as, non-profit housing are fully accepted. For universities, any small or large campuses, if they receive ongoing funding from the Province of Ontario they are mandatorily exempt. There are also some changes in when the development charges are determined. For any developments that are proceeding through site plan approval or rezoning, the rate is actually frozen at the day of application as long as that application has come in on or after Jan 1, 2020. That rate will apply for two years after approval, as long as you had gotten that approval prior to June 6<sup>th</sup> of this year. If you applied for an application it is frozen. If you got approval before June 6<sup>th</sup> of this year you have two years to pull your building permit and pay the rate that was in effect at the time of the application. For any applications that came in that didn't receive approval before June 6<sup>th</sup>, that two year window between approval and building permit issuance is reduced to 18 months. As well as, if there are developments that are rental housing or institutional, they no longer pay their development charges at the time of building permit issuance instead they pay in six equal installments at the time of occupancy permit and then every year for the next five years they pay another installment. Related to that rate freeze and those installment payments, you are able to apply interest to those at a prescribed rate which is set at the average of the five big banks prime rate + 1%. That is the maximum you can apply.

In addition to all of those statutory exemptions and discounts, there are also discretionary policies you can put in place that make your by-law a made in Puslinch by-law. Currently what we have provided in the proposed by-law is similar to what you have had in your current by-law where you have exempt temporary uses. There is a definition under the *Planning Act* as to what temporary is. Accessory uses, a home business, a non-residential farm building used for agricultural uses and non-profit institutional uses, those are currently in the proposed by-law as fully exempt.

For next steps, we are hoping that this evening and following this meeting we will receive any public comments, as well as, concerns and questions from Council and if required prepare the by-law report for September 3<sup>rd</sup>. We will then be back for by-law passage on September 3<sup>rd</sup> with an immediate effective date anticipated as the existing by-law expires on this date.

That is my presentation tonight and I would be happy to answer any questions from the public or Council.

**Mayor Seeley:** Thanks Nancy, appreciate the presentation. Alright, any questions from the members of the public attending today in the gallery. Mr. Sloot?

**John Sloot – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Yes, I have some comments but I'll save that for later.

**Mayor Seeley:** I believe we need you state your name and your address.

**John Sloot – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** My name is John Sloot. I am a proud resident of the Township for many years now. This is off topic, but I would like to put out a big thank you on my behalf for the work that the staff and Council has done on two points. The first was the





community business development directory. I was totally shocked to receive it and it was pretty top notch and well appreciated. As a business owner, thank you very much.

The second point I would like to make out, the job that the parks have done. I am proud to say I am from Puslinch now. To go out to the back of the community centre to the sports fields, I am totally blown away. I got to see one of my grandkids play soccer there and I couldn't believe what I was seeing. I am proud to say I am from Puslinch and well job to whoever put that together between staff and Council.

**Mayor Seeley:** Development charges or parkland dedication fees would have helped pay for those improvement in those parks. As a developer, sometimes we collect those monies and sometimes we sit on them for a while, but then we are putting them back into the community and you are seeing the proofs of that.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** You say this expires on September 3<sup>rd</sup> of this year but the length of the term is it 10 years?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** The current by-law that is in place is expiring on September 3<sup>rd</sup>. It had a 5-year maximum life. One of the changes in the *Development Charges Act* is to allow municipalities to pass new by-laws for up to 10 years. So this new by-law that is being proposed can have a life of 10 years. That is not to say that if something significant happens, more growth comes, additional capital needs are required, that the municipality cannot open it up and do an update to the by-law sooner and pass an amendment to the by-law or a new by-law. But, this next by-law will have a maximum of 10 years.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** In your presentation, you talked about how development fees have nothing to do with new subdivisions and the roads and infrastructure that goes to that. Can you explain to me if it is not for the actual roads as part of that new subdivision or whatever it is, what are the development charges going towards? Is it the library, the fire department, the hospital? Where do the development fees go to?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** That local service component I was talking about would be if you think of a subdivision there'll be internal roads that are required only because that subdivision is going in, but the Township wouldn't build those roads otherwise. Those specific roads would be 100% of a developer to put in place. Once you get outside of that though, the additional traffic from that subdivision and any other growth will put pressure on other roads where you may need to expand or you may need to upgrade from a rural standard to a higher standard or a gravel road to a paved road. You may need to add additional paved shoulders for safety of people walking, cycling, and pulling off to use a cell phone or they break down in their car. There are various different projects that can be identified. They may with those additional local roads need to add additional fleet to plow those roads. Then there will be the space needed to house those. So on the roads component, there are the broader based projected outside of those specific developments that we include in here to help pay for those upgrades and expansions of the roads and the related.

