

THE LOOK OUT

A Newsletter Created by the Mono Mulmur Citizens' Coalition



**Mono Mulmur
Citizens' Coalition**

Our voice in the community
SINCE 1988

WINTER 2021

**PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE**

DON'S DESK
HOW ARE OUR
COUNCILS DOING?

**ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE
NOTES**

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Dear Members!

I am honoured to have been re-elected as the President of MC² for the upcoming term. The organization continues to receive great respect and credibility within our Mono and Mulmur municipalities and beyond. We have positioned our organization well to participate in conversations, and in some cases, the legal hearings, where we feel there could be potential for inappropriate land stewardship that could bring a detrimental impact to our environment and valued way of life.

In our work to preserve our rural environment and support effective local government, MC² strives to provide our members and the community at large with information

about what is happening in Mono and Mulmur and within the County. We also strive to activate member action for support on issues being tackled by other like-minded community groups. We continue to be involved in addressing concerns that impact our ratepayers and municipalities.

We are thankful for a great membership of people who care about the place they call home and for the input and feedback contributed on a regular basis. At our virtual AGM in the fall, we received some very valuable feedback from our members in attendance. Over the next year, we will work diligently to connect with the membership to a greater extent and to connect

with those who want to be more involved.

I look forward to us continuing with great work that has been characteristic of MC² since 1988. Thirty two years and thriving!! Thank you in advance for renewing your membership again for this new year and referring others to join. We were most gratefully overwhelmed by the many generous donations our members included with their annual renewals last year!

Please keep well, physically and mentally, as we navigate through this unprecedented time of change and challenge.

Elaine



DON'S DESK HELPERS WRITE...

MONO UPDATES

Mono Council continued to hold regularly scheduled meetings virtually through the fall and into the winter. MC² continued to attend the meetings electronically. The major events and decisions are as follows:

BUDGET, REVIEWS & TAXES: The 2021 budget was passed with an overall increase in taxes of 1%. This increase is consistent with the inflationary increase during 2020. Staff hold the view that if the overall increase is equal to the rate of inflation,

therefore that represents a zero increase in the budget. MC² does not ascribe to this viewpoint, but we can agree to disagree. Staff asked for an independent salary review by outside consultants and we were pleased to see Council decline this request. The final tax rate has not yet been set at the time of writing this report, as Mono still has to get the final budget numbers from Dufferin County and the Board of Education. Mono residents should keep in mind that the Town's tax bill contains a split of 40-40-20.

Dufferin County and Mono receive 40% apiece, while Education receives about 20%.

Conservation Authorities: The province continues to cut the Conservation Authorities' (CA) budgets. The CAs are now approaching the municipalities to try and make up that revenue deficiency. Members need to continue to write their MPP, Sylvia Jones, on this issue. Conservation Lands need to be protected, not

MONO UPDATES CONTINUES...

further developed. Continued detailed, fact-based communication can turn the tide on this, safeguarding our natural spaces for generations to come.

RACETRACK: The planned horse track on the 4th line between 5 Side Road and Highway 9 continued to be a source of stress in Mono. The following is a quote from the January 19th Report compiled by Mark Early, CAO/Clerk of Mono on the situation.

“...the application has also been met with significant public opposition, especially related to potential for groundwater contamination, stormwater management / drainage, trucking, noise and dust concerns. The proposal to import 22,000m³ (approximately 2,200 truck loads) of fill has been stated to not be in the general

community interest.... The Town Engineer in his attached letter report dated January 14, 2021 has proposed a preliminary revision to the grading plan submitted, which indicates that a cut and fill balance can be engineered onsite and should be pursued.”

At the January 27th Mono Council meeting, the application as submitted to import soil to build this track was denied by Mono Council as well as any time extension to try and offer further arguments to the Town Engineer's Report. Great news for our members and the 4th Line neighbours who kept this issue alive and pressing for the Town!

FILL: We are pleased to report, in the wake of the 4th Line fill issue, that the Town has discovered four additional properties where owners had fill dumped illegally. The Town has

moved quickly to charge the owners and the dirt contractor. The Town has stiffened its existing fill by-law and is hopefully close to rewriting this important document. MC² has asked the Town to encourage all citizens to keep their eyes and ears open when they see trucking activity anywhere in Mono and report it to Town staff.

GOOD NEWS: The last item we would like to cover is the video replay of all Council meetings. Citizens can watch Council meetings from home by connecting to the Town website and with a couple of clicks either watch live or call up any previous meeting. If you are only interested in one particular item on the agenda, you can click on the agenda item and listen to the replay of that particular subject. It works very well.

