

Media Release

November 25, 2020 *Response to Local Media Article Regarding Development* East Ferris, ON

This media release is in response to an article published by local media on November 17th, 2020 titled “*East Ferris, LPAT testing teacher’s patience*”. It is not the Municipality’s usual practice to respond to articles published in the media, but the Municipality believes it is important that our community has complete and accurate information. The Municipality was not contacted for comment on the original article.

Council Members, Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) Members, and Municipal Staff take development projects in the community very seriously and do not rush the decision-making process. We follow the process required by the Ontario *Planning Act* and other provincial planning policy, and carefully consider the policies in our Official Plan when evaluating all development proposals. Council does not make planning decisions based on tax revenue and only considers applications for growth and development when the applicant is able to demonstrate that the new development will occur in a sustainable and responsible way that is consistent with municipal and provincial policy.

East Ferris requires supporting documentation and studies for all development approvals of this nature, which are reviewed by staff as well as by external agencies, including the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. With respect to this application, Staff and the PAC reviewed a hydrogeological assessment, environmental impact study, servicing options report, and a planning justification report. Municipal staff also reviewed traffic, engineering, and emergency services related concerns through the process. Further, comments were received by Hydro One and the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. All reports, comments, and reviews formed part of the public planning process. As a result of this process and the studies that were submitted, the Draft Plan of Subdivision was revised to reduce the number of proposed lots and alter the lot layout in response to recommendations made in the Environmental Impact Study. The average lot area in the proposed development is 4.15 acres with the smallest lot being 2.50 acres.

A robust public process which included two Planning Advisory Committee meetings and two Council meetings, including several opportunities for residents to provide input, was undertaken prior to Council approving the Draft Plan of Subdivision application and associated Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment applications. From the application being deemed complete to being approved, the process took 7 months.

The Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) is an adjudicative tribunal independent of the Municipality; therefore, we will not be commenting on their processes and actions.

With respect to the conflict of interest allegation against our PAC member, the Integrity Commissioner’s role is to conduct inquiries into these types of allegations. In this case, the Integrity Commissioner has determined that the pecuniary interest is remote or insignificant and he will not be pursuing this matter any further.

We support our business community, staff and members of the Planning Advisory Committee, and Council, who has final decision-making authority, stands by its decision to approve this development project.

We will not be commenting any further on this matter.