



NEW DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND ZONING BY-LAWS PROJECT SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

In 1995, the Council of the Township of Lake of Bays took the first step in preparing a new blue print for the future of the Township by placing the preparation of a vision statement in the hands of the community. This visioning process formed the foundation for the preparation of the new Official Plan. The Official Plan was developed with a similar community based approach and was approved in March of 2000. The Township is now continuing our planning program to prepare new Comprehensive Zoning and Development Permit By-laws.

COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

A community committee, which represents the various areas and interest within the Township, was created early in the project. The role of the Committee was to provide guidance and local knowledge respecting the desirable community standards for both by-laws.

WHAT IS THE DEVELOPMENT PERMIT SYSTEM?

The development permit system is a new planning tool in Ontario that is currently only available to a few municipalities. This new system replaces the zoning, minor variance and site plan control processes. It allows the by-law to clearly identify development rules and requirements, it facilitates built-in flexibility and permits the regulation of site alteration and vegetation removal. Council decided to proceed with the design of a development permit system in Lake of Bays in order to better implement the policies of the Official Plan, including the protection of our shorelines, and to streamline the planning approvals process.

Provincial regulations currently limit the use of the development permit system to the waterfront areas of Lake of Bays. As a result, the rural areas and communities in the Township will be subject to the new Comprehensive Zoning By-law.

HOW WILL THE NEW DEVELOPMENT PERMIT BY-LAW WORK?

The new Development Permit By-law will apply in the Waterfront areas of the Township. This By-law is similar to traditional zoning by-laws in that it includes both general provisions which apply across the entire area to which the By-law applies, as well as specific provisions for each Development Permit Area (zone).

This by-law differs from a zoning by-law in that it permits discretionary uses, ie. those uses which are permitted provided that certain conditions are met, in addition to permitted uses. It also allows variation from the standards, such as setback or lot coverage requirements, provided that the additional criteria outlined in the Official Plan are addressed.

The Development Permit By-law also regulates removal of vegetation and alteration of the landscape (grading, blasting, filling, etc.).

Lastly, the Development Permit System allows Council to delegate authority, as it deems appropriate, to staff. Approvals that are delegated to staff involve siting reviews or minor variations from a standard. In this case, notice to neighbours is not required and the process will be streamlined. Where the need for a Council approval is identified, notice to neighbours of a public meeting will be given.

It is important to note that once this By-law is approved, there are no third party appeals to the Ontario Municipal Board. Therefore, it is very important that everyone is comfortable with the contents of the By-law at this stage in the process.

HOW WILL THE NEW ZONING BY-LAW WORK?

The new Zoning By-law incorporates requirements of the new Official Plan, but will be implemented in the same way as is done today, including the processing of applications to amend the by-law, to obtain a minor variance from the by-law and to obtain site plan approval.

OPEN HOUSES – SPRING OF 2002

Public open houses were held last summer to obtain feedback on general concepts and approaches for the draft by-laws. Initial feedback was generally positive and staff proceeded to prepare preliminary drafts of the proposed By-laws, based on a series of discussion papers developed by the Citizen's Advisory Committee. Additional public open houses have been scheduled this June, as outlined on the attached notice. We hope that you will take the opportunity to attend one of these open houses in order to check to make sure that the proposed Zoning or Development Permit Area provisions are appropriate to your situation and properly reflective of the characteristics of your property, or others around you. The by-laws are DRAFT at this point in time, and there is still plenty of opportunity to request clarification or modifications prior to Council's formal consideration of the By-law later this summer.