

Policy changes alter township's urban boundary expansion scenario

» FROM PAGE 1

time. And they can be privately initiated, as well.

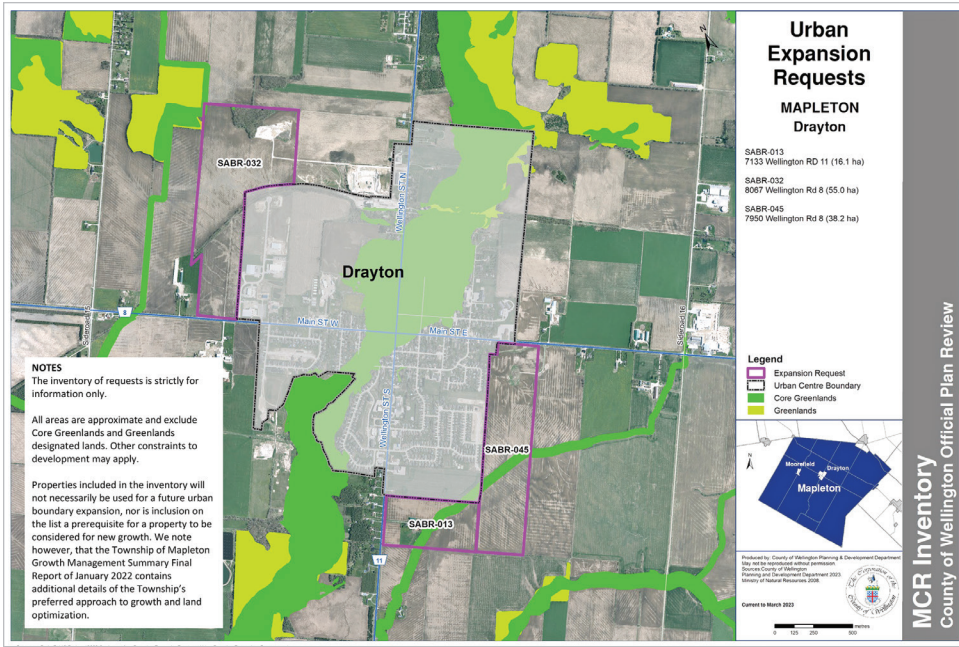
"And more importantly too is that the province has indicated ... the forecasts are minimums, and now they've kind of doubled that up that the land needs are a minimum as well. So it becomes a bit less of an accounting exercise," she added, noting the moves would provide municipalities with "more flexibility" going forward.

Proposed provincial policy changes will also have agricultural impacts, Wilhelm told council.

"The big change, there is much more potential for growth in the rural areas of the county and, in your case, prime agricultural lands entirely, and less protection for agricultural resources," Wilhelm said.

She added it is "quite surprising to see that prime agricultural severances are being opened up.

"And not only allowing for three residential severances from a farm, but requiring the



Boundary quandary - Map showing location of urban boundary expansion requests around the village of Drayton.

policies to allow for that. So not allowing municipalities to be less restrictive."

While Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister Steve Clark has since indicated the prov-

ince may back down on some of the rural residential proposals under pressure from farming organizations, Wilhelm noted the policies as currently proposed would have "pretty

significant cumulative impact" and "might make us want to look a little bit differently at servicing in the rural area or think about what impacts might come for failed systems.

"The presence of these lots also creates a restriction for new or expanding livestock facilities for farmers," she pointed out.

Mayor Gregg Davidson thanked Wilhelm for her presentation, noting "it's a tough situation that the province has put all municipalities through.

"I can't imagine being Centre Wellington right now, with the amount of growth that's been thrown at them that they weren't planning for, nor have any servicing (for)."

Councillor Michael Martin asked Wilhelm if she anticipated changes to minimum separation distance regulations in light of the push for increased residential development in rural areas.

"If say, on a 100-acre farm, you sell off two acres, two one-acre properties, at the front and then you go to expand your dairy operation or your hog barn or something and now all of a sudden, the MDS calculations come in, and suddenly you can't because the person living on that property is from,

I don't know, Cambridge, and doesn't like the smell of the barn and doesn't want it to grow ... is there going to be changes to that as well?" he asked.

Wilhelm said the new lots would need to meet MDS requirements "but you can get a minor variance.

"And now with the changes the province has made, private citizens can't appeal minor variances. And so that concern has been raised and also the fact if there's a disagreement about how you've even completed the calculations, how could we even resolve that without having that appeal mechanism?"

