



Guelph / Eramosa COUNCIL CHIPS By: Vivien Fleisher



WINTER WEATHER: From foggy days to freezing rain, winter weather can be very picturesque. - Mark Thomsen photo

Public Meeting for 2017 Budget

Attendance last Thursday for the proposed 2017 budget was non-existent, save for one resident, making for a much briefer meeting than last year. Finance director Linda Cheyne ran through the highlights, and as reported earlier, the overall increase for residents amounted to 1.99%, or roughly \$25.00 per average household. The highlights were eye-opening though: for every residential tax dollar paid, Guelph/Eramosa receives 24 cents—less than a quarter. The list of services this covers is extensive though, and accounts for roughly a third of the revenues needed to fund the budget. Council is committed to maintaining current service levels, so the relatively small increase represents something of a victory.

Lot Line Adjustments and Severances

A property on Wellington Rd. 29 is seeking a severance, necessitating a public meeting scheduled for March 20. Effectively, according to planning consultant Mitchell Avis, the residence is being severed from the agricultural portion, and the main idea is to prohibit a residential dwelling from being built on the retained farmland. This had councillor Corey Woods unable to resist asking why this kind of thing isn't done automatically. "I hate to jump to item 8.5, but isn't this something we could do automatically under 'efficiencies'?" Mitchell

Avis quipped that Woods ruined his surprise, while Mayor White pointed out—tongue firmly in cheek—that council will be out of a job if all such matters are handled this way. Meanwhile in Rockwood, a lot line adjustment was requested for a property on George St. to sever 986 sq. meters of frontage to be added to a property on Pine St. While changes to core Greenland properties located—this one is within the regulatory flood line—are not usually permitted, the lot line adjustment does not change the land use and is therefore not of concern.

Housekeeping: Tweaks to Last Year's Comprehensive Zoning Bylaw Amendment

Item 8.5 on the agenda will require another public meeting in March to vet a laundry list of adjustments to last year's Comprehensive Bylaw Amendment. As Mitchell Avis pointed out, this happens when the list of errors and omissions discovered afterward gets to a certain length and must be cleared off. In this case, five main areas needed adjustments, with the primary one being 'Accessory Buildings'. With zoning season coming up, it's prudent to clear up all errors, given that one involved setbacks. Another item dealt specifically with the way spelling and grammatical errors—aka 'clarifications'—can snarl applications. Councillor Bouwmeister sought reassurance that

doing so without the public's input was permitted, and Avis explained to council that "it's not meant to overstep" them, according to lawyers.



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