

Mayoral decision issued to advance zoning for 35,000 housing units

Strong Mayor Powers used to propose zoning bylaws for 12 development applications

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon's Mayor has taken steps to speed up housing development in Town. On March 26, Mayor Annette Groves used Strong Mayor Powers to issue a decision to advance zoning bylaws for 12 development applications slated to bring 35,000 housing units to Caledon over time. Caledon is required by the Province to have 13,000 new residential units in town by 2031.

In an interview, Groves said her recent decision is about thinking forward to 2051, when Caledon is expected to grow to a population of 300,000.

"We want to get ahead of the growth... it's better if we take a more proactive approach because then it gives us an opportunity to say 'these are the things that we need to see within these communities,'" said Groves.

She spoke of creating complete communities, where libraries, parks, trails, fire halls, schools and community centres are considered before development occurs.

Phil Pothen, the land use and land development manager for Environmental Defence, a non-profit that works to advocate for clean water, a safe climate and healthy communities, said the organization is concerned the recent decision means Caledon is missing its chance to stray away from low-density, car-dependent development, and picked one of the 12 application locations as an example.

Pothen called the development slated for the intersection of Hurontario Street (Highway 10) and Highway 410 "wasteful cul-de-sac sprawl" that has no place in a new zoning bylaw in one of North Amer-

ica's fastest-growing metropolitan areas.

In a March 26 media release, Town of Caledon staff said Groves' decision will ensure an ample supply of development sites for all types of housing. Staff said Groves' decision will allow planning staff to advance development applications through the remaining municipal planning process, and that it's expected to "streamline procedures by approximately one to two years for the applications."

The sites selected for zoning amendments by Groves are generally in the areas of Mayfield West, Tullamore, Alloa, Wildfield and Bolton.

Groves said the 12 sites were already zoned for residential use under the expanded urban boundaries approved in the Region of Peel's official plan.

"Some of these properties already had applications on them," said Groves. "This is to streamline the process... having said that, this is not a final approval... there are holding provisions within the bylaws."

She said the development applications will still have to go through a secondary planning process.

"If you're going to put houses here we want to see the community benefits as well," said Groves.

Pothen said zoning in Caledon's new settlement areas appears to permit greater density and a larger mix of uses than existing Caledon subdivisions, but added it doesn't require higher densities or a pedestrian-friendly mix of uses.

He said it's disappointing to see that Caledon is expanding outwards before many of its existing neighbourhoods have expanded to be walkable and transit-supported.

"The retention of minimum parking requirements, and aspects of the Town's communications about the new zoning, are cause for concern that a walkable, transit supportive community is not actually planned," said Pothen.

Groves told the Citizen she had to move the zoning bylaws forward through strong mayor powers.

She said working with developers is better than not working with them and then

seeing developers fight Caledon at the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT) where they often win. She said it's costly to taxpayers and that OLT decisions are often made by those who don't know what Caledon's needs are.

Groves said her approach will let Caledon tell the Province what it needs to make the Province's housing and growth targets in Caledon a reality.

Groves said Caledon needs true affordable housing, including rentals. She said through secondary planning, Caledon will work with developers on affordable housing.

A public meeting about the 12 applications will be held at 7 p.m. on April 25.

Residents can attend this meeting online at caledon.ca or in person at Caledon Town Hall (6311 Old Church Road). The

applications will be brought to Council for approval on April 30. If more than one-third of Caledon Council supports Groves' mayoral decision on that date, it will pass.

"I'm very hopeful and very confident that council will recognize the need to move things forward," said Groves.

Pothen said Environmental Defence will be seeking reassurance from Groves and Caledon Council that the zoning will be fleshed out in ways that ensure future Caledon residents won't need a car to comfortably live, work, and raise their children.

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FREE Thursday, April 25, 2024 Volume 44, Issue 18



Caledon Mayor Annette Groves speaks to residents at Democracy Caledon's April 17 meeting.

