

**Township of South-West Oxford
Minutes
SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee
June 6, 2023**

In Attendance: Mayor David Mayberry, Councillor Peter Ypma (Ward 2), and Councillor Craig Gillis (Ward 6), Paula Beckett (community representative)

Staff: Clerk Julie Middleton and Clerk's Assistant Nicole Chambers, CBO Howard Leaver

Guests: Development Planner, Meghan House (Oxford County)

Call Meeting to Order

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

Motion to Accept Agenda

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Peter Ypma
Seconded by Craig Gillis

RESOLVED that the agenda for the June 6, 2023 meeting of the SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee be approved, as amended (Layton property discussion).

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Minutes

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Craig Gillis
Seconded by Peter Ypma

RESOLVED that the minutes of the May 2, 2023 SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

Correspondence

May 2023 Market Report – SWOX Township

The Committee reviewed the May 2023 market report and noted the following highlights:

- Sold listings down 28.6%
- New listings down 15.3%
- Available inventory up 180%
- Average price down 23.6%

Discussion Items

Meghan House: Draft ARU Provisions

Meghan House presented the Committee with a draft of Oxford County's ARU provisions. Oxford County Council approved the new official plan (OP) policies for rural townships in February – this now directs the municipality to implement zoning provisions. She noted that when discussion first took place surrounding ARUs, the *Planning Act* stated that municipalities must have policies to authorize ARUs in single, semi-detached and row houses. Subsequently, provisions in *Act* changed, and it now states that municipalities cannot prohibit 2 units in fully serviced settlements (ARUs are now permitted as-a-right). Outside of settlement areas, it has been left up to the discretion of municipalities to determine the appropriate number of ARUs permitted per lot. Ms. House highlighted some notable changes to the *Act*, including the requirement for one parking space per ARU, municipalities cannot specify the tenant's relationship to the owner, and the zoning provisions are protected from certain appeals.

Ms. House noted that ARUs have been defined in the new provisions. The proposed definition of Additional Residential Unit (ARU) is: a dwelling unit located within the principal dwelling on a lot or in a permanent detached accessory building on the lot, and which is secondary or subordinate to the principal dwelling on the lot (smaller in size). Additional residential unit(s) shall not include a trailer, a mobile home, a motor home or recreational vehicle as defined herein.

Oxford County's OP policies are in agreement with the provincial policy which states that up to 2 ARUs are permitted in fully serviced settlements. In their proposed (draft) provisions, the County specified that this is only possible where adequate servicing permits. Oxford County Public Works is only comfortable with permitting 1 ARU per property in Mount Elgin at this time due to available servicing, despite its definition as a fully serviced village. The Township may choose to amend the zoning by-law (increase to 2 ARUs) in the future once servicing has been updated in the village.

Villages/rural clusters which are not fully serviced will be permitted to have 1 ARU per lot, this includes Sweaburg, Brownsville and Dorland subdivision in Beachville. Due to the lack of servicing capacity in Dereham Centre and Loweville subdivision in Beachville, no ARUs will be permitted.

Ms. House noted that a change to the existing zoning by-law is the change in definition of converted dwellings – these are only permitted in R3 zoning which does not exist in

South-West Oxford. Converted dwellings with up to 2 units are now categorized as ARUs. The term is still being used for up to 4 units in a serviced settlement area. The intent of retaining converted dwellings in the provisions is that a large, older house fits the character of the area better than constructing a new quad-plex.

The Committee noted that parking will present the greatest challenge to ARUs. Under the *Planning Act*, one space per ARU is required, but municipalities can require more for the principal dwelling. Due to parking issues, home occupations will be limited to the principal dwelling and a home daycare/B&B or B&B/ARU are not permitted.

