

localnews

■ POLITICS

Cramahe council briefs

CRAMAHE REVITALIZATION

Cramahe Township is seeking a consultant to help build a retail revitalization plan. On Dec. 18, Cramahe Council agreed to advertise for the position which will cost about \$22,500.

The person or company hired to do the work will develop a strategic retail revitalization plan and implement identified action items. The successful candidate will work closely with the Cramahe Retail Revitalization Committee and stakeholders to ensure the necessary action items are initiated. The time frame is six months.

Cramahe residents will not pay directly for the development of the plan as Cramahe applied to, and was approved for a grant of \$10,000 from the Northumberland Community Futures Development Corporation.

It will be matched by \$10,000 from Northumberland County. Cramahe will pay \$2,500 for in-kind services such as printing, and facilities.

The Cramahe Retail Revitalization Committee (CRRC) a group of business stakeholders from within the commercial sector and interested residents undertook a business retention and expansion survey in conjunction with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA). The survey identified issues concerns and potential opportunities in the retail sector.

Businesses were surveyed in 2011 with a resulting finding that community growth, cost of doing business, commercial vacancies, marketing, training and trans-

portation were major concerns.

In the proposal a plan is to be developed by March 2013 and approval sought at a May meeting of Cramahe Council.

CRAMAHE GETS MID-TERM REPORT

Cramahe Township Council got a mid-term report at its Dec. 18 meeting.

Two years ago, council and staff heads prepared a list of goals in a strategic planning session. The plan was to cover the four-year term of office.

The resulting report listed eight overall goals:

- 1) Completion of the waste water treatment plant expansion
- 2) Updating the existing five-year roads plan
- 3) Completion of Phase II of the Colborne Creek subdivision
- 4) Commercial/retail business revitalization
- 5) Evaluation of the use of existing recreational and community facilities
- 6) Construction of a storage facility for the operations department
- 7) Enhanced council/staff communications/relations including the improvement of morale customer service and protocols
- 8) The creation of a "green committee"

With some of the goals completed and others well on their way to completion, staff and council took a look at the current situation.

The waste water treatment expansion has been completed and the road needs study has been updated. Phase I of the Colborne Creek subdivision is nearing completion and Phase II

is open with lots for sale. The Business Revitalization Committee has identified needs and concerns and a consultant will be hired in the new year to look at ways to increase retail business in the municipality. There has been an evaluation of community-owned facilities and the VBJ Centre has been sold for development. A new storage building has been constructed adjacent to the Keeler Centre. Numerous activities have been completed to enhance staff morale. A green committee has been formed and has plans for 2013.

Council and staff will meet on Jan. 3, 2013 to review the goals in detail and to revise them for the final two years of this term.

GOOD WATER IN COLBORNE

The drinking water in Colborne is fine. That's the word from a report received by Cramahe Township council.

The detailed report refers to six minor non-conformances in 2010. That was reduced to three minor and one major non-conformance in a April 2011 inspection by the Canadian General Standards Board. In February 2012 the township's water system was problem-free and awarded a "Full Scope Entire Accreditation". The number of callouts for alarms in the system dropped dramatically in 2012 too, from the 32 in 2011 to only four a year later.

Water consumption was down marginally in 2011. The figures are not yet available for this year.

The only flaw in the report was a reference to the operators of the system (Lakefront Utility

Services Inc.) operating the system for four months without a current permit to take water. The old permit expired and the new one was applied for in March. It was received in July.

Despite the 99.13% rating, the township's water supply operator has been given a list of eight recommended procedures that are not currently in place.

These include taking measures to ensure that pesticides were not applied, stored, or mixed in the immediate vicinity of source(s), treatment, and storage facilities. The report cited the lack of a program or maintained a schedule for routine clean out, inspection and maintenance of reservoirs and elevated storage tanks within the distribution system.

During the inspection the Ministry of Environment was informed that the tower is serviced approximately every 10 years.

The report also noted that no efforts have been made by the operator to identify and reduce sources of water loss.

NEW ROTARY CLUB SIGNS APPROVED

The Colborne Rotary Club is requesting permission to install new signs advertising the club's presence in the community and meeting times.

"As a club that has played a significant role in the community for over 60 years, we want to ensure our club maintains an appropriate profile," Club President Garry Clement wrote to Cramahe council.

The new signs would be installed at the east and west County Road 2 entry points into

Colborne. The design will be similar to the sign located in the Walter Eddy Park on Percy Street.

Cramahe council approved the new signs, subject to meeting with the approval of Cramahe Director of Operations Dan O'Brien.

FUNDING FOR STREET REPAIRS SOUGHT

If the hoops are cleared, it could mean an injection of provincial dollars to help rehabilitate Cedar, Park and Burnham streets in Colborne. Those three streets were identified as the top road and infrastructure needs for Cramahe by D.M. Wills Engineering, Cramahe Director of Operations Dan O'Brien reported to Cramahe council.

"The anticipated cost for this project that would include rehabilitation of water and sewer services, curb and road resurfacing, is approximately \$2.2-million," O'Brien reported.

Before the provincial government shows the money, a letter of intent from Cramahe Twp. and an asset management plan from the municipality. Cramahe Twp. council decided to send "an expression of interest" to the province to get the ball rolling.

NEW RESERVE FUND SET UP FOR FUTURE FIRE HALL

A recent \$4,000 donation to the Cramahe Fire Department has set new policy with sights on the future.

Cramahe will be in need of a new fire hall or a major renovation/expansion in the upcoming years, Fire Chief Brandon Northrup believes. The two current fire halls are very small and

do not meet current building codes for post-disaster buildings, Cramahe council heard in a report Dec. 18.

Fire halls fall under Life Services Building Design requirements: they should be able to withstand hurricanes, tornadoes and flooding.

Currently, the South Fire Hall at 28 Victoria St., Colborne, sits in a flood plain and would not withstand a significant storm or heavy snow load, a report to council states.

Cramahe council approved establishing the new "Fire Hall Reserve Fund" to begin preparing for future building requirements. The \$4,000 donation is the fund's first contribution.

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Bob Owen — Special to Northumberland Today