This page was exported from - Shelburne Free Press
Export date: Fri Oct 30 5:54:38 2026 / +0000 GMT

Dufferin considers motion to limit powers of OMB

By Brock Weir

Dufferin County is considering a motion this week calling on the Province to limit the authority of the Ontario Municipal Board in local planning decisions.

This comes just days before representatives from over 60 Ontario municipalities, including Mulmur Township, are expected to converge in the City of Markham for a day-long summit on reforming the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), which often has the final say in local planning matters.

Mulmur Councillor Keith Lowry will represent Mulmur Township's Council at the event and Mayor Paul Mills says it is time to look at the OMB's future.

?The OMB has been around for a long time and I know we have had some decisions in Mulmur that have gone against bylaws and I just think maybe it is time to have a look at it,? says Mayor Mills. ?This is going to be [a chance] to see where everyone is coming from and get different views on where the OMB is sitting. Keith is going to bring back some information.

?We all have our official plans and they have all been passed by the Province. Some things come against us, but everyone has their own official plans. We are going through that right now with the Niagara Escarpment Commission and that is all duplication really because our official plan and bylaws are already protected in that area, and it is just duplication. I think there is too much interference coming in from the Province.?

Dufferin County is set to meet Thursday to consider supporting a motion coming from Aurora to ?limit the jurisdiction of the OMB to questions of law or process and require the OMB to uphold any planning decisions of Municipal Councils unless they are contrary to the processes set out in legislation.?

Aurora Council passed the motion at the end of January and it has since been making the rounds across the Province. It was put forward by Councillors Tom Mrakas and Michael Thompson, who are also spearheading Saturday's summit, which has attracted over 140 elected officials.

?This is a unique event: a grassroots gathering of elected officials from every corner of our Province, working together towards the common goal of affecting real change in the decision-making process that affects how our communities are planned? said Councillor Mrakas in a statement. ?There has been tremendous support for this initiative with over 80 municipalities, both large and small, that have passed [motions] on OMB reform and that list is growing every day.

?The message is clear: real, positive and effective change is needed as it speaks to the scope of powers of the OMB. With reform, it is hoped that municipalities will have a greater say in how they grow and evolve. In light of the Provincial review of the OMB, we believe that the time is now for municipalities to come together with one strong, unified voice and request the necessary reform that will allow elected officials to have the authority to uphold their Official Plans and ensure appropriate development.?