

To:	Warden Halliday and Members of Grey County Council
Committee Date:	November 22, 2018
Subject / Report No:	Minor Exemption / PDR-CW-40-18
Title:	Rockland Mfg. Inc. (John M. Martin)
Prepared by:	Stephanie Lacey-Avon
Reviewed by:	Randy Scherzer
Lower Tier(s) Affected:	Municipality of Grey Highlands
Status:	Recommendation adopted by Committee as presented per Resolution CW282-18;

Recommendation

1. That Report PDR-CW-40-18 be received and that the amended application (map 2) for a Minor Exemption under the County's Forest Management By-law for Lot 31, Concession 5 (213159 30th Sideroad), in the geographic Township of Artemesia, Municipality of Grey Highlands, be approved.

Executive Summary

The County has received a minor exemption application to the County's Forest Management By-law to clear a large area of evergreens, spanning roughly 32 acres (13 ha). The purpose of the clearing is to return the subject lands back to farm lands to use for agricultural purposes. Following circulation of the file, and based on comments and feedback from the agencies and members of the public, the proposal was amended for the tree cutting area to span 1.97 acres (0.8 hectares). County staff are recommending approval of the amended proposal.

Background and Discussion

An application for a minor exemption was received for clear cutting under the County's Forest Management By-law.

The subject lands are located at Lot 31, Concession 5 (213159 30th Sideroad), in the geographic Township of Artemesia, Municipality of Grey Highlands. The lands have frontage onto 30th Sideroad and 4th Concession B, and the lands are roughly 54 acres (21 ha) in size.

The subject lands are designated under the County Official Plan as 'Agricultural' and 'Hazard Lands'. Surrounding the subject lands are predominantly farm lands, with some woodlands, and wetlands.

The subject application was circulated to the Municipality of Grey Highlands, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority staff (both the watershed planner and forestry coordinator), the County's Forest By-law Enforcement Officer, and neighboring landowners. The initial proposal as outlined in Map 1 below was not supported by Grey Sauble Conservation Staff, and the County's Forest By-law Enforcement Officer. Through further discussion with the landowner, the County's Forest By-law Enforcement Officer, and Planning staff, an amendment was made to the initial proposal. Map 2 depicts the revised proposal that has the effect of cutting 1.97 acres (0.8 hectares) of trees, as compared to the initial proposal of 32 acres (13 hectares).



Map 1 – Forest Clearing Request



Map 2 – Amended Proposal

Agency and Public Comments Received

Under the Forest Management By-law, adjacent landowners, conservation authorities, Municipal, and County staff are to be notified and/or consulted when an application is received.

Public Comments

No public comments were received during the processing of this application.

Agency Comments

The Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA), the Municipality of Grey Highlands, and the County's Forest By-law Enforcement Officer provided comments on this application.

GSCA staff provided comments October 25th, 2018 and October 29th, 2018. The conservation authority Planning Department noted the subject property is not regulated by GSCA under Ontario Regulation 151/06, and based on a desktop review there were no natural heritage

features identified. The conservation authority forestry coordinator also reviewed the subject application. Staff records indicate Grey Sauble planted trees on the subject property in 2009 and 2011 under the 50 Million Tree Program through Trees Ontario (now known as Forests Ontario). Furthermore, staff completed a Managed Forest Plan for the subject property in 2009 that stipulates landowners need to follow 'good forestry practices'. The contract between Grey Sauble and the previous owner was not binding to subsequent owners, although the forestry coordinator noted that clear cutting on the subject property would not qualify as a 'good forestry practice'.

The Municipality of Grey Highlands shared the application with municipal council for information, and there were no comments or concerns.

Grey County's Forest By-law Enforcement Officer would not support the application as proposed. The officer conducted a site visit and outlined that the hardwood trees are healthy and established. An amended proposal was brought forward for review, in collaboration with the applicant, the County Forest By-law Enforcement Officer, and County planning staff. The County Forest By-law Enforcement Officer has indicated support for the revised proposal, as outlined on Map 2, with a total tree cutting area of 1.97 acres (0.8 hectares).

County staff are recommending approval of the amended proposal (map 2).

Legal and Legislated Requirements

The application will be processed in accordance with the County's Forest Management By-law.

Financial and Resource Implications

At this time there are no expected financial or resource considerations beyond those normally encountered in processing a Minor Exemption application. The County has received an application fee with the file.

Relevant Consultation

- Internal: Planning and Grey County By-law Enforcement Officer
- External: Municipality of Grey Highlands, Grey Sauble Conservation Authority, and the public.

Appendices and Attachments

None