

**The Mayor declared the meeting open at 5:30 p.m..**

**Council Members Present:**

Mayor Christine Ellis,

Councillors Jason Cottrell, Kelly Elik, John Newstead, Merlyn Snow.

**Resolution:**

**R2012-174 Kelly Elik – Jason Cottrell**

The Council for the Township of Strong hereby adopt the June 12, 2012 Council agenda as presented and/or amended.

Noted: Bill Brownrigg called to advise he would not be attending the meeting.

**Carried**

**Declarations of Conflict/Pecuniary Interest:**

**Delegations:**

**Terry Jang – provided a report on noise concerns at Crescent Road. A copy was filed with the minutes.**

**Jim Wright – provided a report on the draft Lake Plan. A copy was filed with the minutes.**

**Bill Brownrigg – absent, with regrets.**

**Guests in the audience included:**

**Andrew Martin – Resolution 2012-175: addressed council regarding noise concerns on Crescent Rd.** Mr. Martin explained to council their business and the procedures they follow when renting out the cottage. He advised there was a local contractor who provided maintenance services at the cottage, they are seeing an increase in repeat customers that stay for a longer period, and realized there may be concern with weekend rentals. Council directed the clerk to send a letter to Relax Muskoka requesting copies of contracts customers sign, name and phone number of local contractor that may be contacted to ensure contract is being adhered to and a copy to the OPP. Council stressed that the Almaguin Highlands OPP should be contacted when there is an concern at the time of the occurrence – not later.

**Chris Clark – Resolution 2012-182: addressed council regarding a zoning by-law issue.** Mr. Clarke wished to discuss his zoning by-law amendment with council. As this matter is before the courts, council advised they were not in a position to discuss the issue at this time.

**Discussion Items:**

**Proudfoot Bridge** – Council agreed the an engineer should inspect the bridge. The Clerk will contact DM Wills to arrange an inspection with recommendation for repairs.

**Quote from EH Environmental (removal of Freon gas)** – The clerk will contact Sundridge Appliance Service to obtain an up to date price for removal of Freon gas.

**Official Plan Background Report** – Council will review the document and submit comments for the July 10, 2012 meeting

**Severance, review of survey** – Awaiting comments from MNR

**Processing plastics at Landfill** – Council felt they did not wish to process recyclables from outside sources. The clerk was directed to send a response to the email request.

**Almaguin Lions Youth Football** – Council felt there were not in a position to support this program and this time, nor provide insurance coverage.

The following resolutions were passed:

**R2012-175 Merlyn Snow – John Newstead**

Therefore be it resolved the Council for the Township of Strong invite Andrew Martin to speak to Council as per section 7.8 of By-Law 2011-008 Procedural By-Law. **Carried**

**R2012-176 Jason Cottrell – John Newstead**

The Council for the Township of Strong hereby adopt the Minutes of the June 12, 2012. **Carried**

**R2012-177 Kelly Elik – Jason Cottrell**

The Council for the Township of Strong hereby accept the Accounts Payable as presented up to and including June 26, 2012 in the amount of \$86,471.53 and hereby authorize the Clerk/Treasurer to issue cheques for same. **Carried**

**R2012-178 Merlyn Snow – John Newstead**

The Council for the Township of Strong does hereby commit \$ 20,000.00 contribution over two years (2011 commitment of \$ 10,000.00 approved May 2011) towards the Economic Development Project. **Carried**

**R2012-179 Merlyn Snow – Jason Cottrell**

Therefore be it resolved that as provided in the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, as amended, Council for the Township of Strong hereby enter into a Closed Meeting at 6:30 as per Section 239(2)(e). for Potential Litigation. **Carried**

**R2012-180 Kelly Elik – Jason Cottrell**

Therefore be it resolved that as provided in the Municipal Act, S.O. 2001, as amended, Council for the Township of Strong hereby exit from a Closed Meeting at 6:35 as per Section 239(2)(e). **Carried**

- Mayor reported council held a closed meeting to discuss items pertaining to potential litigation matters.