Parks and recreation is in here as well so there will be anticipated new parks coming that will have to be developed. The Township may want to put a play structure on there, a ball diamond, a soccer field. Those type of things to add to be able to serve more people are included in here. And of course, fire. There is also expansionary needs for fire services as you grow. There may be an additional vehicle needed so that if there is multiple calls they can send that out. The facility itself to house more firefighters may have to be expanded. So there is fire costs in there as well.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** What about Libraries, Hospitals, Police?



**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Libraries are eligible. We haven't included costs because the County provides the library, it would be in their development charge study not the Township's. The police is a potential service but at this time there has not been any growth related needs identified to include that. Hospitals are not eligible just so you are aware. That is part of the *Development Charges Act* that you can't recover for the hospital.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** In your presentation you talked about 350 new homes or residents coming, assuming that is over the 10 year period and it's basically 35 per year for the increase that you are basing your study on?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** That is correct. 35 additional residential units that produce that additional population.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** On the industrial side of it, you have allocated 585,000 sq feet for new. I am assuming that again is over the 10 years correct?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Correct.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** So if I divide that it is 58,000 sq feet per year for new development for commercial or industrial. To me that number seems low. Being in Puslinch, that is not a lot of space. That number seems relatively low. You have actually reduced your current rate. For single family it is going up, but if I am correct in your presentation for commercial, it is going down. So again, why is that going down especially if the number of commercial space to me seems relatively low, seeing that we just built a building down the road here that is like a million square feet. The number just seems low and why are you reducing the rate?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** There are a few things at play there. Where we take the cost for each of the services and we assign the benefit to the growth we are anticipating on the residential side versus the non-residential side. It is based on population versus employment. The study that split has changed and focused more on the residential portion than the non-residential portion. That's part of it. As well, depending on the square feet that is being included on the non-residential side once we have split the costs up to the non-residential benefit of all the costs that gets divided into the square footage that is anticipated in those buildings.

Industrial buildings tend to have higher square footage and employees, so it generates square footage more than a commercial building or an institutional building. It is really a relationship of the sectors and the square footage associated with them. That total square footage then is our denominator in the calculation of costs divided by that growth to come up with a cost per square foot for each of those facilities. There is a lot of things at play in the calculations.

**Mayor Seeley:** I feel like maybe this is where the question line is going. If the commercial/industrial side of the conversation, does it directly affect the DCs on the residential side? So if your equation was different on the commercial/industrial and dragging that up, would DCs automatically come down for residential?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** In some instances yes. If there is more homes than more of the cost associated with growth would maybe shift over to the non-residential. But then as well if there is more employment, depending on what that is, there is more square footage that we are anticipating being built and that may not mean an increase in the charge, it may decrease it even further. It would depend on the relationship of costs to the total requirements.



**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** So is the reduction basically based on trying to enhance more employment? I don't understand why. I never heard of people lowering prices it is always going up. So why is the price going down?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** No, not specifically. Although every municipality wants to enhance employment. It is really based on the growth we are anticipating for additional employment in the sector that it is. It is a mathematical calculation, that the denominator is larger this time around with our assumptions on the non-residential side of things then it was in the last study and has resulted in a decrease. There's more square footage than a share in the cost of what is needed to provide new infrastructure for that sector of non-residential growth if that helps.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** I am confused.

**Mayor Seeley:** So what I am hearing is they are expecting more industrial growth, and because industrial growth has such large buildings once you divide that all out it ends up reducing because you can put that buck 80 across more square feet because they are expecting more. That is what I just heard at the end there.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Just a comment. You talked about how other municipalities have waste and water which the Township unfortunately doesn't have. But so be it, I just want to be clear that you were saying the development fees for the commercial side is higher than the norm if you factor in the waste water back.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** If the municipality wants to provide municipal water and wastewater services, the infrastructure that would have to be put in place for the water main and sewer main, the treatment of it and storage it would have to be put in place from an existing community potential as well as the growth. You would have to obviously, from the growth component, update the development charge to ensure you were recovering their proportionate share for the cost of those systems into the development charge. All the surrounding municipalities in the comparison provide municipal water and wastewater systems and that is why I tried to isolate them in the comparison because you don't recover because you don't provide that municipal system

**Mayor Seeley:** I believe what he was asking was that when you remove the wastewater and water from the equation of our neighbor municipalities did Puslinch end up at the higher range of development charge?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Yeah, no you're still on the lower range.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Can anyone tell me when development charges were first introduced to the Province and then the Township?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Yes, the first *Development Charges Act* was put in place in 1989 most original by-laws for those municipalities that chose to put them in place happened in 1991. Prior to the *Development Charges Act* though municipalities through the *Planning Act* were allowed to impose a charge that was referred to as a lot levy at the time that the lot was created so there was still capital cost that could be recovered through that older regime for the planning.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Thank you that is it for my questions I have some comments. Thanks for answering those questions. My name is John Slood. I've been a builder in





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this Township for a long time. My first house that I worked on was on Carter Road it was actually over 50 years ago and the reason I asked the question about development fees was I'm pretty sure back then there was no DCs, that's why I just wanted clarification for it.

