

To:	Warden Hicks and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	January 10, 2019
Subject / Report No:	County Official Plan Amendment 42-10-510-OPA-145 / Report PDR-CW-01-19
Title:	Coffin Ridge Official Plan Amendment Merit Report
Prepared by:	Stephanie Lacey-Avon
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer and Scott Taylor
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Meaford
Status:	Recommendation adopted by the Committee of the Whole as presented as per Resolution <i>CW11-19</i> ; Endorsed by County Council on January 24, 2019 as per Resolution <i>CC12-19</i> .

Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-01-19 regarding a proposed County Official Plan Amendment be received; and
2. That the proposal proceeds to a Public Meeting to consider an amendment to the County of Grey Official Plan on lands designated 'Agricultural', to permit an agricultural severance where the minimum lot area of both the retained and severed will be less than 40 hectares, for the lands described as Part Lot 32, Concession 3 (599448 2nd Concession North), geographic Township of Sydenham, in the Municipality of Meaford, provided the Municipality is prepared to hold a joint public meeting in consideration of the necessary local amendment requirements.

Executive Summary

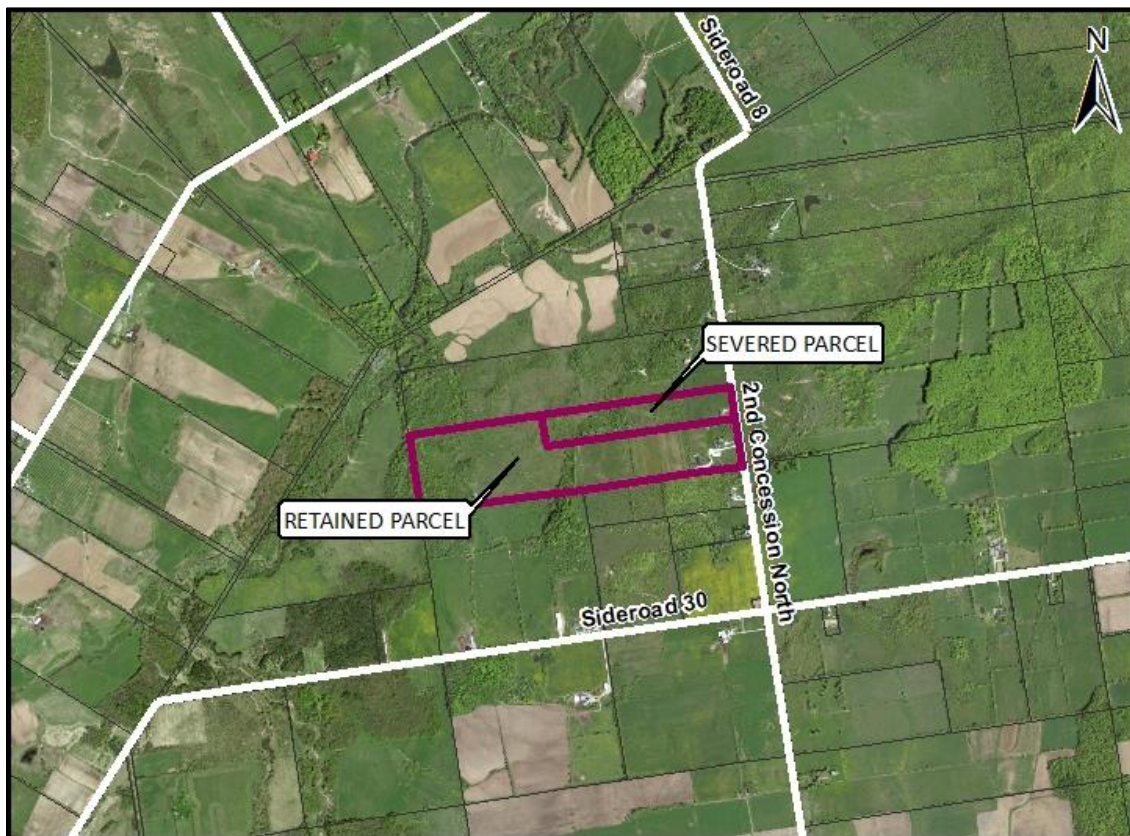
A proposed County official plan amendment application (42-10-510-OPA-145) has been submitted by Coffin Ridge Holdings Inc. (Mike Todd), to amend the agricultural consent policies, to permit a lot severance. County Agricultural consent policies do not permit this type of lot creation, but consideration for this type of application is identified at the Provincial level. This amendment is primarily intended to facilitate business operations for Coffin Ridge winery owners, by separating the vineyards, and winery, from the proposed apple plantation that will serve as part of the cider-making operation. This amendment also requires a local Official Plan Amendment and a consent to sever.

Background and Discussion

The County has received an application from Coffin Ridge Holdings Inc. c/o Mike Todd to amend the Grey County Official Plan. The amendment would allow exemption to the 'Agricultural' development policy 2.1.3(1) to permit lot creation where both the retained and severed lots would be less than 40 hectares (100 acres), which is the minimum lot area requirement. The subject lands are approximately 45.3 hectares (111.9 acres), and the proposal is to create parcels of 10.5 hectares and 34.8 hectares respectively.