PHOTO BY ZACHARY ROMAN

Strong Mayor powers, zoning bylaws questioned at packed Democracy Caledon meeting

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Caledon residents against the use of strong mayor powers made their voices heard at a recent community meeting.

On April 17, a newly-formed group of concerned Caledon residents, Democracy Caledon, hosted a community meeting at St. James Anglican Church in Caledon East.

Democracy Caledon held the meeting as it was concerned with Caledon Mayor Annette Groves' March 26 decision, made using Strong Mayor powers, to advance zoning bylaws for 12

development applications slated to bring 35,000 housing units to Caledon over time.

The Town is hosting a public meeting about the 12 applications at 7 p.m. today (April 25) at Caledon Town Hall in Caledon East. The applications will be coming to Caledon Council's April 30 meeting, where they can be approved if one-third of Councillors support Groves' decision.

Town of Caledon staff said Groves' decision is expected to expedite planning procedures by one to two years for the 12 development applications, which are generally in the areas of Mayfield West, Tullamore, Alloa, Wildfield and

Bolton.

Democracy Caledon volunteer Debbe Crandall was first to speak at the April 17 meeting.

"This thing called Strong Mayor powers has dramatically put the public on the sidelines of land-use planning decisions," said Crandall. "Mayor Groves has set in motion a very dangerous precedent."

She said it's unfair to the public that only one public meeting was planned to discuss 12 massive zoning bylaws with a huge impact on Caledon's future.

Continued on Page A8

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**Shining Through:
Caledon woman's book made to inspire**

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A Caledon woman has written a book about her journey as a mom with a daughter with special needs.

Liana Cancian recently released "Shining Through" at an April 16 launch event at The Exchange in Bolton.

Cancian and her husband have four children. Their 17-year-old daughter, Olivia, has a rare genetic seizure disorder and lives through having seizures every day.

"The book is about her life... from when she was born to getting the diagnosis and then all the things we have experienced," said Cancian.

Cancian and her family have tried so many different things to help treat her daughter's seizures — sadly, nothing has been successful.

Continued on Page A4

Edward Jones

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150 people attended a Citizens' Forum held at St. James Anglican Church on April 17

Continued from FRONT

"This is unconscionable and completely undemocratic that the minority of Council has the power to decide on something of this significance," said Crandall, speaking of the one-third vote required to approve the applications.

Crandall noted Caledon signed a housing pledge to the Province that said it would build 13,000 new housing units. She asked why it was necessary for Caledon to nearly triple this number.

"Who will benefit from this? Us? I don't think so," she said. "Mayor Groves, you are a strong mayor. You don't need Strong Mayor powers to be a strong leader — please slow this process down."

Next to speak was another Democracy Caledon volunteer, Nicola Ross.

"We're worried about the erosion of democracy under our current levels of government," said

Ross. "One of the things about democracy is we have to look after it... we have to protect it."

Ross said she thinks Strong Mayor powers are undemocratic.

"If we want to protect democracy, if we want to be a part of what Caledon is going to become, we have to be diligent," said Ross. "The public meeting on April 25... bring as many friends as you can."

The third speaker at the meeting was Victor Doyle. From 1988 to 2017, Doyle held a variety of senior positions in the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing — including Manager of Planning for Central Ontario and lead planner for the Greenbelt Plan.

He said while the decision has been made already that areas in the south of Caledon will become more urban, Caledon needs to do the best possible job to plan the areas and make the most efficient use of them.

"We can't keep expanding outwards and out-



Planning professional Victor Doyle, an architect of the Greenbelt Plan, provided opinions and insight at Democracy Caledon's April 17 community meeting.

PHOTO BY ZACHARY ROMAN

wards," said Doyle, who shared concerns about the urgency of the recent mayoral decision.

"I have not seen anything like this to zone for tens of thousands of units ahead of all the detailed planning that is typically occurring prior to zoning big tracts of land," he said. "It's not clear to me what the urgency is to do that at this point in time."