This is just my opinion but anybody that built prior to 1991 in this Township had the benefit of not paying those development charges so some would say there's some benefit to all those people that built prior to that because they never had to encompass some extra cost.

I look back in 2006. Development fees for a lot in this Township was around \$120 that was in 2006. The DC rate back then I think it was a \$1,000 to \$1,200 maybe I'm confused on development fee, but I know last about fees I paid was well in excess of \$12,000. I know I don't understand where the where the County comes in and all that but that's gone up by 10% and I would also like to comment on the process of getting a permit.

**Mayor Seeley:** I don't mean to interrupt , but I'm not sure we want to have a conversation about permits today other than maybe some costs.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** My main point here is I'm not opposed to development fees. I've been paying them for a long time and as long as they're used wisely it is the cost of doing business. Where I do have a problem and my issue is some of the facts that you presented here I do not totally agree with. My issue is I am not sure the money, maybe I got it wrong, but the money is being spent properly. I'm of the opinion that I don't think the Township has a planning or development committee here and for all these years since 1989 or 91 whenever we started these development fees , I don't see any money being put towards proper planning and development and it's a little discouraging to read that Erin just hired a planning lady and I don't believe we have anything that has been put towards Planning and Development.

Puslinch Township is in the hub of everything. Firstly, I understand that most of the money both taxes and development fees doesn't go to the Township it goes to the County , but really my beef isn't with the Township it's more with the County, that the County doesn't consider Puslinch seriously enough to put us on the map and when you tell me we're going to have 585,000 square feet of industrial employment lands over the next 10 years, that is very frustrating for me. That should be happening a little more aggressively here in the Township. We're on the main corridor to the 401, but yet the County wants to put all the development up in the North.

**Mayor Seeley:** I need you to tie this into how the industrial may be paying DCS or you could tie the conversation into that the forecast of 58,000 over 10 years is not acceptable and may be justified in your mind or to us. So try to tie it into what we're here to talk about today please.

**John Slood – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** I would just like to see Puslinch get recognized a little bit more on the development side and maybe take some of the funds that we're paying and I don't mind paying more if I know it's going towards planning and making the Township more sustainable.

**Mayor Seeley:** You know what I'm going to pause you because I'm going to give you some answers. We are able to utilize DCs for certain projects and I can have Ms. Hasan go through it but for one: your road is getting repaved right, so we can put a percentage of DCs to that project. So, there's some of your money. On the planning component of it, we posted for a senior planner we weren't able to fill that so we hired a junior planner, John and how long has he been on?



**Interim Municipal Clerk Justine Brotherston:** Seven months or so

**Mayor Seeley:** Seven months. We've also transitioned away from the County being our planners on most components. We've hired a consultant as a senior planner to mentor our junior planner and to work with staff as we want our best interests represented. So, you said the planner we weren't spending any money on. The planner we did.

What was another component that you were saying employment land study? We are doing the employment land study which is right now and is a pretty big net that we've cast, but again the Progressive Conservative government first delisted the eligibility of growth studies so that had to be funded through the tax roll. It is now eligible again, so we can fund this growth study which is all around employment land, which is great news for the Township. So that's being proactive, that's our Council's and staff's attempt to bring development industrial, commercial to this Township as you mentioned because it's a hub. I think you're just not informed of exactly what's going on, but I think you're identifying what this Council has also identified now there's always the argument that you know it takes too long, like sometimes these things are a slow grind you know there's a process to follow so I appreciate your passion. We are doing a lot of the things that you are concerned about, but I'll just give it back to you one more time. There's people waiting patiently online to have a chance to speak. But if you can just keep it closer to the DC component I'd appreciate that.

**John Sloat – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** 2006 we made an application for a subdivision that the County has not acted on, 30 homes for 30 families and affordable homes. The taxes of those 30 homes over the last 15 years would have been 2 and a half million and yet it sits empty. I don't think that's a wise choice. I wouldn't call that smart planning. You guys are always looking for some extra funds and years, the funds are sitting there and it's not that's a development issue but when it comes to development fees there's an opportunity and we shouldn't just let it slip away.

