

**Township of South-West Oxford  
Minutes  
SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee  
June 4, 2024**

**In Attendance:** Mayor David Mayberry, Councillor Peter Ypma (Ward 2), Councillor Craig Gillis (Ward 6) and Paula Beckett (community representative)

**Staff:** Clerk Julie Middleton and CBO Howard Leaver

**Guests:** Justin Masecar and Bianca Metz (MW Drafting)

**Regrets:** None.

**Call Meeting to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 12:27 p.m. by Mayor David Mayberry and a quorum was present.

**Motion to Accept Agenda**

Resolution No. 1 Moved by Craig Gillis  
Seconded by Paula Beckett

RESOLVED that the agenda for the meeting of the June 4, 2024 SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

**Minutes**

Resolution No. 2 Moved by Craig Gillis  
Seconded by Howard Leaver

RESOLVED that the minutes of the April 2, 2024 SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee meeting be approved.

DISPOSITON: Motion Carried

**Appointments**

1:05 p.m. Justin Masecar re: Tiny Homes

Justin Masecar and Bianca Metz, MW Drafting, joined the Committee to discuss tiny homes. The following items were noted:

- MW Drafting deals with a lot of accessory dwelling units – biggest problem with tiny homes is servicing, approvals and permits. A lot of documentation is required for an ADU/ARU, the permitting stage is expensive and can be a long process which loses some individuals' interest. They are looking for innovative solutions to address this.
- Discussion took place regarding if there are any sites with tiny homes on un-serviced lots.
- Norfolk County currently has a permitting system in place – Justin will share this information with the committee. They do have tiny homes on agricultural properties (land leasing or family member-owned properties).
- Hamilton just passed their Rural Official Plan with ARU allowance, permitting detached additional dwelling units connected to septic, well and hydro. Lot size is a minimum of 1.4 acres which allows for site servicing.
- Ontario Renovates Program provides an option to pay for internal site assessments and servicing plans.
- Servicing and minimum lot size are the primary challenges for rural areas – hooking up to well and septic is expensive.
- Hybrid and off-grid servicing options allow for more sustainable living.
- Township taking a proactive approach in wanting to support ARUs.
- Discussion took place regarding tiny home communities with communal servicing. Septic system would be limited to 10,000 litres per day (or otherwise require MOE approval). A one-bedroom house is approximately 750 litres per day. Up to 10 units could potentially work off a septic system that is regulated by the Ontario Building Code.
- Land lease home ownership was discussed – similar to condominium. Servicing costs would be shared by all tiny home owners which would bring the cost down. Many people are looking for this type of ownership solution.
- Zoning presents a challenge, special zoning provisions to allow for a tiny house community would help the approval process. Agricultural restrictions are strict because of the prime agricultural land.
- Developers do not make as much revenue building affordable dwelling units.
- Tiny Town Association developer has a copy of a framework zoning by-law to allow the area to be zoned as a tiny home community – also allows for some specialized commercial developments. Julie will ask for a copy of this proposed zoning by-law.
- Guelph Mini Lakes (year-round modular homes) have a condo style of ownership with a communal septic system.
- Average tiny home is 400 to 500 square feet (around 12' to 14' wide and 45' long). Sleeping lofts will be accommodated in the Ontario Building Code.
- The Township may consider amending the Zoning by-law to make the minimum gross floor area smaller. This is beneficial when it comes to finding a location to place a tiny home.
- Discussion took place regarding quality construction types that are still affordable.

- Scenario A – development – modular construction has impact, one mobilization cost for more than one home. Good quality – higher quality than site builds. Structural insulated panels – all comes in one panel. Larger development may be \$200 to \$275 per sq. foot. This will spread costs across more than one home. One builder for more than one unit will bring costs down – three-tiered approach with varying levels of affordability.
- Scenario B – ARU in backyard – closer to \$350 per sq. foot. Lower cost is found in traditional stick frame approach.
- Discussion regarding certification requirement for tiny homes and what is permitted within Ontario municipalities. Dual stage certification process is permitted to ensure compliance with Ontario Building Code.
- Consider looking at removing minimize gross floor area requirements for dwellings from the Zoning By-law.
- Gaps in knowledge about what is permitted and knowledge about the industry in general.
- Discussion took place regarding under-utilized and low production agricultural land – may be opportunities to use this land for housing. Must take into consideration minimum distance requirements (MDS) for area livestock operations.
- There may be more options available under temporary use by-laws – multiple garden suites on one property. Site plan and servicing plan would likely be required.
- The Township either needs to have a willing landowner or be a partner with the Township.

### **Business Arising from the Minutes**

#### **Land Development Potential**

Councillor Peter Ypma spoke to a landowner in Brownsville regarding interest in purchasing land at the north of their property. Committee members noted the following questions, which will be provided to Justin for follow-up at the next meeting:

- What would be considered the typical lot size for a tiny home? 30' x 80'?
- How could parking be accommodated on the lot – two spaces – tandem or side by side?
- Would space be available for a yard/deck on each lot?
- Would space be available for private garden on each lot and storage shed?
- In the proposed space (illustrated on the maps provided to Justin) – how many land lease lots would be available?
- Which roads could be used as access points for the community? At least two entrances are required. Cul-de-sacs present challenges for emergency services and snow removal vehicles.
- Township would intent to own the land and services.

- Units would be a combination of two and one-bedroom, while keeping in mind each phase should be able to fit on a 10,000-liter septic system. Potential to divide the larger parcel into section for each phase to have its own septic system.

A landowner has expressed interest in creating a similar community in Sweaburg (private, land lease ownership). Staff will ask Justin how this land could potentially be developed and how many land lease lots could fit into this location.

Julie will ask for a copy of the proposed zoning by-law for a tiny home community. Council could consider a general amendment to the Township's Zoning By-law and reduce the minimum gross floor area. David will talk to Oxford County regarding what the Township would require to create site-specific zoning to allow for land lease opportunities with the Township or a third-party owner.

## **Correspondence**

### **Market Update**

The Committee reviewed the April, 2024 market reported and noted the following:

- Sold listings: down 20.8%
- Available inventory: down 4.3%
- New listings: up 10%
- Average price: up 3.3% (YTD average is \$715,674)

## **Discussion Items**

### **New Business**

### **Directives**

- Assist the Township and provide recommendation on taking a leadership role with respect to the consideration of various housing options within the Township and the County of Oxford;
- The SWOX Housing Opportunities Committee acts as a resource, information gathering and advisory body to Township Council on housing needs within the community;
- Monitor and obtain information on the local housing market and identify trends and emerging housing needs in the community and recommend action where appropriate;
- Provide advice and make recommendations regarding affordable housing initiatives and priorities within the community;
- Explore options for facilitating outside partnerships/involvement for new housing;
- The committee will not be directly involved in providing social housing within the community (this is an upper tier responsibility). However, may consider facilitating discussion in this regard should the opportunity arise with available land or interest from developers.