Doyle said if there is to be any advanced zoning, it should only be for the 13,000 units required by the housing pledge. He also said the zoning designation for much of the land in the 12 applications permits nearly any kind of housing unit, which he called premature. Doyle shared additional concerns about proposed zoning changes to some Greenbelt lands which would allow a wide range of rural uses.

"Why should we zone for 35,000 units based on what's going to happen today when it's going to take probably at least 20 years or longer to see those units built? There's no upside in that," said Doyle. "Zoning is a critical tool for the municipality to achieve its own interests in terms of dealing with development... pre-zoning all this land in a single zone removes some of the control and leverage that municipalities need to protect theirs, and by extension, everyone's interests... so I don't really see the reason to move forward with this type of bylaw at this point in time."

After Doyle spoke, there was time for members of the audience to share questions and comments (each person was given two minutes) and this went on for about an hour. Many different concerns were raised by community members, such as: loss of farmland; increased traffic congestion; loss of rural community character; lack of affordable housing; and strong mayor powers subverting democracy.

Groves attended the Democracy Caledon meeting, as did members of Caledon Council. Groves was given five minutes to speak amid the question-and-answer period.

"Some of the lands that are within this draft zoning bylaw, they go back to 2004... some of

these properties have also had public meetings," said Groves. "Some of the other properties have had applications... when an application is filed, you have 'X' number of days, and if we don't deal with the application it's taken to the (Ontario Land Tribunal). So, we will have someone at the tribunal making decisions for what the town of Caledon should look like in terms of development."

Groves said there's holding provisions in the proposed zoning bylaws that address things like secondary plans and servicing.

Groves said she spoke to every member of Caledon Council about her mayoral decision before she made it.

"I had no objections from any member of Council on that... they were fine with it," said Groves.

This statement was disputed by Ward 2 Councillor Dave Sheen after the meeting.

"That was a misleading statement to make, at least as it relates to me. The Mayor called and spoke to me for about 10 minutes on the Sunday evening, two days before the March 26 Council meeting. She explained what she was planning to do and tried to assure me that there would still be safeguards in place to allow further public and Council input and/or control," wrote Sheen in an email. "To be clear, I did not express support for the move. Instead, I told her I had only received the agenda on the weekend and did not have any time to review or understand the dense material nor discuss it with anyone to help me understand all the implications..."

Groves said she encourages people to reach out to the town for information about the 12 applications.

"We will be addressing servicing, we will be addressing the financial implications. We will be addressing what our community is going to look like through this process," said Groves.

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Check-in phone calls for older adults now available in several languages

BY SAM ODROWSKI

A program aimed at supporting adults 55 and older in Dufferin-Caledon just became more accessible.

The Telecheck program, which provides older adults with scheduled check-in phone calls to help them live independently, can now make calls in a variety of languages.

The recent improvement to the program was made possible in partnership with the Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services.

"TeleCheck's collaboration with Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services demonstrates innovation and leadership in our community's health and social system. Our volunteers are thrilled to extend our team capabilities with the language interpreters at Polycultural so that more diverse older adults can be supported with system partners," said Jennifer McCallum, Manager of TeleCheck.

TeleCheck is an award-winning, free, and confidential telephone check-in service to support adults 55+ independently living at home, and connects clients with vital community health services, or a friendly social connection. Clients can tailor calls based on individual needs. TeleCheck volunteers support their clients, every day of the week.

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services is a charitable, not-for-profit, community-based agency that provides support and services for seniors, newcomers, refugees, and immigrants in Orangeville and across the Greater Toronto Area.

The new collaboration ensures that TeleCheck services now reflect linguistic diversity by breaking down language barriers, ensuring that older adults from various cultural backgrounds feel comfortable and understood in Bengali, Hindi, Portuguese, Urdu and Yoruba.

The above language interpretation options are available through Polycultural staff, with the potential for additional languages to be added in the future.

