

Mono Council gets complaints concerning proposed brewery

By Peter Richardson

Council and residents of Mono had their first in-depth look at the proposed Microbrewery at 388113 Mono Centre Road, when Jamie Robison, from MacNaughton, Hermsen, Britton and Clarkson, the planners, made a presentation at the statutory public meeting held Tuesday morning. The microbrewery, proposed for a 50 acre farm at the intersection of 5th Line and Mono Centre Road, is considered an acceptable on-farm diversified use by the Province, under its Provincial Policy Statement, 2014. The endeavour is also supported by the 2019 Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe and meets the requirements of the Dufferin County Official Plan, and the Town of Mono Official Plan. The proposal, would require a zoning amendment to allow the site specific use as a microbrewery, under current zoning restrictions.

The plan presented, was extremely comprehensive and provided every assurance that this would be a small operation and would remain so. The buildings was to be designed to fit into the surrounding agricultural architecture and was limited in size to a maximum of 300 square metres, with a covered porch/patio area of 150 m2. There would be a minimum of 17 parking spaces and the existing driveway would be used as the entrance and exit point. A preliminary hydrogeological assessment determined that the existing well would suffice to supply the water necessary, while an aroma impact assessment determined, by Gerrits Engineering, that no odours would impact the neighbours. It was noted that such microbreweries currently exist in several surrounding municipalities, including Caledon.

During questions, Councillor Nix pondered if this could grow to be much larger, however Mr. Robinson pointed out that the amendment strictly defined the permitted size of the operation and any change would require a new zoning amendment application. Deputy Mayor Creelman asked, if further testing would occur on the well, as it had not been stressed tested and was presently capped. He also questioned the reason behind processing the amendment to the zoning before the well was fully tested? Mayor Ryan replied that no decision was being made at the moment and this was solely an information gathering meeting. David Troutman, Director of Planning said the town engineer had no issues with the well however further testing would be carried out. Councillor Martin stated her dislike for the proposal, but was glad to hear that the well would be further tested.

In public questioning, one resident, Elaine Kehoe, representing several others was opposed to the idea, citing the potential damage to the aquifer from the water taking, traffic and trash concerns and the fact that this should be placed in a commercial zone, not on a rural property. She wondered why Mono was looking for rural business when they had a commercial area. Ms. Kehoe argued that there was no business tax in Mono, so the residential taxpayers will pay the freight for this commercial endeavour and no there is no By-law officer to enforce violations. When the parking lot is full, they will park on the road she felt. Opposition was raised to the hours of business and to this becoming a bar, with all the inherent problems of one. The latter would be unlikely, as only tasting would be allowed.

Ed Kroeker, another local resident, spoke to the issue of odours and to the water usage. He is in the water industry and stated that to pump 6-7000 litres a day would necessitate 11 hours of continuous pumping. Also this was an average demand, what would the maximum be? The area aquifer has a limited recovery capability. Councillor Nix mentioned that the well was determined to be able to produce 21,000L per day and asked Mr. Kroeker if this could change over time. The reply was that there was no definitive answer and that the test would have to be redone. Originally, in the 60's, the well had only been pumped for three hours to determine the 21,000 litre figure.

A dissenting opinion was presented by Shawn Henderson, a new resident to Mono Centre Road, who fully supported the proposal. He said most people fear new ideas and that decisions should be made based on the advice of the experts and professionals hired to present the studies and not on fears. He lives at 347264 Mono centre Road and said he sees no garbage or trash issues on the road currently and said that there is more traffic during the fall colour season that this would generate. His opinion was that this would benefit Mono, being a small quaint enterprise in a similarly described town. He also said that based on the provided hours it would certainly not be a bar. The issue will return to Council in August or September for a vote.