**Mayor Seeley:** So before you leave we all have to follow the Provincial Policy Statements and that the Province sets so as much as this Council could think that your project is the best project in all of Southern Ontario and it makes the most sense, but if the Province sets the rules we're handcuffed so what I will say to you is that we are still patiently waiting. This is completely off script from DC's but I have been waiting on the regulations on the recent DPS. We are, as a Council wanting to ensure that Puslinch has prosperity in the future, in the long term, but we're just waiting for the government to stop changing the rules every four weeks so once they set the regs we'll have more answers for projects like yours. There's others in the Township but at the end of the day we have to follow the rules they set as much as we could want to approve it. So I get the frustration, I'm with you on it.

**John Sloat – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** It is not the Township, It's the County.

**Mayor Seeley:** It's the Province.

**John Sloat – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Well the County is part of that so.

**Mayor Seeley:** But we're doing our best and we're hoping for some clear answers.

**John Sloat – Puslinch (No Address Provided):** Thank you for your time.

**Mayor Seeley:** You're welcome. Thank you for coming out in this rainy day, rainy night whatever it is right now. We'll move to our attendees online.



**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Good evening, this Steve Melia and Carol Ann Melia.

**Mayor Seeley:** Can you just state your address please?

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** It's 6786 Gore Road

**Mayor Seeley:** How you doing?

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Good thank you.

**Mayor Seeley:** Steve, I just want to be clear that this is an opportunity to discuss development charges.

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Yes. Okay, so basically I salute the gentleman before me. He made a lot of common sense and I hear and feel his frustration on a lot of things. My question is when you guys are doing the study, I see you removed some of the aspects for water and sewage. Now is this taken into account for rural properties which do not have natural gas, which do not have street cleaning, which do not have water, sewage, any services coming from the Township plus we also have to pay to have our trash removed by the purchase of the designated trash bags. But I don't see any kind of relief for those kind of properties?

**Mayor Seeley:** I'll let Nancy go but most of what you described there doesn't fall under the development charges.

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Sorry, let me rephrase that then. So when you are talking about the increases from this year to the potentials of next year, you're talking about a 9% increase so for the properties that don't have any city services and we pay for our trash to be removed you know as where is the allowances for this?

**Mayor Seeley:** Okay, so I'm going to have Nancy explain what components drive the development charges. Not every component, but the majority of high level ones. You're speaking about the 9% increase over the residential development charge from the previous by-law to the new one, you're not talking personal residential taxes correct?

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Correct, yes so if we were doing a severance or if there's just a one-off custom built home or a one-off piece of land that involves all these charges and they have the construction charges where is the return on this money? When again, I'm on Gore Road. There's no public facilities as far as a playground or anything local you know so for the constituents that live in these areas where is their return on the money.

**Mayor Seeley:** So if you can speak to you know what drives the DCs.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Let me try and piece that out a bit. You did mention about garbage pickup, anything related to landfill for garbage is ineligible to be recovered through the development charge so that is not something that we can include in this calculation. As it relates to the location of where parks and recreation services are placed that isn't always in everyone's backyard or within a very walkable area, but the Township does look to provide additional park land to develop it, so that you know if you do want to go to a park you can get to one in the municipality.

Where they locate future parks that they're going to develop will be based on a number of different reasons including where they may get land dedicated from a developer, where they may purchase land that's available to purchase to develop more parks and put more amenities



in place. So there's a number of different factors that the Township will go through to decide where best to develop new parks. The other projects that are included for things such as Fire Services, regardless of where you are in the Township if you need to call on the fire department you want to ensure that they have, as the municipality grows, enough fire trucks and firefighters to respond to your property and the fire station and where they house those firefighters and the trucks that would respond again is a centralized location that is decided upon by the Township.

Road infrastructure, we look at where traffic impacts are going to be for all of the additional traffic that's going to be created by the new growth and there are certain routes that Municipal staff have identified are roads that need to be upgraded and/or expanded that handle all of the additional volume of traffic that's going to be coming onto those roads from various different growth properties throughout the Township

Hopefully that answers your question.

**Mayor Seeley:** Miss Hasan, I apologize to put you on the spot, but I mentioned it earlier to Mr. Slood, but there's a component of our paving of our roads that there's a percentage a lot DCS can you speak to that, and maybe if possible a couple other examples of where DCs are eligible for projects within the Township because these are examples of where if you get a severance you're going to pay some DCs but they're going to pay to service a road that you're already living on and there's other examples.

**Director of Finance/Treasurer Mary Hasan:** Yes, so Nancy may be able to just add to this, but it relates basically to a lot of our capital projects in for our various roads infrastructure we have allocated component of them to DCs based on the growth that's been projected over the 10-year forecast. But, Nancy if you want to just add to that.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Yeah, there has been a number of roads that have been identified that will require upgrading or resurfacing sooner than maybe potentially it would have been because of additional volumes and the breakdown of those roads and so there is a portion that recognizes that those roads do exist today and would have to be replaced at some point so there is tax dollars that is put towards those, but there's also a small percentage that is being assigned to some of those roads to be upgraded sooner than later to handle those additional volumes because of growth and it's that small percentage that has been included in the development charge calculations.