"In the year since launching our Orangeville site, we've witnessed the richness of the multicultural tapestry in Dufferin-Caledon," said Fatima Medeiros, Program Manager at Polycultural's Orangeville site.

"Our exciting collaboration with TeleCheck will link new Canadians with social health services that are personalized to their needs and made accessible in their preferred language."

To arrange a call with language interpretation or language-specific services, current and new TeleCheck clients can fill out a self-referral form at headwatershealth.ca/Areas-of-Care/TeleCheck.



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FREE Thursday, June 27, 2024 Volume 44, Issue 27



Residents protested outside Caledon Town Hall on June 25 before the Council meeting where 12 zoning bylaws that permit 35,000 housing units were approved. PHOTO BY PAUL GAYLER

Zoning for 35,000 housing units approved by Council following contentious meeting

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

A decision has been made on 12 zoning bylaws that have galvanized the Caledon community for months.

At Caledon Council's June 25 meeting, 12 zoning bylaws that would permit 35,000 housing units were approved.

Mayor Annette Groves, Ward 3 Councillor Doug Maskell, Ward 5 Councillor Tony Rosa, Ward 6 Councillor Cosimo Napoli,

and Regional Councillor for Wards 4, 5 and 6 Mario Russo voted in favour of the by-laws.

Ward 1 Councillor Lynn Kiernan, Ward 2 Councillor Dave Sheen, and Regional Councillor for Wards 1, 2 and 3 Christina Early opposed the bylaws.

Ward 4 Councillor Nick de Boer recused himself from the vote due to a pecuniary interest as he leases land for agricultural purposes within the affected lands.

The June 25 meeting lasted over six hours and Town Hall was packed.

27 people gave delegations on the by-laws.

A large number of Caledon residents who attended the meeting requested that Groves honour a commitment she made in a May 23 public information session: that she would not hold a vote on the bylaws this summer.

Others in attendance supported the by-laws and said Caledon needs the growth they will bring.

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New murals unveiled on Caledon Trailway following grant

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

There are some new improvements on the Caledon Trailway.

On June 21, the Town of Caledon announced that thanks to Rural Economic Development (RED) funding from the Provincial Government, several additions to infrastructure and public art were made along the Caledon Trailway this spring.

In the summer of 2023, Caledon applied for RED funding and was successful, receiving a grant of \$117,274.

"With this funding, the Town implemented and installed various pieces of infrastructure throughout Caledon's villages to beautify and enhance public spaces, improving the visitor and resident experience in and near Caledon's commercial core areas," said the Town in a news release.

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Edward Jones

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Some residents unhappy Mayor broke commitment to not hold vote on zoning this summer

Continued from FRONT

Eric Lucic, Caledon's chief planner, gave a presentation on the 12 bylaws. He said they were designed to meet the criteria of Caledon's Official Plan and that they're a logical extension of built areas.

The bylaws were drafted by law firm Loopstra Nixon and will expedite planning procedures in 12 areas, totalling around 5,000 acres, in Mayfield West, Tullamore, Alloa, Wildfield and Bolton.

Lucic said a broad approach will best address broad planning issues and ensure critical infrastructure will be built. He said the bylaws are all within the existing urban boundary set out by the Region of Peel and that they won't negatively impact Greenbelt lands.

"These applications are not a surprise," said Lucic.

He said there are holds within the bylaws that will allow Caledon to plan the types of communities it wants; and, that the bylaws cannot be in effect until the holds are lifted by Caledon Council.

Lucic said the bylaws will better qualify Caledon for incentive funding and that while a change in approach to planning in Caledon is difficult, Caledon will benefit from it.

In response to many questions asked after his presentation, Lucic said secondary planning, which the public will be engaged in, will address concerns.

Lucic said the 12 zoning bylaws will match Caledon's growth management and phasing plan and that they're about enabling opportunity for development.

He said while the Region of Peel hasn't yet provided clearance on the bylaws, staff are confident they've addressed the Region's concerns and continue to work with the Region.

