

DATE: September 13, 2021
REPORT NO: PD-105-2021
SUBJECT: Information Report - Regional Official Plan Work and the West Lincoln Master Community Plan/Urban Boundary Review Project by Township of West Lincoln Consulting Teams (Aecom and Wood)
CONTACT: Brian Treble, Director of Planning & Building
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OVERVIEW:

- The Township of West Lincoln Master Community Plan consultants have been working hard on the Natural Heritage System mapping and the urban systems information for Smithville.
- The consultants are ready to go to the public with the third Public Information Centre (PIC 2, followed by PIC 0 January 2020, PIC 1 – February 2021) which will present finding and recommend a third concept for the urban area of Smithville to the broader community.
- Steve Wever will be in attendance on September 13, 2021 on behalf of our consulting teams to present their findings and the preferred concept to the Township Planning Committee prior to the Public consultation session.
- The preferred concept has now been refined and will be presented to the Committee and Council prior to presentation to the public.
- Details around the Natural Heritage system, urban infrastructure, transportation linkages, density and the types of development will also be part of the complete package, some of this detail is still in the early stages.
- There have been a number of discussions with the land owners' group representatives over the Natural Heritage system mapping through Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and sub-TAC meetings.
- It will not be possible to satisfy all land owner concerns and comply with Provincial direction, but efforts are underway to keep discrepancies and outstanding issues to a minimum.
- Finally, on August 1, 2021, Regional Planning staff introduced report PDS-033-2021, which can be found at attachment 1 to this report. PDS-033-2021 identifies the Regional land needs assessment work of Hensen and Associates and confirms population targets for West Lincoln along with all local municipalities.
- Finally, the Settlement Area Boundary review work (SABR) is a Regional mapping initiative that will be applied to both Smithville and our hamlets. A recommendation report on each of these topics will be presented to Committee in October in order to endorse proposals for inclusion in the Region's New Official Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That, Report PD-105-2021, regarding “Information Report, Regional Official Plan Work and the West Lincoln Master Community Plan/Urban Boundary Review Project by Township of West Lincoln Consulting Teams (Aecom and Wood)”, dated September 13th, 2021, be RECEIVED for INFORMATION PURPOSES; and,
2. That, staff will present a future recommendation report after proceeding with PIC 2 on October 6th, 2021. Notice will be provided to the Public very soon.

ALIGNMENT TO STRATEGIC PLAN:

Theme #3

- Strategic, Responsible Growth

BACKGROUND:

The Master Community Plan work in West Lincoln officially began in late October of 2019 with the passing of the Authorizing By-law 2019-96 and By-law 2019-97 and with the signing of contracts to hire Aecom and Wood to undertake the Master Community Plan work and Natural Heritage system work. All of this work in turn is to be fed into the Regional Master Comprehensive Review, which is part of the new Regional Official Plan project. In order to do so, and to ensure compliance with the Planning Act and the Environmental Assessment Act, Public Information Centres (PIC) are also required. To date, two have occurred, one on January 30, 2020 (PIC 0) and the other virtually on February 11th, 2021 (PIC 1). A third PIC is now proposed for October 6th, 2021. PIC 0 was held in person in the West Lincoln Community Centre gymnasium, whereas, PIC’s 1 and 2 will be of a virtual Zoom format.

CURRENT SITUATION:

On August 11, 2021, Regional Planning Committee endorsed Regional staff report PDS-033-2021. This report is entitled “Niagara Official Plan: Land Needs Assessment and Settlement Area Boundary Review Update”. A copy of this Regional report is found at attachment 1 to this report.

The proposed growth targets for each lower tier municipality have been provided in PDS-033-2021. For West Lincoln, they are as follows:

West Lincoln	2021	2051
Population	16,370	38,370
Households	5,330	14,060
Employment	4,460	10,480

Over this same time period the Region of Niagara is projected to grow from 491,120 population (2021) to 694,000 (2051) target, representing a 40% increase in growth while West Lincoln population is projected to more than double in 30 years.

These allocations are generally consistent with the work that the Township’s

Consultants have been working towards, notwithstanding the fact that the target growth was originally being planned to 2041, but was extended by the Province to 2051 on August 28, 2020 through Amendment 1 to *A Place to Grow*.

In order to achieve this growth while planning to maintain the character of Smithville, the following targets have been assigned by the Region:

- West Lincoln needs to achieve a 13% intensification rate
- West Lincoln needs to protect natural heritage systems and will require up to an additional 370 hectares of land for community needs and 45 additional hectares of land for employment needs.

Internal adjustments to the East Smithville Secondary Plan and the Spring Creek Heights Secondary Plan affect the amount of additional land that will actually be required.

Where we can grow by removing less land from the agricultural systems and by increasing internal capacity, is part of the review. Notwithstanding this planning work, it is critical to maintain the West Lincoln/Smithville small town charm.

The presentation by Steve Wever on September 13, 2021 will present how it is foreseen that we can grow and achieve these targets. In conjunction with all of this, Master Servicing Plans are being prepared and the Region is working with our consulting teams on the sewer, water, and transportation linkages, including a bypass and an escarpment crossing.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

This project is being front ended by the Land Owners group.

INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS:

This project is a substantial undertaking that includes Regional Public Works and Planning, NPCA, Land Owners representatives along with Township Planning and Public Works staff, our consultants and our consulting facilitator, Mr. Richard Vandezande.

CONCLUSION:

This report, the Regional report and the presentation by Steve Wever on the September 13, 2021 agenda are all to be received for information purposes in advance of a PIC 2 (third public consultation session) this is scheduled for October 6, 2021. A report to seek endorsement of the projected urban boundary will be presented to Committee in October of 2021.

ATTACHMENTS:


1. Regional Report - PDS-033-2021

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