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**Date:** September 18, 2019

**To:** Mayor and Council

**Author:** Robert Brown, H. Ba, MCIP, RPP  
Manager, Planning Services

**RE:** Greenhouse Policy Review – Official Plan Policy Updates and  
Zoning By-law Amendment Updating the Current Regulations for  
Greenhouse Development

**Report No.:** PS 2019-042

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## **AIM**

To provide the Mayor and Council with information on the Greenhouse Policy Review Committee's (GPRC) activities, the proposed Official Plan policy updates for inclusion in the 5-Year Review and the recommended zoning by-law changes for future greenhouse development.

## **BACKGROUND**

In 2018 ongoing greenhouse development and the significant interest in the establishment of medical marihuana production facilities raised a number of questions and concerns. Council was provided with two reports, the initial report regarding possible changes to the medical marihuana Official Plan policies. The direction in this report outlined that because of the pending changes to the federal regulations on cannabis that updates should wait for the adoption of the new regulations. The second report was regarding use of an interim control by-law limiting greenhouse development west of Division Rd N. That report led to the establishment of the GPRC and the policies outlined in this report.

The GPRC first met in March of 2019 and held a total of seven meetings reviewing both the Official Plan policies and zoning regulations as they related to both development in general and greenhouses more specifically. The main outcome resulting from the initial meeting of the committee was the need to establish 'balance' between the needs of a growing industry and the existing rural residential and more traditional cash crop/livestock farming in Kingsville.

An open house was held in August to present the draft policies to the public. Activities of the committee and the outgoing policy drafts were posted to the Town website as the committee continued its work. At the final meeting of the Committee the policies outlined in the report were unanimously adopted for presentation to Council for consideration.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)**

The policies proposed by the amendments are consistent with PPS and continue to support and strengthen the importance of agriculture in the Town.

### **County Official Plan**

The Official Plan policies proposed (Appendix A) will be included as part of the 5 year review process and will conform with the Agricultural goals of the Plan and continue to reinforce the significance of the agricultural designated areas.

### **Town of Kingsville Official Plan**

Both the proposed Official Plan amendment and the updated zoning regulations conform with the agricultural policies of the Official Plan. They help to provide strengthened and clear wording for all development proposed for the Town, not just exclusively greenhouses.

### **Policy Review**

The policies advanced by the Committee were reviewed and developed in three parts:

- 1) General policy and goal update in the Official Plan related to all development;

Comment: This included an update to the wording in the Forecasted Agricultural Demand to be more reflective of the current and expected trends. The more significant change in this part of the review was based on the committee's suggestions that development in general needs a more robust review relative to site suitability. As such, the changes to Section 2.8 Site Suitability are applicable to all development for Kingsville. As this will be included as part of the 5 year Official Plan review there will be additional opportunity for public input on these particular items prior to final approval.

- 2) Enhancement and expansion of Official Plan policy specific to greenhouse development;

Comment: Since the committee was established with a specific goal in mind it was important that the limited policies specific to greenhouses be enhanced. During discussion with the committee it was understood that while greenhouse development was a permitted use in agricultural zones it was logical that areas with existing services be encouraged as the first choice.

On-site labour housing has become a significant item of consideration for all greenhouse operations and as such the policy requires that this issue be specifically addressed. In addition the character of the housing itself needs to be prioritized more.

With the increased amount of the on-site labour there also comes a need to provide safe transportation options for workers through some form of interconnections. The suggested direction was for development to provide linkages to the existing and future active transportation corridors including CWATS and the Greenway.

Medical Marihuana/Cannabis – although it was not the direction of the committee to provide input on this item it was suggested the Official Plan update should include updates to wording resulting from the legislation changes. In addition, it is suggested that the policies reconsider new build facilities over that of retrofits. This would result in a new build being the first consideration and more demonstration of suitability for retrofits.

- 3) Establishment and enhancement of expanded zoning regulations for greenhouse development;

Comment: The committee spent a good deal of time addressing the need for updated standards for greenhouse development based on the increased scale. The bulk of the consideration was linked with the updated site suitability in the Official Plan sections and the review of several past site plan approvals. The overarching direction of the new zoning standards, outlined in the attached amendment, is to address the increased scale, intensity of use, compatibility with abutting sensitive uses and generally establishing an increased standard of development.

## **LINK TO STRATEGIC PLAN**

Promote the betterment, self-image and attitude of the community.

Manage growth through sustainable planning.

## **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

There is no short-term financial impact to the proposed policy and regulation update.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

Management staff, OMAFRA, public circulation and open house

## RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that:

Council approve zoning by-law amendment ZBA/17/19 to update the current zoning by-law standards for greenhouse development as established by the Greenhouse Policy Review Committee and adopt the implementing by-law, and

Council endorse the outlined Official Plan policies in Appendix A to the Report of R. Brown (Report dated September 18, 2019), established by the Greenhouse Policy Review Committee, for inclusion in the 5-year Official Plan review process and associated amendment.

*Robert Brown*

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*Peggy Van Mierlo-West*

Peggy Van Mierlo-West, C.E.T.  
Chief Administrative Officer