



Staff Report

Report Title: Draft Trailer By-law Consultation Report

Prepared By: Matt Farrell, Manager of Building and Planning/CBO

Department: By-Law Enforcement

Date: Sep. 7, 2022

Report Number: BLE-2022-09-17

File Number:

C-11 BLE22

Attachments: Survey (redacted), Comments (redacted)

Recommendation:

That the Township of Huron-Kinloss Committee of the Whole hereby approves Report Number BLDG-2022-01-3 prepared by Matt Farrell, Manager of Building and Planning/CBO AND defers discussion on alternate methods of regulating trailers until the review of the Township's planning documents AND FURTHER directs staff to research ways to strengthen the Property Standards By-law to address derelict or unsightly trailers being located on residential properties.

Background:

At the July 4, 2022, Committee of the Whole Meeting, staff presented a Draft By-Law that would prohibit or regulate trailers on lots within a Residential Zone. Staff reported earlier in the year that the Township had received an increased number of complaints about trailers being, parked, stored or inhabited in violation of the Township's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law. Obtaining compliance for these offences however is an inefficient and costly process so staff was exploring other options. We also had additional complaints about multiple recreational trailers being parked in residential areas and the potential use of trailers for illegal activities.

The Committee had a discussion on the Draft Trailer By-Law and had some concerns. They suggested staff do further public consultation on the Draft Trailer By-Law using the Have Your Say HK engagement website.

Discussion:

A Public Survey was made available between July 14th and August 22nd, 2022 and we received 425 responses. The results of the survey questions are attached to this report. We also received 340 comments as part of the survey and a number of direct email submissions. All are attached to this report. We truly appreciate that each

respondent took the time to complete the survey and it is evident that our residents have spent a great deal of time researching the matter. All comments have been reviewed by staff and we have tried to summarize the common themes within this report.

While the majority of the respondents were against the draft By-Law, 68 of the 425 were in favour. There was also a general support for the draft By-law's intent which was to restrict the parking of unsightly or derelict trailers in residential properties and control nuisance and long-term human habitation of travel trailers. The majority felt we should stick to the regulations in place or look for other ways to handle this situation rather than developing a stand-alone by-law.

Many comments were in favour of restricting long term camping on residential properties but felt that a short-term stay was reasonable for guest or special occasions. The difficulty for the Township is defining what is reasonable in a by-law as people's views on an appropriate timeframe varies.

Also of concern was the restriction on parking and storing of trailers in the front yard of a residential property that is currently included in the Township's Comprehensive Zoning By-Law. Many properties do not have enough space in the side or rear yards of properties to place trailers when they are being stored. There also a large number of properties where the front yard is large enough to park a number of vehicles and trailers and not cause any nuisance or harm. It was suggested that our current siting requirements in the Zoning By-law are more appropriate for a denser urban area. This may be an accurate observation.

Staff had also proposed that the number of each type of trailer be limited to one, in addition to the limit of three total trailers per property. This proposal was made to help deal with situations where property owners had three larger travel trailers that caused a nuisance to the surrounding area. Several comments brought to light that residents may have multiple types of recreational vehicles; boats, sea-doo's, ATVs, or snowmobiles, and each has a different mode of transportation. Some small businesses may also have multiple small utility trailers that support their work.

The Township is approaching the timeframe for a five-year review of its planning documents. The Local Official Plan was approved in 2017 and the Comprehensive Zoning By-law followed in 2018. The County is in the process of updating its Official Plan. Once the update is complete we will be able to begin work on our Official Plan & Zoning by-laws. We anticipate this work starting in the latter part of 2023 or early 2024, if approved by Council. Staff will be bringing a proposal forward for the 2023 budget.

The other issue staff was looking for the Draft Trailer By-law to address was derelict or unsightly trailers being located on residential properties. There are currently provisions within the Township's Property Standards By-law that regulate against derelict vehicles but the process for getting them removed is long and inefficient. Staff has been looking into alternative ways the Township can manage these situations.

Due to the high level of public interest in the rules around parking, storing and using trailers, staff recommends waiting until the review of the Township's planning documents occurs so we can undertake more detailed consultation with the public on how to best regulate trailers. Since a majority of the rules proposed for the draft Trailer By-law were taken from the Zoning By-law, it does not make sense to create a stand-alone by-law at this time. Staff will also look at ways to strengthen the Property Standards By-law and explore other options to help manage problem situations with trailers.

Financial Impacts:

A proposal for updating the Huron-Kinloss Official Plan and Zoning By-law will be brought forward for consideration in the 2023 Budget

Strategic Alignment / Link:

The information provided in this report is consistent with and in keeping with the Municipality's Vision & Mission. The recommendations contribute to the goals in achieving a prosperous, safe, vibrant, environmentally conscious and accessible community.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Matt Farrell, Manager of Building and Planning/CBO
Heather Falconer, By-Law Enforcement Officer

Approved By:

Mary Rose Walden, Chief Administrative Officer