**Mayor Seeley:** So a component of rural living is that, you know I'll speak specifically to Puslinch, is that we generally have our parks centralized, and yes people have to travel to them and as new consents come online there's Parkland dedication fees that help to maintain those parks for that growth and for the future, but yes if you're living down the Gore Road they're probably a good distance away from you to be accessible, but they are accessible to everybody in the Township. I hope that helps

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Yeah, no, I appreciate that and just a kind of follow up with the studies that were done for the projection over the next 10 years. Do you think the study is in line especially when we have so many restrictions about the kinds of types of development that can actually happen? You are very correct that we are at the central hub, for one Cambridge has expanded exponentially, Breslau, all the areas around us have expanded on huge amounts and it just seems that Puslinch seems to be trailing.

There could be, and don't get me wrong I moved to the country because I didn't want to be in a main city or a town that was bustling, to have a constructive way of bringing more business and



more development to Puslinch via then you know the Township gets more taxes, there's more development, there's more work opportunities, it's going to bring more wealth and more growth to the Township but you know I feel that the study is very restricted. I feel there could be a lot more if there was more potential for development.

**Mayor Seeley:** Right so, I'm not sure which study you're referencing, but I think the DC study the scope was fine. If you are referencing our Puslinch by Design study which is again getting a little off track. I thought I heard you say that you felt Puslinch was not taking opportunity or falling behind in development. I would counter that by saying we're quite the opposite with this forward thinking Puslinch by Design that was many hours of bugging the planning department at the County to think of outside the box, and Miss Wilhelm came up with this study area and then ultimately was submitted to the Province for approval I would hazard to guess that if I were to google it right now you wouldn't find another municipality in Ontario that put in for a Special Economic Development Area to support employment lands along Highway Corridor.

So if the statement was and I maybe misheard you, and I'm not offended that Puslinch isn't looking to have this growth and development, this is not the case we're being very proactive. This Council is very supportive of that. Even when it was deregulated through the DC changes we found the money in laymen terms. It was that important to this Council to go forward now that it's back on the DCs where it should be, growth that's what it would be, it's less burden on the current taxpayers. So I think I feel we're doing a really good job here, I mean if you were sitting in my chair you probably wouldn't say anything different, but I'm trying not to be biased. There's a lot going on in the Township and we're looking out for the prosperity.

As for the DCs I don't know if I believe you mentioned a component about the projections I don't know if our projections are lower so say we went to 15 houses per year 150 over the 10 years would that actually be a reduction in the DC's charge or an increase because there's less to spread it out over. I don't understand it enough, but I think there could be arguments both ways that the 35 houses is accurate or not or, it's not a science, nobody could really figure that out because the County is doing it. It may not be released yet, but I believe they are doing an inventory of existing lots. I know of a few that people have legacy lots they just haven't been developed and then they're also doing inventory of potential lots on secondary Ag so there's a lot of moving parts so to you use the best information available to you come up with 35. Do I know if we tried to push the consultant to say 45 that we could charge more I don't know, or it could go the other way but I respect the opinion that 35 is a good starting point and as Nancy stated we can revisit this, I don't know if there's even a prescribed time that you could do that but any time so does that help answer some of your questions?

**Steve Melia - 6786 Gore Road:** Yeah. Appreciate the time, thank you.

**Mayor Seeley:** Is there anything further? I'm going to move on. I said I'd go to these two let's just alternate back and forth. If you'd like to speak could I ask you to come down to the table. Just state your name and address if you could.

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** Pleasure to be before you Mr. Mayor. Gary Scanlin, 12 Ochs Drive in Morriston. Resident for 25 years. Very pleased to be a resident for 25 years. I do have some experience in development charges so I'm knowledgeable about the legislation and how these studies are put together. So, I compliment the consultant staff it's a very, you know, robust report. I think there is a lot of very good Information contained within that so that's my starting point however; I am aware that within the way that calculations have been put together there are additional opportunities to increase the charges and I guess when I take a look at our growth over the last eight years, 2016 to 24, it's 12% and then the projection is going to take us another 17% from today so we're running at about 30% increases over an 18-year period.





