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March 13, 2025

Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
Office of the Minister
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor Toronto ON M7A 2J3

Sent by email to minister.mah@ontario.ca

Re: Resolution regarding Planning Authority

At its regular meeting of Council held on March 5, 2025, the Township of Amaranth Council passed the following motion:

Resolution #: 6

Moved by: C. Gerrits

Seconded by: A. Stirk

BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

The Township of Amaranth request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) remove planning authority from Dufferin County as they similarly did with other upper tier municipalities as part of Bill 23: More Homes Built Faster Act in 2022.

For (4): C. Gerrits, S. Graham, B. Metzger, and A. Stirk

Nay (1): G. Little

CARRIED (4 to 1)

Background

Dufferin County was founded in 1881, being created from parts of the counties of Grey and Simcoe, on the north and east, and from the County of Wellington on the south and west. From 1881 until March 27th, 2015 all planning within Dufferin County was completely solely at the local municipal level.

On March 19, 2013 the Province of Ontario amended Regulation 352/02 of the Planning Act (*Mandatory Adoption of Official Plans*), requiring Dufferin County to adopt an Official Plan via Section 1(2) of Regulation 352/02;

(2) If an upper-tier municipality that is named in subsection (1) does not, on March 19, 2013, have an approved official plan, the council of the municipality shall prepare and adopt a plan and submit it for approval on or before March 31, 2015. O. Reg. 101/13, s. 1.

The County's Official Plan was approved by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) on March 27th, 2015. It should be noted that Regulation 352/02 requires Dufferin County to have an Official Plan but it does not compel Dufferin County, or any of the twenty nine (29) municipalities named under Section 1, to develop a Planning Department. The Province of Ontario does require that all lower tier Official Plans must comply with the upper tier Official Plan.

The County's OP Section 1.1.4 Purpose of the Plan Subsection 5 states that the purpose of the Official Plan is to "Guide private investment through land use and development policies to ensure efficient development approvals and administrative processes consistent with the County's goals and objectives."

Section 3.7.1 Affordable Housing subsection c) further states that it is the policy of the County that "the County will encourage the provision of affordable housing where appropriate, through: iii. supporting the reduction of housing costs by streamlining the development approvals process...."

Dufferin County's Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026 identifies Governance as a priority area with a stated objective to "explore opportunities to ensure effective and efficient service delivery..."

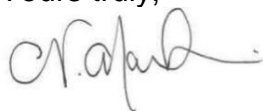
The Township of Amaranth's Strategic Plan was based on the Foundational Pillar: Manage an Efficient and Effective Township.

Council believes that the County having approval authority for planning applications is counter to the stated goals of the County's OP and Strategic Plan as well as the Township of Amaranth's Strategic Plan and Foundational Pillar. It has been observed since the provincial approval of the County's OP that approvals for planning applications take longer and cost the applicant significantly more money than at the Township level. As the Province mandates that all Upper Tier Official Plans cannot be more restrictive than local Official Plans, if a planning application meets the requirements for the local Official Plan it is not possible to fail to meet the requirements of the County's OP and is therefore a complete duplication of effort.

The Planning Department at the County serves a role in providing input and support to local municipalities as well as completing regular conformity reviews and other studies required by the Province and this function should remain at the County level.

Please do not hesitate to contact the office if you require any further information.

Yours truly,



Nicole Martin, Dipl. M.A.
CAO/Clerk