**R2012-181 Kelly Elik – Jason Cottrell**

Therefore be it resolved the Council for the Township of Strong in the interest of economic development, accept the South River Sundridge Flying Club proposal to manage the airport over a 25 year horizon. **Carried**

**R2012-182 Jason Cottrell – Kelly Elik**

The Council for the Township of Strong grant Chris Clarke the opportunity to speak to council as per Section 7.8 of By-law 2001-008 Procedural By-law. **Carried**

**R2012-183 Merlyn Snow – Kelly Elik**

The Council for the Township of Strong hereby close the regular meeting of Council at 7:00 p.m, to declare the meeting Open to the Public to discuss a Shore Road Closing.

**Carried**

**R2012-184 Jason Cottrell – John Newstead**

The Council for the Township of Strong hereby close the Public meeting of Council at 7:05 p.m, and resume the regular meeting of council.

**Carried**

**R2012-185 Kelly Elik – Jason Cottrell**

• The Council for the Township of Strong hereby approve By-law 2012-015 being a by-law Stop up and close part of a shore road allowance in front of Lot 20, Concession 8, being in front of 8 and part of lot 39 RP 152, designated as Part 1, Plan 42R 19644, have read the by-law the required readings.

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• And that Council for the Township of Strong hereby authorize the Mayor and the Clerk to sign this by-law and affix the Seal of the Corporation thereto. **Carried**

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**R2012-186 Merlyn Snow – John Newstead**

• The Council for the Township of Strong hereby adjourn the regular meeting of Council at 9:00 p.m. until the next regular meeting of Council on July 10, 2012.

• **Carried**

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**Mayor, Christine Ellis**

**Clerk/Treasurer, Linda Maurer**

## **Presentation of Terry Jang**

### **My Concerns**

We're here today because of the events of the May long weekend of this year when there were 10 cars and anywhere from 17 to 20 occupants of #4 Crescent Rd.

This was another disturbance in a series of disturbances that have occurred at #4 Crescent Rd. over the past five years.

I'm here to ask Council for help in resolving the issues that seem to keep occurring.

The major concerns that myself and the neighbours on Crescent Rd. have regarding the operation of a Short Term Accommodation property at #4 Crescent Rd. are as follows:

- Noise

- Environmental and Health Issues
- Potential for Vandalism

Unfortunately the concerns that I raised with Council five years ago still exist. Nuisance and disturbance noise still occurs at #4 at various times of the year. It prevents my family, Jim's family and the other neighbours from enjoying our properties. When there are between 17 and 20 people staying there for a weekend or longer it is usually necessary to repeatedly ask them to keep the noise down and call the OPP.

Our concern regarding environmental issues still exist. When large groups are staying at #4 Crescent Rd. we are unsure of whether the septic system is capable of dealing with the volume of waste. If it is not capable then what are the repercussions for the lake and for our health?

Finally, we are concerned about the potential for vandalism, especially if we complain about their behaviour. We unfortunately, do not know what the repercussions will be when we complain. It is always a concern that something will be damaged.

## A Growing Issue

It seems to me that this problem can only get worse. The four laning of Highway 11 will provide faster and better access to Strong Township and to the Lake Bernard Tourist Area. The growth of the Muskoka and Huntsville areas also indicates that people are willing to travel to the north in search of recreation. The rising property values there can only lead to more people travelling further north where property values are lower and someone can purchase a property and rent it for \$1600 to \$1900 per week.

There is at least one other property that I know of that has the same problem. Rondi Penfold on Tamarack lane has approached Jim Wright to discuss her problems with the Short Term Accommodation property beside her cottage. Her concerns echo my own. She speculates that there are probably six or seven others currently exist on the lake.

## Different Land Use

Operations such as Relaxmuskoka are commercial entities and exist to provide Short Term Accommodation they are not residences and should be recognized for what they are: properties that provide Short Term Accommodation.

While Short Term Accommodation is a necessary component of a tourist area and a tourist economy it does present some challenges that cause conflicts when they exist in an established residential area such as ours.

The experience of Collingwood and the City of Blue Mountains is enlightening. They tried various ways to control the activity and finally concluded that they needed to officially recognize that these were not residential properties and were not being used as "residences." They defined the "new" land use of "Short Term Accommodation" which is recognized in the Municipality's Official Plan and is regulated by the Municipality's Zoning By-laws like "any other" land use such as Commercial and Residential.

