



THE MUNICIPALITY OF

LAMBTON SHORES

Administration

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November 22, 2022

by email: schicp@ola.org

Standing Committee on Heritage, Infrastructure and Cultural Policy

To Whom It May Concern

Re: Proposed Legislation
Bill 23 – More Homes Built Faster Act, 2022

Thank-you for the opportunity to comment on the above-noted proposed legislation.

Please be advised that the Council of the Municipality of Lambton Shores passed Resolution 22-1108-11 at its November 8, 2022 regular Council meeting:

THAT staff draft a letter to the province outlining Lambton Shores' concerns with Bill 23 and circulate to AMO and all Ontario municipalities.

Lambton Shores is a thriving, growing community on the shores of Lake Huron. It includes several communities experiencing appreciable growth in residential and commercial developments. Lambton Shores' beaches, lakeshore communities, places like Grand Bend and Pinery Provincial Park, and its provincially and internationally significant natural heritage areas make Lambton Shores a well-known tourist destination and desirable place to live and work. Like much of rural Ontario and perhaps more so, it has experienced housing shortages, increased development activity, and a sharp rise in housing costs in the last several years.

In general, Bill 23 seems to be intended to address approval process problems that exist in larger centers more so than portions of rural Ontario like Lambton Shores. Lambton Shores, on the whole, works well with the development community and issues timely planning and other development approvals. In Lambton Shores' case, Bill 23 will "fix" many things that are not really broken and will have the unintended effect of substituting relatively efficient processes with additional processes, time, and costs to development.

The Province conducted a very narrow, developer and real estate-focused, consultation in developing its strategy to address the housing crisis. It is misleading to lay so much blame on the easy target of municipalities. Delays are often due to a development proponent's reluctance to provide information, meet requirements, and follow processes that are overseen by municipalities, but provincially-established. If the Province wishes to speed up Municipal approvals, it should look at its own approval processes, legislation, and responsiveness with respect to matters related to the *Endangered Species Act*, Records of Site Conditions, archaeological assessments, Environmental Compliance Approvals, and the like.

The limiting factor in addressing the housing crisis is labour and material shortages, caused by government policy and the demographics of aging baby-boomers. The Province would better address the housing crisis by finding ways to increase the capacity of the building industry and direct that capacity towards forms of housing that produce more units (e.g. medium and high rather than low density), rather than placing expectations on municipalities that increase staffing needs and put more pressure to draw labour away from construction and manufacturing.

Conservation Authorities

With respect to Conservation Authorities, the Municipality of Lambton Shores has an excellent working relationship with our two Conservation Authorities (Ausable Bayfield and St Clair Region). They are responsive given the level of resources they have and provide valuable expertise, resources, and services to the Municipality. These would not be practical for a Municipality of our size to provide internally. The Municipality wishes to retain the ability to obtain these services through memorandums of understanding.

- If the CAs are prohibited from commenting on natural heritage matters, the Municipality will need to instead refer development proposals to third party consultants, which will add time and cost to development proponents, contrary to the intent of Bill 23.
- Municipalities will be reluctant to grant planning approvals that would exempt development from Conservation Authority approvals. The Municipality lacks the expertise to assess natural hazards and does not wish to assume the liability. Just as planning approval processes were not designed to address Ontario Building Code matters, planning approval processes and Municipalities lack the unique tools and mechanisms of CAs and the *Conservation Authorities Act* to ensure development can proceed while appropriately addressing hazards.
- Repeal of the Regulations specific to each CA, in favour of a province-wide Regulation, will eliminate the local flavor of each CA and its ability to provide for the needs of its constituent municipalities, which are different in rural Ontario than in larger centers.

Additional Dwelling Units

With respect to allowing three units as-of-right on residentially zoned lands:

- This permission potentially creates additional dwelling units in areas where existing municipal services are at full capacity.
- For a second or third unit to be permitted in a particular form of dwelling, it should be clarified that the applicable zone must permit that form of housing in the first place. The current wording of the legislation would seem to permit, for example, a single detached dwelling with a basement apartment on lands zoned and intended for medium and high density, contrary to the intent to Bill 23 to create more units.
- How will the province ensure that these additional dwelling units are used as primary residences, as intended by Bill 23? In significant tourist areas like the Municipality of Lambton Shores, these provisions will promote additional

conversions of existing primary residences into two or three short term rental accommodations, contrary to the intent of Bill 23.

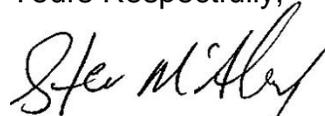
Waiving Fees

With respect to waiving development charges, parkland dedication and other requirements for additional dwelling units, not-for-profit housing, inclusionary housing, etc., the Municipality questions whether these savings to developers will be passed on in lower unit purchase prices. (Consumer demand and willingness to pay remains higher than the building industry's capacity to supply.) Development will however increase municipal service and infrastructure needs, the costs of which will be a burden passed on to the existing tax base, if not collected through development charges.

Site Plan Approval

Waiving site plan approval for residential developments of ten or fewer dwelling units will create adverse impacts to public and municipal interests and developments. The site plan approval process currently provides a single mechanism to address relevant items such as parking, site grading, stormwater management, site servicing, servicing capacity, entrances, work on municipal lands, and sidewalk and road closures. These are important considerations even for smaller developments. In the absence of site plan approval, municipalities will be forced to rely on (or create) a variety of other mechanisms and by-laws to address these interests, which will be less efficient than site plan approval and contrary to the intent of Bill 23 to reduce process.

Yours Respectfully,



Stephen McAuley,
Chief Administrative Officer

- cc. Honourable Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario, premier@ontario.ca
Honourable Steve Clark, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, minister.mah@ontario.ca
Honourable Graydon Smith, Minister of Natural Resources and Forestry, minister.mnrf@ontario.ca
Honourable David Piccini, Minister of Environmental Conservation and Parks, Minister.mecp@ontario.ca
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