When I take a look at the service levels and if you take a look at Appendix B you've documented all the different amenities and you know the amount of parkland and such you've provided. When I look at the last 10 years there's been no changes with fire department space or with vehicles, the number vehicles. There's been no additional parkland created. There's been only one additional amenity which was just a soccer field that was just built last year and then trails, there's the Fox Run Trails and actually the recreation facilities over the last 10 years have dropped now only by about 1500 square feet but the total square footage for that service is actually dropped. So, from my perspective, the way the calculations are undertaken you do historic service standard, you look into the future and the calculations say here's an upper limit that we can collect, a maximum amount that we could collect for parks and rec, the maximum amount we could collect for fire and when I take a look at fire we could collect \$1.9 million towards additional fire station space and vehicles etc. and we've used about \$863, 000 so we've used about 40% of it.

We look at Parks and Recreation the calculations will allow us about \$2.3 or \$2.4 million and we've used just over a million dollars so there's room where the development charge could be higher and it's all within the legislation, all within the calculations. When I start to take a look at the fact that at the last 10 years maybe what's in the DC right now we are just catching up with the growth that we just incurred, but my personal feeling maybe we're not capturing enough and putting enough aside to pick up that extra 17% that's coming along so it's if at the end of 10 years we look back and say gee we could have, we need to build this because of growth - it goes on to the taxpayer.

I know that there's you know, if I read correctly on the website, there's recreation consideration going on I think perhaps it's to study and the seniors which would also fall under the recreation component. I would think that setting aside and you can put a aside a provision for an extra half a million dollars or a million dollars for parklands well within what you can do so Parks and Recreation and you put a provision there pending what the recommendations are coming out if not then what we're doing is we're waiting until some point down the road and constantly playing catchup.

My recommendation or my perspectives is that I think the charge today could be higher and if you looked at maxing out on those service standards it' be about another \$5,000 on the charge so every house every one of those 350 or so houses are contributing extra \$5,000 which once again is going towards the infrastructure.

The other part is with the roads, I'm just wondering whether a couple of additional roads might be added in. I look at Victoria Road which I go up many times and I know by the Audrey Meadows subdivision there are different times of the year where that road is kind of blocked and people turning to get into the subdivision especially around Christmas time. With the subsequent one I would wonder and if they follow in the same thing there's going to be quite a segment of that road where you would think that there should be extra turning lanes. I'm not clear looking at the local service policy whether that expense would be a developer responsibility or whether it should be included in the DC. You have that opportunity, but I do see that road as being a problem with this subsequent subdivision coming.

Then I take a look at Calfass Road which comes right into Morryston and you know I think there's some lands that are being removed from the Green Belt.

**Mayor Seeley:** Don't say that. There are no lands being removed from the Green Belt.

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** We would look at least with the employment study that's going on as well I think there's a lot of local roads that could be impacted and whether we make a provision for once again unidentified growth related roads, which will come as a result of those studies. I think you can incorporate that now once again saving always you know two years from now doing another update and then all we just have this study. I'm just thinking especially on the first two services you can do that within your abilities now with the roads I think maybe there are provisions that could be made in that one particular one and whether there's any other such Calfass being urbanized and such, but other than that I as I said I think the report's a very good report. I think there is all the different elements that have been hit well and I think there is a lot of thought that's gone into it.

**Mayor Seeley:** I hear what you're saying laymen's terms. I don't want to leave money on the table. As you're saying like 10 years from now you'd hate to look back and think 'oh man we missed an opportunity', because you're not going to be able to go back and get that. As for the Green Belt comment you may be referencing the Special Economic Development Area. Initially, we had been requested by the Province that we study lands in the Green Belt they removed those lands from our study that we're in the Green Belt.

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** I haven't seen the update from that I'm just looking at the January report.

**Mayor Seeley:** Okay. I'm hoping that's where there was some maybe...

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** Yep. Not problem as I say some of those areas will impact on roads that's consideration.

**Mayor Seeley:** So Victoria Road I agree it's very busy especially in front of Audrey Meadows, but my understanding is we can't incorporate neighboring municipality growth into our DCs so if that traffic is generated in Guelph and causing the impacts on our roads we can't use that as part of the formula.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** If the road is in your municipality you have to look at it with staff to say what you know how is your growth triggering the need to upgrade or expand that road. Certainly every municipality has go through traffic from other municipalities. I mean you can't impose a charge on City of Guelph residents to expand roads here in Puslinch, but if there is growth impacts on roads we can go back and look at some of those.

It's not too late to amend the background study before passing the by-law. We would have to consider whether another public meeting was required if we were going to increase the charge to allow people who may not have come tonight because they were happy with the charge that was another \$5,000 per unit was added we may have more people so we might have to do another public meeting if that was the case to add more costs in or Provisions for the parks, rec, roads but we can certainly work with staff to look at some of those that have been highlighted Mr. Scanlin and determine whether or not we do want to add anything more.

