This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 2:11:06 2026 / +0000 GMT

Council upholds bylaw on Feral Cat Rescue

By Peter Richardson

Shelburne is exploring solutions to move the Feral Cat Rescue.

On Monday, Council heard from Deputy Clerk Jennifer Willoughby in regards to a report on the Feral Cat Rescue (FCR), which is currently being operated from 141 Second Avenue West, being in violation of the Town's Zoning By-Laws.

Council had previously recognized the need for and the value of this service to the residents of Shelburne and had requested the study to try and find an appropriate solution.

The business is being operated from a private home in a residential neighbourhood, which contravenes By-law #38-2007 prohibiting such action.

Council was presented with six possible options for a solution. These included adopting a Feline Control By-Law which would, in effect, put the Town in the animal control business, issuing an RFP for an outside contractor to take over the feline problem.

Further options were to allow FCR to apply for a site specific zoning, a costly procedure for the owner, and a time consuming one, which would involve having the agreement of all the surrounding neighbours and would require numerous health and safety requirements to be met, as well as having the Town assist the operation to relocate.

The sixth option was to issue an order of non-compliance, in accordance with the Town Zoning By-law#38-2007, with operations to cease and desist at 141 Second Avenue West.

It was the unanimous opinion of Council, that none of these options were ideal, in and of themselves, but that Council could not, in good conscience, allow an illegal business to continue to operate in violation of the By-law.

As a result, an order of non-compliance with By-law #38-2007 was issued. However, Council also adopted option number five, as well, in order to assist FCR owner Sharon Morden to relocate her business to an appropriate venue.

To that end, a resolution was drafted requiring Feral Cat Rescue to return to Council in July with a business plan, detailing how it wished to proceed.

This plan is to include a statement of accounts, showing all of the cost associated with the operation of the rescue, any projected sources of income, such as government grants, donations or other proposed revenue generating initiatives, as well as an outline of the size and type of facility required to house the business and the costs of relocating it.

To assist in this requirement, Council placed Town Staff, including Town Planner Steve Weber, at Ms. Morden's disposal, to help in drafting the plan and locating grants and other income sources.

It was also suggested that the Town could possibly contract with the Feral Cat Rescue, for its services, in the future.

Mayor Ken Bennington made it clear that it was Council's intention to help Ms. Morden relocate and maintain her rescue business to the extent that that is feasible and appropriate, and that the intention of Council is not to simply shut the Feral Cat Rescue down.

Also on Monday's agenda, was the continued deliberations over the troubled Town crosswalk, located on the east side of William Street opposite Town Hall.

Despite many initiatives by Town staff, traffic still continues to ignore the signage and to drive through the crosswalk while it is in use.

The latest incident, involved the Mayor's mother, who was struck and seriously injured while using the crosswalk last Thursday afternoon.

Although rushed to Sunnybrook Medical Centre, from Headwaters Health Care Centre, Thursday evening, Mrs. Bennington is responding well and will make a full recovery.

Council heard from CAO John Telfer, that the new lane delineation markers have now been installed, which essentially, reduce Main Street to two lanes at the crosswalk, one eastbound and the other westbound. These markers will cause substantial structural damage to a vehicle that attempts to drive over them.

However, in an effort to further reduce the confusion and the risk factor at the crosswalk, Mr. Telfer, in consultation with the Fire and Police chiefs, has suggested to Council that left hand turns from both William and Victoria streets be prohibited immediately.

According to CAO Teller, this will greatly reduce traffic problems at the crosswalk.

Council was in full agreement with this response and endorsed the change to begin as soon as possible.

In addition, it was suggested that a second set of crosswalk lights be installed lower than the overhead ones, to aid in alerting drivers to the crosswalk. Mr. Telfer noted that this is being done in Wasaga Beach, with great success.

Several Councillors and the Mayor, however, opined that should these measure not succeed, that it may be time to forsake the crosswalk entirely and remove it.