

Request for Decision United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria Council

Type of Decision									
Meeting Date	Friday, March 28, 2014				Report Date	Wednesday, March-26-14			
Decision Required	X	Yes		No	Priority	X	High		Low
Direction	X	Information Only			Type of Meeting	X	Open		Closed

Resolution of Support – Township of Wollaston- Report #28/03/14/1207

Subject:

Resolution of Support – Township of Wollaston – re: Development on Private Roads and the new Provincial Policy Statement

RECOMMENDATION:

It is strongly recommended that Council adopt the attached resolution in support of lobbying the province to change the recommendations in the current Provincial Policy Statement limiting rural development.

WHEREAS many rural municipalities exist in Ontario outside of the GTA with thousands of acres of undeveloped lands;

AND WHEREAS the best potential for growth for many of these rural properties throughout Ontario and specifically in the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria is through tourism and recreational use;

AND WHEREAS many of these rural Ontario municipalities cannot afford to extend the existing network of municipally maintained roads to grant the necessary municipal road frontage to these lands as per the Provincial Policy Statement;

AND WHEREAS the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) has indicated that they may not support policies that will permit new development to occur on the extensions of private roads, on new private roads or on unopened road allowance severely limiting the ability for growth in many rural Ontario municipalities;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Council of the United Townships of Head, Clara & Maria does hereby support the resolution of Wollaston Township and requests that the MMAH reconsider its policy direction regarding development on private roads and un-opened road allowances;

AND FURTHER THAT policies be developed to allow municipalities more autonomy to regulate their own development in ways that are appropriate for their specific area acknowledging that a one size fits all policy does not accurately reflect the needs of rural Ontario while meeting the needs of the GTA;

AND FURTHER THAT this resolution be circulated for action and support to the appropriate ministries, ministry personnel and municipalities.

BACKGROUND/EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Although the new Provincial Policy Statement begins with the following vision statement "*The long-term prosperity and social well-being of Ontario depends upon planning for strong, sustainable and resilient communities for people of all ages, a clean and healthy environment, and a strong and competitive economy*" it then goes on to restrict development in rural areas.

It further states "*The Provincial Policy Statement focuses growth and development within urban and rural settlement areas while supporting the viability of rural areas. It recognizes that the wise management of land use change may involve directing, promoting or sustaining development.*"

After expressing these sentiments, acknowledging that prosperity, controlled growth etc. are requirements for long term sustainability in all communities the document continues under its "Rural" section to limit options stating "*Development shall be appropriate to the infrastructure which is planned or available, and avoid the need for the unjustified and/or uneconomical expansion of this infrastructure.*"

The definition of infrastructure includes roads.... "*Infrastructure: means physical structures (facilities and corridors) that form the foundation for development. Infrastructure includes: sewage and water systems, septage treatment systems, stormwater management systems, waste management systems, electricity generation facilities, electricity transmission and distribution systems, communications/telecommunications, transit and transportation corridors and facilities, oil and gas pipelines and associated facilities.*"

This sentiment, by law must be given consideration and form the basis for the County Official Plan which states in its Rural section... "*Low density residential development as well as rural-related commercial, industrial, recreational and institutional development is desirable, provided it is appropriately located. The Rural designation is intended to guide rural type development while at the same time protecting the rural character, heritage and natural resources of the County. In addition, the designation is intended to manage growth in an environmentally and fiscally responsible manner.*"

It further goes on to state: "***the development must have direct access to a public road that is maintained year-round and is improved to acceptable municipal standards;***"

This section of the Official Plan has been affected to some degree by the Municipal Zoning By-Law allowing growth on private roads. The challenge is that this only applies to existing lots. We have had instances where residents wanted to sever their property, sometimes chunks as large as 100 acres and because they did not front on municipally maintained roads, were disallowed.

This is a huge detriment to growth within our municipality. There are tracts of land, as yet undeveloped and un-severed. We currently have a request just like this forwarded to the County for consideration. The first response of our planner was, this is not allowed as it is contrary to the Official Plan and the Provincial Policy Statement.

The Official Plan, which follows the Provincial Policy Statement, significantly restricts the potential for growth in Head, Clara & Maria. It is strongly recommended that this resolution be supported with copies forwarded to the County and County municipalities for support and endorsement.

Options/Discussion:

Financial Considerations/Budget Impact:

Policy decision made at the provincial level significantly impact the opportunity for growth within Head, Clara & Maria limiting any potential for growth by increased assessment and development on not already severed lots.

Policy Impact:

Results if successful could significantly affect future provincial, county and municipal policy.

Others Consulted/Resources/Sources:

Resolution Wollaston Township

Provincial Policy Statement Document - <http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page10679.aspx>

County Official Plan - http://www.countyofrenfrew.on.ca/documents/official-plan/CountyOfficialPlan_Consolidated.pdf

Approved and Recommended by the Clerk

Melinda Reith,
Municipal Clerk