Sheen said Councillors weren't expecting the vote on the bylaws to be held on June 25 and asked if more time would help Caledon work with the Region, to which Lucic said it wouldn't.

Sheen also asked how Caledon will address planning mistakes it made in previous communities like Southfields Village for future communities.

"I don't want to see Southfields recreated times 12," said Sheen. "When you try to cut through red tape you take away safeguards."

Kiernan said she was concerned with the holds in the bylaws; she questioned why if something was so great so many things have to be put into it to make sure nothing goes wrong.

Nicola Ross, one of the founders of citizens' group Democracy Caledon — which was formed when Groves first introduced the 12 bylaws through Strong Mayor powers — said the group feels the financial implications of the 12 bylaws have not been properly addressed.

Ross said the four public information sessions held by the Town of Caledon on the bylaws (May 15 in Southfields Village, May 23 in Bolton, May 27 in Alton, and June 10 in Caledon East) did not cut it.

"Many of our questions have not been answered," she said.

Ross said on June 25 Democracy Caledon was not even asking Groves to change her opinion on the bylaws: it just wanted her to honour the commitment she made on May 23 to not hold the vote on them this summer.

"You broke your promise," said Ross.

Vadim Promotorov, a Caledon Chamber of Commerce member, said Caledon needs a Mayor who is "mature" enough to keep promises. He took issue with Groves' claim that the bylaws coming forward on June 25 was a staff-led move.

Promotorov said he's not against growth but that it needs to be done with, not against, the residents of Caledon.

Caledon resident and small business owner Peter Bozzo said he supported the 12 bylaws and that if executed properly they will enhance Caledon.

Local realtor Anthony Caputo said Caledon needs development to bring housing prices under control and that he applauds Groves for bringing the 12 bylaws forward.

Realtor Daniel De Rosa said embracing development can take Caledon to the next level and encouraged Councillors to not miss the opportunity to make Caledon better together.

Resident Daniel McCammon said it's not about development but the quality of development. He said the bylaws should not proceed until the Region of Peel's concerns are thoroughly resolved.

McCammon said to proceed with the bylaws without a fiscal framework is folly. He also took issue with Strong Mayor powers, calling them an affront to democracy.

Resident Cheryl Connors said Caledon should defer the applications to the fall and complete its growth management and phasing plan, and complete secondary plans for the lands impacted by the 12 bylaws.

"Why should we believe your promises?" Connors asked. "We have been burned too many times. There's been an erosion of transparency and accountability."

Connors said by taking a non-adversarial approach to development for developers, Caledon has become adversarial to residents.

Inglewood resident Linda Pim said it's her

view that Caledon has not paid enough attention to resident concerns.

"Staff may be ready but residents are not," said Pim.

She said the 700-plus-page agenda for the June 25 meeting, which was released on June 21, was far too large for any resident to reasonably digest in time for the meeting. Pim also shared concerns about whether proper engagement with Indigenous peoples was completed for the bylaws.

Resident Alan Boughton questioned if the bylaws were about building homes or changing the value of land. He said while he's heard great points on both sides of the debate, there's no rush for the bylaws and encouraged Councillors to defer the vote on them.

Democracy Caledon co-founder Debbe Crandall said giving zoning to developers up front hands Caledon's future to wealthy developers and their friends.

"If staff is directed by the CAO, and the CAO directed by the Mayor, how is it not the action of the Mayor to force the vote tonight?" asked Crandall.

Groves appointed Caledon's CAO Nathan Hyde using Strong Mayor powers in 2023.

Crandall said Groves needs to own up to her actions.

"She has proven promises and commitments mean nothing to her," said Crandall. "Bring back integrity to Town Hall and vote to defer tonight."

Local realtor Rocky Punia said Caledon needs to tackle the housing crisis by expediting housing development and creating a competitive environment to drive down house prices.

