

Response to Proposed Housekeeping Amendment to Sandwich South Zoning By-law 85-18

September 2, 2020

I would like to state that I am in support of the proposed housekeeping amendment which will limit the use of intensive agricultural practices such as, livestock, mushroom farms, and greenhouses in the hamlet areas of Tecumseh. This amendment will protect these areas from practices that may inhibit future urban development. What I am confused about though, is why the property at 2085 Highway 3, which is in the hamlet area of Oldcastle in Tecumseh, is currently constructing a greenhouse to produce cannabis. Why is it that this business is being allowed to proceed given this amendment that you are proposing today?

Last September, concerned citizens met with the planning department twice to discuss this cannabis facility and the concerns we had regarding its placement in the hamlet areas, as well as the lack of by-laws regarding cannabis in Tecumseh. In October, presentations were made to town council and I stressed in my presentation the need for rules about these facilities, especially when being placed next to schools, walking trails, parks, and cemeteries'. At that meeting, Mayor McNamara requested administration to develop a report which I have not seen. We were assured that the permit for the facility had not been granted and there would be public input regarding the matter.

Recently, concerned citizens noticed activity happening at the 2085 Highway 3 property and it was discovered that a building permit was issued for the construction of the cannabis facility on December 16, 2019. I am trying to understand how this happened. Did you just ignore us last fall? I am trying to understand how town council thinks it is okay for this very new industry to be permitted without discussion or debate, without public input? How many more cannabis facilities are going to be allowed? What about the residents who live here?

I am extremely disappointed and angry about how this has all unfolded. It seems that business and money are winners here and that what the residents of Oldcastle have to say does not really matter. This experience has made me feel not trusting of this council or the people who work for the town.