

Another study needed for traffic bypass: MTO

By Peter Richardson

Traffic in Shelburne is likely to get worse before it gets better.

Deputy Mayor Geoff Dunlop and Councillor Benotto reported to Council on Monday night on their recent discussions with the Minister of Transportation, Steven Del Duca, at the AMO Conference.

They spoke with the Minister concerning Shelburne's discussions with the MTO on various issues.

In the matter of an advanced green light at the intersection of Highway 89 and County Road 124, the MTO took the Town traffic studies under advisement, but told the delegation, which included Town Engineer Stephen Burnett, that they would still require the completion of their own warrants, which would be completed as soon as was feasible and a report made to the Town, of the findings.

In the matter of a Highway 89 bypass to take traffic around Shelburne rather than through town, the position of the Ministry was that a study is scheduled for the greater GTA and Golden Horseshoe areas and will be presented in 2019.

At that time, a decision could be made as to whether or not a bypass was warranted. This, in spite of, the fact that a study in 2007 indicated that a bypass would be required by 2035 and statistics show that the volume of traffic currently exceeds the numbers in that study.

With all of the expected new growth, in both Shelburne and Dundalk, this means that traffic congestion is going to get much worse before it gets better.

If approved, a by-pass would take a minimum of ten years to complete, once approval was granted, by the Province.

In the absence of Mayor Bennington, Monday night's Council meeting was presided over by Deputy Mayor Geoff Dunlop.

The first order of business, was a report from town planner Steve Weber, concerning a bylaw amendment to allow the property at 138 Wellington Street to have a second residential dwelling, in the accessory building, on the property.

Mr. Weber explained to Council that the amendment was required, to allow the use to comply with recent changes in the Provincial legislation that now encourages such usages and promotes their use where suitable.

The amendment would apply only to the one property and all other applications would be considered on an individual application basis.

The measure is required, while the Town reviews and updates it's Official Plan to comply with the new rules and drafts the appropriate regulations and conditions under which such units would be acceptable.

The motion to amend the current bylaw was carried unanimously.

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Council next heard a delegation from Gord Gallagher concerning the formation of a Community Foundation in Dufferin County. A

Community Foundation is a registered charity whose purpose is to create and invest endowment funds, whose income is then dispersed, as grants, for projects and services to enrich the community.

What it essentially does is allow people and organizations that currently fundraise for various purposes to have a central organization that can oversee and manage their financial affairs.

Many communities utilize the services of the United Way, a workplace fundraiser, for this purpose. However, in Dufferin County, the United Way is poorly supported, which reduces its ability to make grants.

Across Canada, there are some 200 such Foundations, with assets exceeding \$5 billion. A Community Foundation in Dufferin will supplement current fundraising efforts by providing new sources of funding and encouraging philanthropy in the County.

It was noted, that Community Foundations help to reduce the arduous administrative responsibilities of charitable organizations and family trusts.

The funds collected, are to be managed by professional Money Management Personnel, under the guidance of a Board of Directors.

Donors would be able to specify how they want their funds to be allocated, or they can put their donations into a general purpose fund, that would support charitable work either throughout the County, or in a specific municipality.

It was noted that several surrounding municipalities currently have a Community Foundation in place.

Council received the delegation and moved a motion of support in principal, with the intention of allocating the Foundation consideration in the upcoming Budget discussions.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Carol Maitland, the Economic Development and Marketing Co-Ordinator reported to Council on the application for RED, from OMAFRA.

RED, which stands for Rural Economic Development, is a programme to help remove barriers to economic development in smaller rural communities like Shelburne.

If an application is approved, RED will cover 50 per cent of the cost of a project.

Shelburne has applied for two projects, under the programme. One is the CIP, or Community Improvement Plan, and the second is the Community Website Development Plan.

The CIP, which is to help revitalize the downtown core, has a total project cost of \$128,000, of which \$80,000 of this is eligible under the RED Programme.

The Town Website application, is to completely redesign and overhaul the existing website to make it more user friendly and accessible, as well as vastly expanding its capabilities. This expansion would allow for such things as being able to sign up and pay for recreational programmes, book town facilities and supply direct links to other services and organizations, such as Headwaters Tourism.

The new site would be much easier to navigate and allow for far more visual entries than currently exist.

Many of the Town's facilities and organizations, such as the CDRC and the Police and Fire Departments, could have their own pages, within the general site, where they could directly interact with the public.

Council expressed a strong interest in this initiative and will continue to work with Maitland and the EDC to see it to fruition.

BENOTTO APPOINTED

Finally, with the passing of Councillor Egan having left a vacancy on the Fire Department Board, Council Appointed Councillor Benotto to sit on the board until December 31, when all committee positions come up for reassessment.