Alex Sallal, owner of restaurant Blue Smoke in Bolton, said it's been a challenge to run a small business in Caledon. He said it's hard to find staff when there's nowhere affordable for people to live.

"I feel like growth is essential," said Sallal.

Resident John Rutter said Caledon needs its own health care facility before any large population increase. He also said he hasn't seen much appetite in the community for 35,000 new housing units.

Resident Alan Axworthy said while he's learned more about the 12 bylaws, he still never got an answer to his main question: What's the rush? He said the vote on the bylaws should be deferred until after Caledon knows what will happen with potential downloading of services from the Region of Peel.

Former Bolton councillor Rob Mezzapelli used the start of his delegation to play a recording of Groves committing to not holding a vote on the bylaws this summer. He told Groves to not insult Town of Caledon staff and residents by saying it's staff's move to bring the bylaws forward.

"What you are looking at is piecemeal planning on steroids," said Mezzapelli.

Resident Brad Merkley said, as a young person, he's not against development but is vehemently against the 12 bylaws and issuing zoning before secondary planning is complete. He said congestion issues in Caledon will be compounded if large amounts of new housing come to Town before jobs do.

"This is ethically and financially reckless," said Merkley.

Resident Rayissa Palmer said she can't remember another time Caledon residents came together so strongly in opposition to something like they have for the 12 bylaws. She encouraged Councillors to not support the bylaws.

Phil Pothan, a land-use planning lawyer with Environmental Defence, said the lands added to the Region of Peel's urban boundary in 2022 never should have been. He said the development the 12 bylaws will permit comes at the cost of more cost-effective infill homes that could be built in other places.

When delegations at the June 25 meeting were complete, Early said she heard loud and clear that residents did not want the bylaws voted on that evening.

She said it didn't make sense to vote on something that will impact Caledon for 30 years at 10 minutes after midnight.

She motioned to refer the 12 bylaws back to staff, and her motion was eventually defeated. A later motion from Sheen to defer the vote on the bylaws was also defeated.

Russo said the referral would appease a group of residents and that it wouldn't actually achieve anything. He said infrastructure in Peel will be competed for and that Caledon needs to get in the queue for it.

"We have a very clear mandate from the Province we must fulfill," said Russo.

Kiernan said it can't be swept under the rug how the community spoke out about the bylaws.

"It's not Caledon's responsibility to fix the housing crisis," she said. "I don't buy that we have to get in queue; we are desirable, there is no reason why we shouldn't be able to sit down with developers and compromise."

Maskell said the way Caledon has planned in the past has been far from perfect, so Caledon needs to try something new. He said he liked Lucic's plan to move things forward and called it comprehensive.

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READER'S CHOICE 2023
DIAMOND WINNER

FREE Thursday, May 2, 2024 Volume 44, Issue 19



Premier Doug Ford was in Caledon on April 30 to announce that his government plans to start construction of Highway 413 in 2025. PROVINCE OF ONTARIO IMAGE

Premier Ford announces construction of Highway 413 to begin in 2025

Critics say announcement is just "bluster"

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The Highway 413 is going to be built, according to Premier Doug Ford.

Ford made the announcement at an April 30 press conference in Caledon.

"I'm thrilled to announce that construction on this highway will begin in 2025," said Ford. "We're already starting field work and land acquisition that will help make sure we get shovels in the ground on time."

The Premier said in mid-May, the Province will host a market sounding event with "key private sector experts" to discuss ways to move construction of the highway forward quickly and

efficiently.

Ford was joined at the press conference by David Piccini, Minister of Labour, Immigration, Training and Skills Development, and Vijay Thanigasalam, Associate Minister of Transportation. Also at the announcement were Brampton Mayor Patrick Brown, Region of Peel Chair Nando Iannicca, and representatives from numerous labour groups and industry associations.

Continued on Page A11

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Mayor puts fast-tracked zoning bylaws on hold after significant public backlash

BY ZACHARY ROMAN
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Many Caledon residents were not happy with a recent decision, made using Strong Mayor powers, to advance zoning bylaws for 12 development applications that would bring 35,000 housing units to Caledon.