The proposed development also requires an amendment to Municipality of Meaford Official Plan and a consent to sever.

The subject lands are located at Part Lot 32, Concession 3 (599448 2nd Concession North), geographic Township of Sydenham, Municipality of Meaford. Map 1 shows the subject lands and surrounding area.



Map 1: Airphoto of the Subject Lands

The subject property is designated 'Agricultural' and 'Hazard Lands'. Currently on the subject property is the Coffin Ridge winery that includes a wine production area, warehouse, retail store, three decks with customer seating, a tent, and the owner's residence located on the south side of the property. A second dwelling, occupied by the winery's manager and co-owner, is located on the north side of the subject lands. The vineyard occupies roughly 10 hectares of land, and the apples used for the production of cider are currently grown elsewhere and purchased by Coffin Ridge.

The severed parcel will be approximately 10.5 hectares, and would include the dwelling located

on the north side of the subject lands. The intent for the severed lands is for Coffin Ridge to grow their own apples. For business reasons, Coffin Ridge is looking to keep the apple growing and cider-making operation separate from the winery and vineyards. The retained parcel will be approximately 34.78 hectares.

The surrounding lands appear to be predominantly used for agricultural operations, with the exception of some non-farm residential lots. Appendix B of the County Official Plan maps many of the County's natural features, including significant woodlands, wetlands, and streams. In reference to the subject property, there are no natural heritage features located within 120 metres of the subject property.

Ron Davidson, a land use planning consultant, has submitted a Planning Justification Report in support of the proposal. The applicant did engage the Municipality, County, and Grey Sauble Conservation Authority in pre-submission consultation. The applicant has submitted as part of the overall application submission, an agricultural assessment report completed by Orion Environmental Solutions. The intent of the report was to assess the agricultural viability of the severed lands to support an orchard for the purposes of cider production, to confirm the existing vineyard will remain economically viable, and that the two parcels are of sufficient size to be viable with potential changes in agriculture. A copy of the Report and background materials can be found at the below link:

[Link to Background Materials](#)

Analysis of Planning Issues

In rendering decisions, planning authorities must have regard to matters of Provincial interest under the *Planning Act* and be consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS). Decisions within the County must also conform to the County of Grey Official Plan, and in this case the Municipality of Meaford's local official plan, and any Provincial plans in force and effect.

A detailed planning analysis has not been undertaken at this stage. Following the public process, and agency comments, a thorough analysis and staff recommendation will be provided. Key Provincial and County policies have been flagged below for consideration.

Provincial Legislation – The Planning Act

Most notable to this proposed official plan amendment are the following clauses from the *Planning Act*, which will need to be considered.

(a) the protection of ecological systems, including natural areas, features and functions,

There are no identified ecological or natural heritage features on the subject property.

(b) the protection of agricultural resources of the Province,

The subject property is designated 'Agricultural' lands as per Schedule A of the County Official Plan. Within the 'Agricultural' designation, consents for new lot creation are generally discouraged except under a few circumstances. The Agricultural Assessment report discussed the viability of smaller farm parcels for orchard and vineyard production, by integrating data from OMAFRA. The new draft County OP and the PPS contemplate lot creation for this type of development.

(l) the protection of the financial and economic well-being of the Province and its municipalities,

Included as part of the Agricultural Assessment report was an assessment on the overall economic viability of both the retained and severed parcels to withstand any potential changes in agriculture.

Provincial Policy Statement (PPS 2014)

Section 2.3.3.1 of the PPS states in prime agricultural areas, permitted uses and activities are: agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses and on-farm diversified uses. Proposed agricultural-related uses and on-farm diversified uses shall not hinder surrounding agricultural operations.

Furthermore, policy 2.3.4.1 outlines that lot creation in prime agricultural areas is discouraged and may only be permitted under a few circumstances, including for agricultural uses, provided that the lots are of a size appropriate for the type of agricultural use(s) common in the area and are sufficiently large to maintain flexibility for future changes in the type or size of agricultural operations.

County of Grey Official Plan

Section 2.1.3(1) of the County Official Plan states that within the Agricultural designation, newly created farm lots should generally be 40 hectares (100 acres) in order to discourage the unwarranted fragmentation of farmland.

Furthermore, agricultural consent policy 2.1.4(1)(a) states that one lot severed could be considered provided the lot created is generally 40 hectares in size, and that development criteria of Section 2.1.3 has been satisfied.

Section 6.3 of the County Plan contemplates amendments to the Plan, provided the criteria of the relevant sections of the Plan can be addressed.

As noted above, following the public and agency processes, a thorough planning analysis and staff recommendation will be provided.

Legal and Legislated Requirements

The application will be processed in accordance with the Planning Act.

Financial and Resource Implications

There are no anticipated financial, staffing or legal considerations associated with the proposed official plan amendment, beyond those normally encountered in processing an amendment. The County has collected the requisite application fee and peer review deposit for this application.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: Planning Staff
- External: Municipality of Meaford, required agencies under the *Planning Act*, and the public

Appendices and Attachments

None