MULMUR UPDATES

ATVs: A by-law to prohibit off-road vehicles on Township roads was passed in December. Farmers using vehicles for agricultural purposes are permitted to travel on the roads. Snowmobile permission is under the Highway Traffic Act and cannot be prohibited by a municipal by-law.

Fibre Optic: Eh!tel Networks made a presentation in December that outlined where and when (spring 2021) they will begin laying the fibre optic lines for high capacity broadband in Mulmur. Results of the Broadband Survey have been shared with Eh!tel to assist them with an application for more funds to expand our coverage.

Draft Budget: The January 13 Council meeting included a Public Meeting for feedback on the 2021

draft budget. Council did not request any changes and will vote on it at the February meeting. The budget includes a 1.91% tax levy increase which equates to an increase of \$10.98 on every \$100,000 of assessment. Only one Mulmur resident asked questions.

The budget includes \$65,000 to convert the street lighting to LED for energy conservation.

Mansfield Ski Club: Answers to questions from the Pine River Valley Residents' Group about the Mansfield Ski Club application can be found beginning on page 120 on the January 13 Council Agenda.

LIC: Staff has been directed to assess interest in a potential LIC (local improvement charge) and to continue to research opportunities for

residents to get loans to carry out Green Energy related projects.

Rec. Facilities: The future of recreation and of recreation facilities in Mulmur continues to be a focus with no decisions made at this time. The Sierra Planning and Management Efficiency Review of the North Dufferin Community Centre is available on the Mulmur website.

New Hire: Dustin Early has moved from Administrative Assistant to the new position of Planning Assistant and Committee Coordinator. Doing a little bit of everything from general office duties to record keeping and research, his main focus will be assisting the Planner with questions and applications as well as drafting agendas and minutes for committees. Alexis Phillips has been hired to take over as Administrative Assistant.

MULMUR UPDATES CONTINUES...

This year we are asking for something from you. We encourage you to be involved and informed, to read for yourselves what is happening at the Council and Committee meetings. It is quite easy. Go to the Township website (mulmur.ca), click on Agenda

& Minutes and find dates, times, agendas and minutes for all the meetings. If you can't attend, you can at the very least be informed. You can ask questions, have input in how your tax dollars are spent and how Council decisions are made.

During this difficult time with so many challenging and competing demands we sometimes forget the good around us; our friends, our families, the beauty of Mulmur. Perhaps we need to take a break, sit back and look around us. We have many reasons to be thankful!

Notes from the Environment Committee

In this seemingly unending time of COVID, many important things are happening, most often outside of our awareness. Governments, including our Provincial leaders, are still doing more harm to the environment by supporting the desires of those who are almost exclusively focused on healthy profit margins. There has been a continued weakening of laws protecting biodiversity and previously protected land.

Many organizations are bringing these problems to the light of day and pushing back on decisions that can in the end only harm every living being. Fortunately researchers, journalists and academics are still working hard to increase our awareness and understanding of the state of our world.

We are continuing to follow up on actions from the federal government on plastic pollution which to date are still half measures. Hopefully by

sometime in April the environment committee will be able to do a virtual presentation updating all of us on ticks and Lyme disease. Our next in person presentation will be on the broader issue of waste.

On a local level we see a similar push-pull when it comes to balancing the needs of the environment with the needs of everything else. At times, our municipal leaders have done years of due diligence culminating in decisions that are balanced and fair. At other times, there has been a relatively passive, far too late response from our leaders. Individually it makes sense to keep as up to date as possible by attending council meetings including those at the County level. We encourage you to scan the websites of your local community government including minutes and agendas. Commit to finding out about an issue close to you. We are more effective

when we engage on the front end of the decision-making process. We have so much to protect here not only for local residents but for a much wider community that desperately needs healthy spaces that sustain life.

Each of us can keep following what is happening on a broader scale. Once again, websites like Ecowatch, Ecobusiness, EcoJustice, Environmental Defence, Ontario Nature and many more have excellent background and up to date information. Understanding the wider context helps us to tie issues to our local place and increases our ability to act by doing more to simplify our lives, reduce our environmental footprint and communicate with our neighbours to stand up for the environment.

THE LOOK OUT

Your comments on this issue are welcomed at info@monomulmur.com.

The Executive of MC² : Elaine Capes, President - Rita Reitsma, Secretary - Bob Mitchell, Treasurer.

Members-At-Large: Del Bernardi, Susan Brown, Arnold DeGraaff, Knut Holmsen, Michael Penny, Cheryl Russel.

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