Residents made their voices and concerns heard at an April 17 citizens' forum (held by newly-formed volunteer group Democracy Caledon) and April 25 public meeting (held by the Town of Caledon) on the zoning bylaws for the 12 development applications.

The mayoral decision residents took issue with was issued by Groves on March 26.

There were around 150 people at the citizens' forum, and even more at the April 25 public meeting, which had well over 30 delegates.

Continued on Page A3

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Residents packed Town Hall on April 25 for public meeting lasting almost seven hours



Mayor Annette Groves spoke at a recent meeting of the new community organization Democracy Caledon.. PHOTO BY ZACHARY ROMAN

Continued from FRONT

Caledon's Town Hall was packed past capacity, and the meeting didn't finish until nearly 2 a.m. — it lasted around seven hours.

Groves said there were nearly 200 people at the public meeting, while Democracy Caledon volunteer Nicola Ross said there were 350.

"The Council chamber was filled, the atrium was filled, the cafeteria was filled... then they took people over to the community center which is where we asked the meeting to be held in the first place because we knew it was going to run over this space here," said Ross in a delegation at Caledon Council's April 30 meeting at Town Hall.

Regional councillor Christina Early also estimated around 350 people were at the public meeting, and called it unprecedented.

As a result of residents' concerns, Groves removed the 12 zoning bylaws from the agenda of Council's April 30 meeting, where they could have been approved if just one-third of Caledon Councillors supported Groves' decision.

At the April 30 meeting, Groves said there were questions and concerns about the

zoning bylaws that weren't addressed.

"The message was loud and clear that people in Caledon need and deserve more information, information about the process and why we are considering this action, and the details about each of the 12 parcels of land," said Groves. "We're scheduling three public information sessions for the next month in different areas of the town to provide more transparency and share detailed information with residents and stakeholders."

Groves said she'll address the questions and concerns of residents, and encouraged residents to keep checking the Town of Caledon's website (caledon.ca) and social media feeds for information about the upcoming public information sessions.

"Thank you, Caledon for helping us realize we must do better," said Groves.

Groves' decision, now on hold, was expected to expedite planning procedures by one to two years for 12 development applications which are generally in the areas of Mayfield West, Tullamore, Alloa, Wildfield and Bolton. Loopstra Nixon, an outside law firm, was used to draft the zoning bylaws for the 12 applications.

During her April 30 delegation, Ross said the minutes from the April 25 public meeting do not accurately represent the com-

ments made by many of the delegates on April 25.

"I could not find reference to the criticism many delegates expressed... from reading the notes, the unassuming reader may understand that the delegates were in favor of the process with only minor technical comments," said Ross, reading a letter from a delegate. "You were there... you know it could not be further from the truth."

Later in the Council meeting, Caledon Council unanimously voted in favour of referring the minutes from the April 25 public meeting back to Caledon's town clerk so they can be amended to more accurately represent what was said at the public meeting.

Democracy Caledon volunteer Debbie Crandall also delegated at the April 30 Council meeting.

"Zoning is not supposed to precede secondary planning, zoning is not supposed

to precede detailed environmental studies, fiscal analysis, transportation planning, allocation of water and wastewater servicing, and community building," said Crandall. "Zoning is supposed to codify all of that work; zoning is a municipal tool to ensure that all the work is done properly and that it reflects what is truly needed to meet the affordable housing crisis with input from all of council and input from the public."

Crandall said Democracy Caledon will be attending the three public information sessions and continuing to ask questions.

"We will continue to ask you, Mayor Groves, why you are using your Strong Mayor powers to pre-zone to allow 35,000 homes that far exceed the 2031 housing pledge," said Crandall.

Caledon's housing pledge to the Province says Caledon will have 13,000 new housing units by 2031. Council endorsed this pledge in 2023.

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