She continued, "I have obviously heard a lot about minimum distance separation, but then I heard someone saying, 'Oh, well, is that part of the problem?"

"And then I think ... the government could choose to do something with that, too. So it's a fair question."

Council received Wilhelm's presentation as information.

Police-enforced parking fines increasing in Wellington North

Eighty-five tickets issued since 2019

JORDAN SNOBELEN
REPORTER

KENILWORTH – Wellington North council was informed of relatively minor revisions to the township's parking control bylaw at a May 23 meeting.

The bylaw will include provisions for electric vehicles and charging station parking spots, among others such as not allowing parking on the curved portion of an angled roadway bend.

For residents, the significant

change comes in a fine increase to \$35 for early payment and a set fine of \$45 for most infractions — the exception being for parking in "accessible parking spaces" which continues to carry a \$300 fine.

The fine currently associ-

ated with voluntary ticket payment is \$20.

Wellington County OPP are obligated to enforce parking bylaws in Wellington North, however a report on the revisions from township clerk Karren Wallace notes that isn't the case on private property.

The township does not conduct parking enforcement, nor

does the township's arrangement with the City of Guelph for bylaw enforcement allow city staff to enforce parking infractions.

Guelph bylaw staff enforce the township's property standards, swimming pool enclosure, door-to-door sales and zoning bylaws.

The revised bylaw hasn't yet

been approved by council, and will require a vote to pass it once the province stamps its approval on set fine amounts and bylaw verbiage.

An average of 21 tickets are issued in the township each year, based on data since 2019. Since then, 85 total tickets have been issued within the township, Wallace's report states.

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Reflections

BY HOPE REIDT
OF HOPE REFLECTED

As I knelt in our front garden, I was struck with just how many weeds had taken root.

It had only been a few weeks since I last tended to our roses, and in that short time, choke weed, bindweed, pokeweed, and pigweed had all taken root. While the pokeweed was easy enough to uproot, the others had embedded themselves into the soil quite sufficiently, making my task of weeding them out very difficult.

At first, I considered whether the fresh topsoil we'd purchased was to blame. Maybe it wasn't as clean as advertised. Then, I thought our mulch could be at fault; perhaps we need to look at a different type next year to avoid all these weeds invading our garden space.

Try as I might to find some external influence to blame, the truth is that our garden was overrun with weeds because I wasn't tending to it regularly.

My struggles with gardening, sad to say, are like those in my spiritual life. While I start out strong, I have a hard time following through. My spring efforts of getting our garden ready for the season simmer and stop, and by midsummer, our garden is often overrun with weeds.

While things may look good from a distance, when we dig down and really examine the soil, there is so much work that needs to be done.

As I tried to untangle the roots of whatever weed

was choking out our Bolero Floribunda rose bush, I was reminded of Proverbs 24:30-32 (KJV): "I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down. Then I saw, and considered it well: I looked upon it, and received instruction."

Slothfulness in my spiritual life is a problem; I'd rather sleep for those extra minutes in the morning then get up and get into God's Word. As a result, my understanding lacks and I'm left wanting for more, but not necessarily wanting to put in the work to grow.

It's not easy to get up early and dedicate those first moments of the day to God and His Word; it requires regular effort. It takes hard work and diligence to write down prayer requests and keep track of praises in my prayer journal.

I start out strong and enthusiastically but tire quickly. I tend to let my lack of understanding discourage deeper study of God's Word, and I let life and distractions take up my time, leaving little or no time for God.

I'm also guilty of getting my heart wrapped up and filled up by the cares and entertainment of this world so I'm too full to feed on God's Word.

Sound familiar? When Jesus shared the parable of the sower (Matthew 13, Mark 4, Luke

8), He explained that there were four types of ground on which the seed fell: The wayside, the stony places, among thorns, and on good ground. The wayside soil signifies people who hear God's Word, but they don't understand it and Satan uses this to keep them in darkness. The stony places represent those who start out strong and enthusiastically, but their flame is burned out as soon as they encounter life's challenges and trials. The thorny ground speaks about those whose hearts are open to receiving God's Word, but they get wrapped up and filled up by the cares of this world. The good ground however, this is the ground that represents the people who hear God's Word, understand it, bear and bring forth fruit from it.

In any garden, good ground is not possible without consistency and hard work by the gardener. Soil needs to be tilled, weeds need to be picked, plants need to be nurtured and pruned. These activities are not limited to once a season; these tasks need to be worked on each day, thoughtfully, methodically, with the end goal in mind of keeping the garden growing well.

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and established in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving." Colossians 2:6-7 (KJV).