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Recommend no camping

A consultant working on a master plan for parks, recreation and culture in Guelph/Eramosa has recommended elimination of camping at Marden Park.

Fred Galloway of F.J. Galloway Associations Inc. told residents attending a public meeting that park clientele is dropping and changing. Parks of this type are now being used as low cost summer accommodation for poorer residents, often from nearby urban areas like Guelph.

To bring the park up to a standard where it meets provincial water safety regulations and the requirements of more sophisticated campers, would cost \$500,000 or more, Galloway said. He predicted the municipality would choose other priorities for such a large capital expenditure if it had the money.

Also on the list of changes Galloway suggested are improvements to the existing soccer facilities at Rockwood, including building a second and possibly a third field. Likewise, he recommended upgrading baseball fields across the municipality and possibly adding two or three field around Rockwood if registration levels stabilize or increase.

Galloway noted many youngsters leave the municipality to participate in sports in other communities. So long as that happens council should be prepared to work with those other municipalities to ensure these kids get service. If/when Guelph/Eramosa youngsters begin losing access to those services, then council will need to look at providing it within the community.

Galloway also suggested using that old municipal office as a combined library and community centre in order to give residents on the west side of the municipality equal access to resources without having to go to Guelph for them.

The Rockwood MILLER



Council decides against secondary agricultural zones

By **MAGGIE PETRUSHEVSKY**
The New Tanner

After listening to the public, Guelph/Eramosa councillors have decided against establishing secondary agricultural zones in the municipality.

At a public meeting June 25, residents asked over and over why good agricultural land needed to be "downgraded" to secondary.

Despite council's assertion that the objectives of one would-be developer were not their motive, several residents said the only reason they could see for the change, was to allow Wellington County to avoid an Ontario Municipal Board hearing. The successors of the late Ronald Olbaum have promised to withdraw their objection to the county's Official Plan if their Fourth Line site is designated as secondary agricultural land, residents were told.

Residents said with the township all zoned as prime agricultural land, any development applications need to be fought individually. If the designation is switched to secondary then council has "opened the door" for development.

Planning consultant Bernie Hermsen told residents concerned about potential damage to the water table in the area that special

policies could be overlaid on the zone to protect the water. The policies would set tests to be met in order to get a zone change, severance or approval for development.

Right now the Official Plan allows in-filling in hamlet and urban centres and requires a kilometre separation between these centres and any new development. Unless changes are made no development can occur between Eden Mills and Rockwood without expanding Rockwood's municipal services or setting up those services for Eden Mills. Hermsen agreed there would be a greater chance of development on the Olbaum land if it were downgraded to the secondary agricultural classification.

Bill Woychesko pointed out how developers hammered away at Georgetown council over his years in that community until they got their way and the town has more than doubled in size.

Kit Bresnahan pointed out that as a boy growing up in

the Niagara peninsula, fruit farms abounded. Now the orchards have been taken away. The Eramosa River is a natural corridor for wildlife, he said, and people need to consider the natural environment, not just money, when looking at decisions like this.

When council debated the issue, Coun. Doug Breen made the case for all members. He said he recently drove to Brampton for the first time in a while and saw how development has taken over farms where he and his brothers worked in their youth. Those farms were among the most productive in the province, he said, and now that land is gone from agriculture. He felt council needed to take a stand and listen to their constituents.

Without further discussion council unanimously supported the status quo and rejected the zoning amendment to set up a secondary agriculture zone in the township.

Mark time on proposal

Guelph/Eramosa Township councillors want more time before acting on a proposal to designate part of their municipality as secondary agricultural land.

Land use planner Bernie Hermsen of MacNaughton Hermsen Britton Clarkson Planning Limited said his proposal originally resulted from an application for development near Rockwood. At a public meeting residents repeatedly expressed concerns for how development might impact on the area's water table because it is underlaid by fractured bedrock, making groundwater contamination very possible.

Hermsen said a watershed study on the area showed its sensitivity and its importance for recharge.

The current proposal would designate about 2,100 acres south of Rockwood and a smaller parcel southwest of Guelph along County Road 124. The larger parcel is

bounded by Eden Mills, the Eramosa River, Rockwood, the railway tracks and Highway 7. Both contain mostly Class 3 to 5 soils. Designating the smaller parcel would also correct some "house-keeping" issues where Wellington County maps are inaccurate.

Councillors expressed concern about preserving the water quality south of Rockwood and questioned how a special policy area designation might facilitate that. At the same time they wondered aloud if changing the land's designation from primary agriculture to secondary agriculture wouldn't automatically invite additional pressure for development.

Hermsen suggested council get together with Grand River Conservation Authority staff and Wellington County planners to look at policies that would achieve their aims. Then, in light of prior public concern, he advised council to draw up a draft of those policies and present them to another public meeting. He estimated it would take two to three months to complete that work.

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