

Shelburne, Ice River fight Amaranth zoning

An Amaranth Township Council's decision to approve two residential developments on property owned by one of the councillors might be challenged at the Ontario Municipal Board by the Town of Shelburne and by Ice River Springs, in Shelburne's Industrial Park.

A referral to the OMB is not related to the ownership of the proposed residential lots by Councillor Brian Besley, but by the creation of a residential development adjacent to industry. The industrial park is on the north side of Warriors Way (30 Sideroad or County Road 11), and the development would be on the south side directly across the roadway.

Councillor Besley had declared his conflict of interest in the matter. The council's approval of a consent application was signed by all members except him.

The objections are based on several regulations, including the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), Places to Grow legislation and the county's Growth Management Plan, as well as on the forthcoming provincially mandated county Official Plan, which sets out intensification targets.

The targets deal specifically with assimilative capacity. Part of Shelburne's claim is that Amaranth has not demonstrated that it would be capable of providing a potable water supply to the development, and has not shown how it would manage sewage. What goes into a septic system must eventually be pumped out and disposed of in accordance with regulations.

The PPS requires compatibility in new developments. Shelburne and the industrial interests don't consider residential to be compatible with industry.

Town Planner Steve Weber, in a letter to Amaranth last month, cited the Ministry of Environment's guideline for development of housing in the proximity of present and future industrial development. He said, among other things, that the proposed development is not consistent with the township's own Official Plan.

Ice River Springs and its Blue Mountain Plastics recycling facility in Shelburne appear poised for growth with their announcements this month that Ice River had purchased Fernbrook Springs Bottled Water Company, based in Amaranth and Halton Hills, and also that it had launched production of a 15-litre water bottle made from 100% recycled plastic.

Its objections are similar to those cited by Mr. Weber.

By Wes Keller