



TOWNSHIP OF SOUTHWOLD

PLANNING REPORT

Application: Update on new Southwold
Official Plan

Report No.: PLA 2021-08

Date: February 22, 2021

TO: Mayor and Council of the Township of Southwold

FROM: Heather James, MCIP, RPP, Planner

SUBJECT: Update on proposed New Township of Southwold Official Plan.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

On February 16, 2020, a statutory public meeting was held virtually for the proposed new Township of Southwold Official Plan. Twenty members of the public attended the meeting. The Township planner presented her report to Council and the public. Paddy Kennedy, land use planner for Dillon Consulting provided a presentation of the overall Official Plan project. Seven members of the public provided verbal comments and three letters of concern were submitted prior to the public meeting.

Comments were received from the Township's Economic Development Committee regarding the lack of alternative accommodations in the agricultural areas and the lack of live/work, industrial/residential policies in the proposed Official Plan. Three requests were submitted to add lands to the settlement areas of Shedden, North Port Stanley and Middlemarch. One request was submitted for a land exchange within North Port Stanley.

The staff recommendation for the report for the public meeting was as follows:

THAT Council of the Township of Southwold receives the report from Heather James regarding the proposed new Township of Southwold Official Plan;

THAT Council receives and reviews comments from the public during the public meeting;

THAT Council reviews the comments received from the open house, comments received from the Township's Economic Development Committee, requests for revisions to settlement area boundaries and submitted letters from the public; and,

THAT Council considers adoption of the new Township of Southwold Official Plan at a future meeting.

Council supported the staff recommendation.

UPDATE:

The Township planner and Mr. Kennedy have had an opportunity to review the comments received both verbally and written and have reviewed the requests for settlement area expansions and land exchanges.

Below is our response:

Settlement Area Expansions/Land Exchanges

Dillon Consulting has completed a revision to the settlement area boundary by removing hazardous, undevelopable lands along the fringe of our settlement areas as well as aligning the boundary where applicable with lot lines. As a result, below is a chart showing where we have gained the ability to add additional lands to the settlement areas:

Settlement	Current (ha)	Proposed (ha)	Difference (ha)
Fingal	115.0	111.4	-3.6
North Port Stanley	73.5	71.5	-2.1
Shedden	145.2	143.4	-1.8
Talbotville	1,302.8	1,302.8	-7.4

Due to these revisions, should it be the desire of Council, we will be able to support several of the requests for adjustments to the settlement areas. In particular, it is my recommendation that we can support the following:

1. Brent Fulton and Barbara Strickland’s request to add 5.4 ha (13.34 ac.) to the Shedden settlement area can be partially considered, given 1.8 ha (4.45 ac.) have been removed from Shedden.
2. Harry Wismer’s request to add 0.31 ha (0.77 ac.) to the settlement area of North Port Stanley.

In regard to the request by Jay and Lorrie Futcher to expand the hamlet boundary of Middlemarch, there are a few concerns in doing this. The first concern is the lands located at the southwest corner of Fingal Line and John Wise Line do not have frontage on Fingal Line as there is another owner who owns the lands directly to the north. The only frontage these lands would have would be along John Wise Line and there would only be 40.54 m (133.0 ft.) of frontage. Secondly, hamlets are not intended to be areas of growth but rather areas that are recognized for their historical settlements and are intended to only grow through infilling and the rounding out of existing development patterns. Should Council desire to support this request by the Futcher’s, I recommend that they engage in discussion with the Manager of Planning for Elgin County to determine if the County would support such hamlet expansion.

In regard to the request by Domus Developments (London) Inc. c/o Barbara G. Rosser, it is my recommendation at this time that Council does not consider the proposed land exchange due to comments received from the public. It would be advisable that this request is not included as part of the adoption of the Official Plan and instead that it proceeds through a site-specific amendment, filed by the owner/developer, to the Official Plan once the new Official Plan is in force and effect. This will also provide additional time to review the public comments and finalize the servicing requirements for this development.

Southwold Economic Development Committee Comments

Should Council desire to support the requests from the Economic Development Committee to add the requested policies to the Official Plan, it is recommended that Townships staff engage in discussion with the Manager of Planning for Elgin County to determine what is the best approach to do so.

Written Comments

Three letters of concern were submitted regarding the proposed Official Plan. The first letter was submitted by Fingal Farm Supply Limited c/o Harm Spangenberg, vice-president, for their operation located 7655 Union Road. I have been in contact with TSSA about the concern raised by Fingal Farm Supply Limited and I am still awaiting a response at this time. Fingal Farm Supply Limited has requested for Council to provide industrial land with appropriate buffer zones to residential properties, which in my opinion, can be addressed through an amendment to the Township's comprehensive zoning by-law.

The second set of letters were submitted by Rene Brooymans and MaryAnne Van de Gevel, owners of several farm properties in Southwold, in particular apple orchards. Mr. Brooymans and Mrs. Van de Gevel expressed interested in policies permitting non-permanent structures for 10 people or less, in particular for seasonal farm workers for their farming operations in the agricultural area. As well, Mr. Brooymans and Mrs. Van de Gevel have also expressed interest in alternative accommodations for agricultural farms for agri-tourism uses. The draft Official Plan has been updated to permit temporary residences for seasonal farm labour. The type of temporary residences will need to be further specified through an amendment to the Township's comprehensive zoning by-law once the Official Plan is in force and effect. The request for alternative accommodations for agri-tourism has already been addressed in this report.

The third letter was submitted by MaryAnne Van de Gevel, apple orchard co-farm owner located at 5111 Union Road and 4602 Thomas Road. Mrs. Van de Gevel had the following concerns:

- Prefer no more development in their area as they have already experienced a lot of development which has been done prematurely, causing problems after;
- Potential development of 4509 Union Road for residential use and the need to educate new residents about agriculture;
- Ensure developer provides appropriate fencing to prevent disturbance to neighbouring wildlife; and,
- Council needs to make sure that the developer pays for the added costs of the developing the lands including all drainage and site upgrades

At this time, it is my recommendation that the land exchange that would involve the property known as 4509 Union Road should not proceed at this time as part of this new Official Plan. These concerns will need to be addressed at the time of planning applications, should the potential residential development at 4509 Union Road proceed.

A fourth letter was also submitted by MaryAnne Van de Gevel. Mrs. Van de Gevel is also requesting that wording be included in the Official Plan to advise new residents that reside adjacent to agricultural farm operations to acknowledge the potential inconveniences that may arise such as noise, dust, and late working hours during peak agricultural time periods.

This request would require a specific policy to be added to the Southwold Official Plan. The Elgin County Official Plan currently does not contain this specific policy. As the Township's Official Plan

must conform with the County's Official Plan, at this time, this request will need to be reviewed with the Manager of Planning for Elgin County and be added to the County's Official Plan prior to being added to the Township's Official Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Council of the Township of Southwold receives the report from Heather James regarding the update to the proposed new Township of Southwold Official Plan; and,

THAT Council provides direction to staff on potential policy changes and revisions to maps, as outlined in this report.

Respectfully submitted by:

Heather James, MCIP, RPP, Planner
"Submitted electronically."

Approved by:

Ken Loveland
CAO/Clerk