

Rate Payers Rights

I believe that as rate payers in Mulmur Township, we have the right to expect our elected officials to make decisions based on facts, not assumptions or best guesses. Case in point. Recently there was an application made to the Township to change a zoning by-law which would re-zone land from the Rural Zone to Rural Commercial Exception Zone. Specifically a commercial company, Inglewood Pumps on the 4th Line E in Mulmur, was operating illegally on rural zoned land for several years. Within the last year, as their company was getting larger with more trucks and more noise, they decided they should apply to the township and asked to be re-zoned, to make their business establishment legal on their property.

Notices were sent out and residents of the area wrote letters, petitions, and many attended the open meeting to state their concerns about allowing this rural area to become an industrial area. Once the precedent is set, there is no stopping others who may want to set up commercial businesses in this quiet, country setting.

The local rate payers were informed that the decision of the Councilors and Mayor, was to approve the re-zoning of half the property to allow the commercial business to remain in Mulmur.

The rationale for the unanimous decision was specifically to increase the tax base revenue from this commercial business. We all understand the fiscal concerns and responsibilities that the elected officials face; however, when they were asked how much this one small company will supplement the tax base, they did not know, until MPAC assesses the property.

Every Councilor and the Mayor voted unanimously to re-zone this property based on no facts, only their knowledge that there will be some increased revenue from this commercial company. Will it be \$100, \$1000, \$10,000? No one knows. Did they also consider that the three properties surrounding this commercial property will most likely request that their land be reassessed by MPAC and devalued as they are now neighbours with a commercial business? This devaluation would then decrease their property taxes.

We fought our battle and we lost, but what is more concerning is that the elected officials who are overseeing the health and wellbeing of our township today and in the future, think they are making decisions, as Mayor Mills said, 'in the best interest of the majority of the rate payers?'. How do they possibly know what is in the best interest of the rate payers if they don't have the facts on which to base their decisions?

I am appalled that all the Councilors and the Mayor would vote on such a major re-zoning issue without being properly informed. As a rate payer I believe that is our right to demand that Councilors have all the information and facts before making decisions that affect the lives of those who have chosen to live in Mulmur Township.

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