

Council revokes building permit for hog farm

The Municipality of Tweed, in a move that made a lot of area residents very happy, is requesting Jim Shiner, Chief Building Inspector, to revoke the conditional building permit for an intensive livestock operation on Kinlin Road. In a press release issued by the Municipality it states "over the last two years, council has become increasingly aware of, and involved in the wide debate about intensive livestock operations, and in particular intensive pork operations. As a group, and individually, councillors have attended seminars, researched government documents, and many other sources in an attempt to be better informed of the issues and thus provide responsible government. During this same period, council and staff have been preparing a new zoning by-law to regulate the use of land and the erection or use of buildings within defined areas of the municipality. Through all of this research council formed the opinion that while it is important that the existing agricultural operations within the municipality be supported and encouraged, the same regulations should not apply for industrial sized farms for the production of pork."

Tweed which is suitable for the establishment of Intensive Livestock Operations for the production of pork. The zoning by-law now drafted reflects that view. Since it is the intent of council to prohibit such installations, it is only reasonable that it would not be in the best interests of the municipality or the developer of the proposed site, to allow him to proceed. At the February 18, 2003 regular meeting, council moved to request the Chief Building Official to revoke the conditional building permit as issued to Mr. Slack."

Before council voted to rescind the building permit Laura Creighton, who is part of the opposition to the proposed Intensive Livestock Operation, collected 376 letters of opposition to the hog farm. That brought the total of letters in opposition to over 450. Creighton explained to council that she was asking the Reeve and Councillors to read all of those letters and said there are a lot of wonderful comments. Creighton said "I have read all of the letters and if you read them you will feel empowered".

The building permit was issued in October to Mark Slack. Under the building permit, the proposed amount of the construction was \$1,421,660. The Ministry of Environment was contacted by the municipality asking that an impact study be carried out. The impact study was for the study of the surface and groundwater in the area. The MOE responded saying they do not conduct these types of studies as they are normally done by the proponent.

Over the past several weeks delegations have spoken to council against the operation and also for the operation. An informational meeting was also organized and held at the Tweed Legion Hall where approximately 200 residents showed up to listen to guest speakers opposed to the Intensive Livestock Operation.

During the recent council meeting, Councillor Bill Summers put a motion forward to revoke the building permit. Summers said "there is no location suitable for the livestock operation. It is not in the best interest of the municipality." Councillor Paul Healey had not heard about this motion until it was brought forward at the council meeting. Healey said "all of council should have been involved". Healey continued saying that he was not voting on the issue