

DATE: June 14, 2021

REPORT NO: PD-73-2021

SUBJECT: **Rural Settlement Area (Hamlet) Boundary Review**

CONTACT: Gerrit Boerema, Planner II
Brian Treble, Director of Planning & Building

OVERVIEW:

- The Region of Niagara is currently undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review as part of the process to create and adopt a new Regional Official Plan.
- As part of this process, the Region is reviewing settlement area boundaries, including rural settlement boundaries in Wainfleet and West Lincoln.
- The Provincial Policy Statement previously did not permit expansions to unserviced hamlet areas, but in the most recent 2020 iteration, Policy 1.1.6.4 now permits the 'minor rounding out' of rural settlement areas.
- Regional and Township staff have received a number of private requests to consider adding additional lands to specific rural settlement areas.
- Township staff are also considering a few areas where additional lands could be added to existing rural settlement areas to include already built out areas and to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure.
- Planning staff recommend that this report, including the hamlet adjustment considerations, be circulated to the Region to ensure they are aware of the Township's ongoing work.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, report PD-73-2021, regarding "Rural Settlement Area (Hamlet) Boundary Review", dated June 14, 2021 be received, and;
2. That, report PD-73-2021 be circulated to Regional Planning Staff to ensure that they are aware of the Township's ongoing work on reviewing the existing Rural Settlement Area boundaries, and;
3. That, staff present a Recommendation report at a future Planning/Building/Environmental Committee meeting identifying which adjustments to rural settlement area boundaries, if any, are recommended by Township staff to support the Regional Municipal Comprehensive Review work.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #3

- **Strategic Responsible Growth**

BACKGROUND:

The Region of Niagara has been working on a new Regional Official Plan for a number of years. The new Regional Official Plan is expected to be completed in late 2021 or 2022. As a part of the new Regional Official Plan, the Region is currently undertaking a Municipal Comprehensive Review (MCR) which includes the review of existing settlement area boundaries, including unserviced rural settlement area boundaries.

West Lincoln has 15 rural settlement areas, or hamlets, which are not serviced by municipal sewer or water. These rural settlement areas provide an important role in supporting the surrounding agricultural areas by providing residential and commercial opportunities.

As the Region is getting closer to preparing and presenting a draft Official Plan, Township staff want to ensure that the private landowner rural settlement area boundary adjustment requests and the adjustments that the Township is in the process of considering are formally submitted to the Region for their consideration. As such, staff are recommending that this report and its attachments are circulated to the Region.

CURRENT SITUATION:

Several private property owner requests have been made to adjust the rural settlement area boundaries in a number of West Lincoln Hamlets. In most if not all cases, these requests have also been sent to the Region for consideration, but they have also been included as attachments to this report.

These requests involve adjusting the rural settlement boundaries of Caistorville, Grassie, Bismark, East Boyle, Fulton, Silverdale and Abingdon.

There are also a number of boundary adjustments that the Township Staff are considering and will continue to review. These requests and considerations can be found in the attachment mapping.

Township staff are recommending to circulate this report with the Township's considerations and the private owner requests to the Region to ensure that the Region is aware of the ongoing work. Planning staff will continue to review the proposed adjustments and prepare and present a final recommendation report at a future Planning Committee meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

CONCLUSION:

Township staff have compiled all of the private owner rural settlement area boundary adjustment requests that we are aware of and in addition have mapped out a number of adjustments that the Township is considering, but needs more time for a fulsome review. These requests and considerations are attached to this report.

Staff recommend that this report be circulated to the Regional Planning Staff and that a recommendation report be prepared and presented at a future Planning Committee meeting once all requests have been fully reviewed.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed Rural Settlement Area Adjustments
2. Private Owner Requests

Prepared & Submitted by:



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Approved by:



Bev Hendry
CAO



Brian Treble
Director of Planning & Building