



Motion

Re: Natural Heritage Strategy

“Whereas Council unanimously approved the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan for the current Council term at the September 11, 2023 Council meeting.

And whereas Council collectively identified four priority areas in the plan, including: delivering excellent service, growing our community, promoting community safety and well-being and ensuring environmental sustainability.

And whereas within the environmental sustainability priority, Council has committed to leading by example to reduce our climate footprint, enhancing community resiliency to climate change impacts and also preserving natural heritage.

And whereas the previous term of Council through the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole was presented with a tremendous amount of information, community feedback, data and examples of best practices from across Ontario in relation to natural heritage policy.

And whereas in February 2022 the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole approved departing from the status quo approach to woodlot conservation and to also investigate further the ‘education’, ‘incentive’ and ‘regulation’ woodlot preservation instruments.

And whereas the Municipality is currently developing a Climate Change Action Plan and an update on the plan is expected to be before Council in the near future.

And whereas having a clear-cutting by-law in place since April of 2021 has proven to be effective in deterring clear-cutting activities, while natural heritage policy discussions have taken place across the community.

And whereas historically having natural heritage conversations in a public forum, without a clear-cutting regulation in place, has proven to be detrimental to Chatham-Kent’s natural heritage, resulting in clear-cutting activities.

Therefore, be it resolved that:

- 1. Council direct administration to create a schedule and work plan moving forward, to carry-on with the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole work.**
- 2. This work plan will be rooted in transparency, creating opportunities for public consultation and feedback throughout the process.**
- 3. This schedule will be presented to Council for consideration by January 2024.**
- 4. The work by the Committee of the Whole pick up where it left off, following the previously approved decision tree matrix, which was paused in March of 2022.**
- 5. By-law #72-2021 remain in place until repealed by Council, only after the Natural Heritage Committee of the Whole has made recommendations to Council for approval in regards the regulatory instrument for woodlot conservation.”**

Signed: Councillor Aaron Hall

Notice Given On: September 18, 2023