**Mayor Seeley:** Can you also just one more time explain the relationship between the DCs and the Parkland Dedication because in my mind that's two different fees because we collect significant amount of money, as I'm sure Mr. Slood's aware, on every severance and that goes into restricted reserve, but we also get DCs. So on a first look we may be leaving as I use the term "money on the table" for our parks but we're also collecting \$15,000 per Severance.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** The development charge does not allow you to recover the cost of purchasing land for park purposes, once you have the land it allows you to collect for



developing that into a social functioning or passive park, putting your amenities in it and on it. The Parkland Dedication Funds that you're receiving is to assist in purchasing additional lands that you can develop and pay for a development charges, and providing other recreational spaces so maybe it makes more sense that with some of those funds coming from various different severance and consents and stuff that you're going to instead of purchasing another small piece of property you're going to purchase an adjacent property to an existing park and/or put more amenities in those parks, because the park land funds allow for that to be used for acquisition or development of other recreation purposes where the development charge does not allow you to purchase the land.

**Mayor Seeley:** Well you are probably aware but you know we do well on our Parkland Dedication and that offsets.

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** But it does allow you to purchase recreation lands, but not build parks so you can purchase land for recreational services as long as it's done.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** If you wanted to buy land for a senior center for example or a community center the land associated with that Community Center is eligible for development charge collection it's just not the park land acquisition that's allowed for a park.

**Gary Scanlin – 12 Ochs Drive:** With respect to Victoria Road. What I have seen is the potential of whether it's a an additional turning lane that needs to be constructed and primarily because of the turning into that existing area, as well as, the new community and you're right there could be benefits that we would deduct and there's deductions throughout the calculations which recognize that not all of it would per se be put on to the backs of new development. But, there's you know to me, I would suspect if it's just adding turning lanes it would be a very high portion because it's specific to accommodating that specific area.

**Mayor Seeley:** We have an active application in that area that again we're waiting on the regs on but I'm sure you know staff would be cognizant of that if it ever gets approved then definitely I would agree with you that's a growth related cost and I'm not I haven't been through a subdivision development agreement yet, I don't know when and where and if you can mandate your fixing the road and all that stuff. A lot of times they'll just agree because they want to get the approval anyways, but so hearing what you're saying and you know I'm not short timelines I'm not sure we'll be interested in blowing up the whole report again, but definitely if there's an opportunity to tweak and you know find a little more money I'm all in favour. Thank you for coming out tonight.

Is there anybody else online?

**Interim CAO Courtney Hoytfox:** Just the media and the one individual that already commented.

**Mayor Seeley:** Okay all right I guess that is it so I am going to ask council if they need to ask some questions or clarification from anyone.

**Councillor Sepulis:** One question, I like Mr. Scanlin's approach. We don't want to leave money on the table. I also want to respect the September 3rd deadline. Is there an opportunity to proceed with September 3rd deadline to pass the by-law and ask some basic questions and then a year from, if there is money left on the table, choose to update that background study at any time?



**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** You can update your background study at any time. You do have to go through the full process if it is outside of a year of the study that we've got here in place because the study has a one-year life, although the by-law may have a 10 year life. But you can amend the study within the year to add anything additional that's been identified. That will then allow you to get that September 3rd by-law in place before the current one expires and then continue to review and refine if necessary over the next year but again at any time over the next 10 years if something is identified.

**Councillor Sepulis:** If I'm hearing you correctly, we pass the by-law September 3rd we can amend that current by-law to look at not leaving money on the table and still be without having to do a full-blown study?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Within a year of the background study, yes, you could do a minor amendment you'd still need to have another public meeting.

**Councillor Sepulis:** Well that's fine, that is the easy part.

**Mayor Seeley:** So could staff do some discussions between now and September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 and decide if maybe there is some value because, there's definitely going to be some cost associated with it, see if there's some value in you know amending the by-law within that first year or if maybe depending on growth and we get some numbers from the County anyways and then come back to Council and say yay or nay; yes we feel there's some, due to public feedback, we feel there's some value in moving forward with a site review.

**Interim CAO Courtenay Hoytfox:** Through you Mr. Chair, certainly we want to be working with Watson closely on what that looks like and we can bring back a proposal for budget. If the timing is good this fall to see what that would cost and what that looks like.

**Councillor Sepulis:** I think the first thing is a rough cut to say are we leaving money on the table. If in your estimation we are not then let's not pursue it, but if we are then let's find that number.

**Councillor Bailey:** Nancy I'm just looking for your comment from Gary's thinking and I really appreciate you coming down because it just helps expand my thinking.

**Mayor Seeley:** The only thing I'd worry about is putting people in a situation where they have differences of opinion in a very public forum so I just don't want Nancy to refute completely.