As proposed, garden suites are not permitted but residents are able to apply for a minor variance if they would like to proceed with this option. The Committee discussed whether existing garden suites could be converted to ARUs. Ms. House noted that these structures would have to be converted to permanent dwellings (i.e., pour a proper foundation, meet various CSA standards, etc.). Clerk Julie Middleton added that as long as the garden suite meets the definition of an ARU upon inspection by the Chief Building Official, they could apply for a change of use permit. Mayor David Mayberry noted that the unit has to meet building code to be an ARU, and Ms. House added that this is important especially if there is servicing involved.

Councillor Peter Ypma noted that in the Mount Elgin subdivision, servicing and parking are two major concerns. Ms. House noted that typically, you need 2 parking spaces for a single, detached dwelling. For ARUs, garage parking spaces do not count, but tandem parking does (would have to look at lot frontage when considering this).

Mayor Mayberry expressed his concerns regarding the draft provincial policy statement (PPS) and the creation of 3 lots (which has since been tentatively removed) and the ability to sever ARUs. He noted that if there is the ability to sever ARUs off one at a time, is there a way to stop this subdivision by default? Ms. House noted that currently, the OP and PPS would stop this. In the proposed PPS, there are some criteria regarding the land being adjacent to non-agricultural uses, and the lot size. It was unclear in the draft and guidance how detailed planning criteria could be with respect to these policies. They are hoping to receive more clarification when the PPS is enacted. Mayor Mayberry inquired about farm consolidation if there are multiple dwellings and ARUs. Ms. House noted that there is a policy in the OP regarding how the ARU has to stay with the primary dwelling.

The Committee discussed the next steps for this process. Oxford County will bring forward the draft ARU provisions to Township Council for consideration at the June 20th meeting. A public meeting will take place during that meeting as well. Council may make changes and/or approve the By-law during that meeting (or approve in principle). After implementation, staff will review the building permit and/or minor variance applications received and decide whether they need to have Council re-evaluate the provisions.

The Committee discussed the option for licensing or a registration system (or another process) to confirm compliance. Ms. Middleton noted as long as the ARU meets the

Mr. Heckford met with Mayor Mayberry and CAO Mary Ellen Greb regarding the potential future options for this property. He presented the Mayor and CAO with a mockup drawing of a cul de sac with 5 freehold units. It was noted that these units would share the cost of snow removal and lawn maintenance, and they would not be priced in the “affordable” price range. Mr. Heckford was clear during that meeting he was not interested in changing his plan to add a library space. He did not establish a timeline for bringing an official plan/proposal to Council for consideration.

The Committee discussed other properties that could be suitable for library space, as there is a need to bring the library across Plank Line. The following alternatives were discussed:

- Elgin Hall property (possible issue with well head protection area)
- Townhouse in phase 6
- Lot on north side of Mount Elgin Road
- Lot adjacent to the phase 6 park

The Committee discussed the need to create retail space (medical clinic, boutique drug store, coffee shop, etc.) and a daycare in Mount Elgin and the possibility to locate these spaces on the Community Centre lands. Mayor Mayberry questioned if the existing library space was suitable to be converted to a daycare (if 25 spaces will be enough for a viable operation as Zorra is offering over 80)? He will follow up with Cara VanKlaveren from Oxford EarlyON. Staff have received a copy of Zorra’s child care RFP and it will be added to the next meeting agenda for review. It was noted that fencing may need to be added to the Community Centre lands if a daycare was to be located on that property.

Directives

- Assist the Township and provide recommendation on taking a leadership role with respect to the consideration of various housing options within the Township and the County of Oxford;
- The SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee acts as a resource, information gathering and advisory body to Township Council on housing needs within the community;
- Monitor and obtain information on the local housing market and identify trends and emerging housing needs in the community and recommend action where appropriate;
- Provide advice and make recommendations regarding affordable housing initiatives and priorities within the community;
- Explore options for facilitating outside partnerships/involvement for new housing;
- The committee will not be directly involved in providing social housing within the community (this is an upper tier responsibility). However, may consider facilitating discussion in this regard should the opportunity arise with available land or interest from developers.

Adjournment

