

October 21, 2024 Blog

Did you know Zorra Township was a founding member of the Top Aggregate Producing Municipalities of Ontario (TAPMO)? TAPMO fights for better regulation, inspection, taxation, and approvals processes of aggregate sites on behalf of municipalities, communities, and residents. We need an aggregate sector that works for everyone.

A recent Auditor General's report revealed that the Ontario government lacks the resources to adequately enforce regulations meant to ensure aggregate companies operate responsibly in our communities. While aggregate will play a critical role in meeting Ontario's growing infrastructure needs, we need a sector that works for everyone. tapmo.ca

The Township of Zorra will not be providing Municipal Support Resolutions for wind turbine projects. The following Resolution was moved by myself, seconded by Councillor Stewart, and passed unanimously at Zorra Council:

“THAT Report No: 2024-131 REA Process be received and filed; and,
WHEREAS the procurement of electrical energy is the responsibility of the Province of Ontario; and,
WHEREAS the current Independent Electricity System Operator procurement process requires a Municipal Support Resolution for all energy projects before any application will be considered; and
WHEREAS the current procurement process does require an Agricultural Impact Assessment, but only within 18 months of receiving a contract, which would be after a Municipal Support Resolution; and,
WHEREAS the Township of Zorra does not have, nor should be expected to have, the expertise or resources necessary to make an informed decision as to whether or not to provide a Municipal Support Resolution for an energy project;
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT until the Ontario Government, Ministry of Energy and Electrification, and the Independent Electricity System Operator changes the procurement process to allow municipalities to be better informed on issues such as, but not limited to: agricultural impacts, health impacts, environmental impacts, the Township of Zorra will not be providing Municipal Support Resolutions; and,
THAT this resolution be forwarded to Oxford County, Oxford MPP, Minister of Energy and Electrification, the Western Warden's Caucus, and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.”

Despite what some people have said, my mind was not made up on this issue. It pits two issues that I am passionate about against each other: protecting agricultural land, and the environment. I believe strongly that council should make informed decisions and be able to defend those decisions to residents. I'm not able to defend a decision to allow a wind turbine on a neighbour's property, but I'm also not able to defend a decision to not let someone do something with their private property. On this issue I do not believe we are informed enough, and the process does not allow us to be informed enough, before we would make a decision.

That is not OK. Therefore until the Ontario Government procurement process changes to allow municipalities to be better informed, the Township of Zorra will not be providing Municipal Support Resolutions.

Ideas don't divide us. We divide ourselves.

People have different opinions. But they're the same good neighbours and friends they were before. They're the same person you went to the fair with, the same person that helped you with a breakdown, the same person whose kids play hockey with your kids. Council in a small community is neighbours discussing the community we want. We agree, we disagree, we do it respecting each other. Whenever I'm asked what other Councillors think, I say "ask them, not me". Let's not divide ourselves. Let's be neighbours and friends discussing the community we want.

As always, feel free to contact me on any issue:

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