**Councillor Bailey:** Well maybe this could just be part of staff's discussions later too, but I'm just more curious if increasing DCs into municipality that has no water or waste water would be a deterrent for people to be looking at development within the community. You'd hate to increase the DCs and it would end up being a deterrent where we're looking for growth to happen.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** There may be that odd person honestly, but I mean if you're looking to settle somewhere your home there's so many different components that you're looking at for that you know the gentleman that was online you know doesn't want to be in the hustle and bustle of Cambridge or some of the other surrounding municipalities and that's going to draw them and a few thousand dollars more on a development charge probably would not deter them especially if they knew that you know there was that park recreation space available for them, they didn't get blocked up on roads that are you know getting congested more, that they could still move through that community that they want to be in. So development charges may be a factor if it's a little bit more. I don't think Mr. Scanlin was



suggesting doubling it or going even more than that, and you are still in the survey of the surrounding municipalities on the mid to lower end based on this calculated rate. There's a lot of factors: what's the property taxes, what's the land cost, all the rest of it to determine whether or not they want to locate in a new home.

**Mayor Seeley:** On the commercial industrial that would play more of a factor because if we're not in the low to medium sector because of all the other challenges to develop here with the private services and all those things combined that would probably as you're thinking discourage them from growing here so that's important. I agree with on the residential side if you are paying \$1.2 million bucks for a lot you're going to pay me \$20 grand in DCs and park land dedication, it's just how it's going to go.

**Councillor Goyda:** I just wanted to ask, so we have a few sort of big plan studies on the horizon. We have our Fire Master Plan coming up, we have our Parks Master Plan coming up and we have this Puslinch by Design Study taking place which I'm imagining perhaps the result of those studies would trigger some discussions about growth infrastructure requirement so to me that would be something that would potentially trigger a review of our development charges background study. That's not likely going to happen to be finalized within 12 month period probably more like two to three years. So what I'm hearing you say is if that's the case we can look at updating the Development Charges By-law at that time, but it's not considered then an amendment it would be a full-fledged new background study. But would that background study now be eligible according to the rules the province has today, could that study be funded by development charges

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Yes.

**Councillor Goyda:** So that's not necessarily (inaudible). Making sure it's accurate and the right balance in terms of are we not hindering development, are we encouraging development. I think it's important and I think that those three studies would, to me, be big considerations for what those development charges would be long term.

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Absolutely, it's always great when we're doing a development charge study if we have master plans that have already gone through the rigors of the public process through those studies and have been approved by Council and have clearly identified what the growth related needs are. It makes it much easier for us to then easily lift those into the development charge calculations we covered up without some of those master plans in place we've had to work with staff to estimate some of what we've had to include in here but definitely any kind of approved master plan that identifies growth is very helpful for the future updates of the development charges.

**Councillor Goyda:** Okay and I just have one more question. It's in regards to the park land dedication. So we heard today a comment from the public saying "I'm paying development charge so I don't live anywhere close to a park." Instead of having like payment in lieu of park land can we be asking for like, I know with a plan of subdivision, Council could at least as far as I understand request a parcel of land be dedicated for park. My question is, if someone is just doing a single severance can we be requesting the same sort of thing? Or is it strictly that we can ask that park land be dedicated to the Township within the plan of subdivision?

**Township Consultant Nancy Neil:** Obviously if you feel that you could get dedication from a single lot you can request it however; a lot of municipalities what they want to do is having a little piece of land you know here, there and everywhere you have to go out and cut grass it becomes operationally very expensive sometimes to do that. They're very segmented pieces of property that you might not be able to develop much of anything on and so most municipalities





THE CORPORATION OF THE TOWNSHIP OF PUSLINCH  
JULY 10, 2024 PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING  
VIRTUAL MEETING BY ELECTRONIC PARTICIPATION  
& IN-PERSON AT 7404 WELLINGTON RD 34

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look at larger pieces of land to develop parks so you can have those larger amenities multiple amenities that draw more to it. Piecemealing, getting a little piece of land here or there is probably not what your Parks and Rec staff would prefer to have to go out and maintain. You really wouldn't be able to put much on it so it's not typical of what we see most municipalities look at making sure that when where they are putting park in place they can be used and developed into sort of a community type destinations to go to with your family with the pets whatever else you want.

**Mayor Seeley:** Anything else? I declare this public meeting closed. Council will take no action on this matter tonight. Staff will be reporting at the September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2024 Council meeting with a recommendation for Council's consideration. If you wish to receive further notification of this proposal please email Mary Hasan at [mhasan@puslinch.ca](mailto:mhasan@puslinch.ca) or by phone 519-763-1226 extension 222. Only those persons who leave their names will be provided further notification. If you wish to speak to the proposal that is brought before Council in the future you must register as a delegation with the municipal clerk prior to the meeting.

Thank you everyone.

**Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:26PM