

Quips come during Council debate over pet crematorium application

A “chicken and egg” situation. The “nature of the beast” might need a site specific rezoning and an investigation to see if there are any “alligators under... the water”.

No puns were intended, but the animal-related quips just kept coming during Guelph/Eramosa Township Council debate last week of a rezoning application by Crawford Transport Inc./Pets Above Ltd. for a pet crematorium in an industrial zone on

County Road 124, near south/west Guelph.

The proposal calls for animal cremation services for domesticated animals – dogs, cats – as well as equine cremation services. Township planner Bernie Hermsen called it a “chicken and egg” situation, suggesting a delay in the required public meeting on the proposal until they have a better sense of what the application includes, including environmental compliance.

Hermsen said before the Ministry of Environment (MOE) will investigate issuing a Certificate of Compliance, it needs to know the Township’s position on the rezoning, something he can’t make a recommendation on until all of the proposal’s details, including potential emissions, are known.

In support of the application, Hermsen said it is in the right zone, on a major route, surrounded by a railway line and indus-

try, but he doesn’t know the crematorium’s impact – noise and smell – on an adjacent farmhouse. He said the small scale operation that does not use any water, would be done inside with refrigerated units.

Applicant Kyle Crawford called his application a “special case” because any time the word crematorium is used people have all kinds of perceptions, mainly the “fear of death” being around them. He said there are other businesses operating with MOE Certificates of Approval in the industrial strip where they want to open Pets Above Ltd., and the Township did not require any of them to have

preliminary odour and emissions studies done – that was left up to the MOE.

Crawford said he would bring the manufactures of the crematorium equipment and experts with emission details to the as yet unscheduled public meeting. He said the MOE requires him to have a continuous emissions monitoring system, and there would be no odours because he intends to run “a very clean operation.”

As several councillors suggested they have the public meeting and leave it up to the applicant to answer any and all questions or concerns, Hermsen said normally he would come to such a meeting with a

draft bylaw prepared so people could see what was planned. “The other approach is to write a bylaw that says a crematorium – and we have to figure out the nature of the beast – no pun intended – the character of it to properly describe it,” Hermsen said.

Councillor Doug Breen suggested that the logical next step is to hold a public meeting to determine if there are concerns – to find out if there are any “alligators under... the water,” and make decision before the applicant goes to the expense of applying for a Certificate of Approval.

The public meeting will be slated for July.



Beware of coyotes in Rockwood

Some residents of the Rockwood Ridge area are a little spooked and warning neighbours that a number of coyotes have been sighted in the neighbourhood, including at small parkette area where young kids play.

Michelle Johnstone of Carter’s Lanes was surprised to see a coyote standing at her gate across from the Rockwood water tower and on Sunday night, her next door neighbour saw three coyotes in the parkette area around midnight.



Asked if she was scared, Johnstone said, “Well, everybody up here is because some have small kids and others have pets that they walk at night,”

she said on Monday, assured that they were coyotes and not large dogs.

Ministry of Natural Resources Guelph office clerk Michelle Bonaldo said coyote sightings are “very common” at this time of year, in cities and in rural areas. She suggested people check out their rights as property owners on the MNR website so they are aware. “Sometimes the (coyote) attraction these days, which won’t be very comforting to people, is even small dogs and cats, so people shouldn’t let them run off-leash,” Bonaldo said on Monday.

She said that coyotes are not known for preying on people, with only two incidents in Canada in the past year, one in Burlington when a coyote jumped a fence into a backyard.

She said the neighbours could contact the MNR for the name of a licensed trapper, or the Township could hire a trapper if it received enough complaints on coyotes in a particular area.

For details visit www.mnr.gov.on.ca

Township Digest

Hot permit numbers in GET

With 22 building permits issued in May by Guelph/Eramosa Township’s building department, the value of construction-related to the permits – \$3.2-million – makes May the “best month in four years,” according to Michael Newark, the Township’s Chief Building Official.

In a report to Guelph/Eramosa Township Council last week, Newark said May was “very busy” and he expects things to pick up once building permits are issued for the Harris subdivision – also know as Noble Ridge – which includes 258 units, the final housing development in south/east Rockwood. Councillor Doug Breen called the report a “good thing” as the majority of permits issued were for farms and additions to industrial/commercial buildings which will reduce the tax burden on residential properties.

To date in 2012, a total of 74 building permits have been issued with a construction value of \$6.1-million. The total value of construction in 2011 was \$1.9-million.

Council voted to approve a consent application by Harris Street

Developments for a lot line adjustment that would add 84.3-square metres of vacant land to an existing lot on Harris Street. That would allow for an entrance feature to be built for the Noble Ridge development.

Parking ‘dilemma’

Are residents of approximately 10 houses in the Carol/Wetherald/Henry Streets area of Rockwood willing to give up on-street parking for themselves and their guests to prevent people from parking on the streets to take a back way into the Rockwood Conservation Area?

Guelph/Eramosa Council wants to know, and so will talk to the affected residents – although who would actually ask the questions was not decided by Council last week as it grappled with the issue. Staff suggested a parking ban on both sides of Carol and Henry Streets would solve the issue of people parking on nearby streets to use the footpath entrance to the Conservation area, which the Grand River Conservation Authority said it will keep closed.

Councillor John Scott asked if there was a way to give area residents a tag allowing only them to park on the streets in the area, leading Councillor

Doug Breen to comment that “they want to be able to park there, but they don’t want others to be allowed to park there.” It is a “dilemma” without an easy answer according to Mayor Chris White who added they don’t want to “use a sledgehammer to kill a fly.”

The proposed new parking restrictions were deferred until area residents could be questioned about the issue.

Emergency Plan changes

Changes to Wellington County’s Emergency Response Plan are designed to increase preparedness for evacuations, flooding and chemical, biological or radiological incidents. Last Monday, Guelph/Eramosa Township Council approved the amendments, many stemming from the evacuation of 200 Sandy Lake residents to Arthur last summer to escape a fire.

Linda Dickson, Wellington’s Community Emergency Management Co-ordinator presented the amendments, many of them “housekeeping issues” to Council at last Monday, and said they would improve communications during an emergency and detail requirements of a host community to provide medical assistance and volunteers.

DAILY SPECIALS

ROCKWOOD

CASUAL FAMILY DINING

Dine in or Take Out

Open 7 Days a Week
For Lunch & Dinner
11 am - 9 pm

Saturday & Sunday Breakfast
11 am - 3 pm

Call for Reservations

295 Alma St. Rockwood 519-856-0909