Collingwood's new Short Term Accommodation By-law has even with stood an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board which ruled with the Municipality and rejected the reasoning of the appellants. ( Please see <http://www.owensoundsuntimes.com/ArticleDisplay.aspx?e=3188550&archive=true> )

Since, Strong Township is going through the process of updating its Official Plan, I believe this is the perfect time for Council to address this issue and recognize that the “new” land use of “Short Term Accommodation” should be included.

The Official Plan should reflect the future as we envision it. It really stretches the imagination to not expect that there will not be more properties that are devoted to providing Short Term Accommodation. It is already occurring why would we believe that it is going to stop in the future? If we want to encourage development and we want people to invest a quarter of a million dollars or more on cottage property then we should be doing our best to ensure that they can use the property for the use that they intended.

People who purchase residences and want to use them as full or part-time residences want to ensure that they won't be disturbed by the activities of the neighbouring properties. While, people who purchase with the intent of providing Short Term Accommodation should be able to do so without the fear of conflict from the surrounding neighbours.

It does us no good as a Municipality if people cannot enjoy their investment and if we have ongoing conflicts between residents and short term visitors. We should be taking measures to eliminate or reduce any potential conflict so that people will keep returning to the area and so that people will invest.

## What I Propose

What I propose and would like to see Council do is the following:

1. Council must look at the “big” picture of how to accommodate the various land uses in the Municipality and recognize that providing Short Term Accommodation is a growing and identifiable issue that must be included in the Official Plan.

2. Council provide some interim plan to deal with nuisance noise issues. Nuisance noise occurs twenty-four hours a day seven days a week. Shouldn't we have a By-law that recognizes this reality? A Noise By-law modeled after the Noise By-law in Sundridge would certainly signal that Council takes the issue of nuisance seriously. ( Please see [http://www.sundridge.ca/pdfs/bylaws/Noise%20By-law%202007\\_016.pdf](http://www.sundridge.ca/pdfs/bylaws/Noise%20By-law%202007_016.pdf))

3. Council also recognize the environmental issues associated with a property that provides Short Term Accommodation. Since Lake Bernard is our greatest resource we must ensure that all land uses are compatible with ensuring its ongoing protection.

4. Finally I propose that Council create a subcommittee with a mandate to explore and provide recommendations for providing Short Term Accommodation in the township.

# Appendix

## Reigning in party houses OK: OMB

*By Scott Dunn*

Posted 12 months ago  
Scott Dunn

Sun Times staff

Town of the Blue Mountains' efforts to reign in "growing tension" caused by short-term vacation "party house" rentals in residential neighbourhoods were reasonable and legal, the Ontario Municipal Board ruled last week.

OMB vice-chair K. J. Hussey released her decision June 22, which endorsed the town's moves first to freeze new short-term chalet, cottage and house rentals in 2008, define and set rules governing their location and grandfather non-conforming uses.

They target problem areas in "low-density residential" neighbourhoods while permitting short-term accommodations in other areas around the mountain resort "in order to achieve compatibility," the decision says.

"The board finds that this is a reasonable and legitimate response to the residents' concerns and is consistent with good planning practice."

Thirteen residents testified, 12 supporting the town. Even the one against it "acknowledged the valid concerns of the residents," the decision said.

The hearing officer noted testimony of OPP Sgt. Charlie Watts, who confirmed disgruntled residents' observations. He spoke of "numerous complaints" about noise, garbage and parking problems related to short-term rentals in residential areas.

The hearing officer rejected appellant arguments that limiting short-term accommodations is akin to limiting access to affordable housing, contrary to the Human Rights Code.

Also, restrictions don't discriminate among potential renters by sex, race or otherwise and so appellant assertions of "people zoning" had "no basis." The board rejected all other appellant objections.

Appellant Sheldon Rosen, who owns a property-management company which owns and rents chalets and cottages around Blue Mountain, was disappointed.

"Why does anybody get out of bed in the morning to be in a business that can't grow?" Rosen said in a phone interview Saturday, arguing the new restrictions will hem him in.

"When the growth of the industry is there, why not be able to capture that growth?"

Rosen, who placed fourth in the race for Blue Mountains mayor in the last municipal elections, said he'll meet with his lawyer Monday to consider whether to appeal the decision.

Reaction from the municipality and a ratepayers' group was strongly supportive of the OMB decision.

"This is a tremendous success for our community," said David Finbow, director of planning and building, in a news release Friday.

"Council will now consider the most efficient way to enforce the regulations, including a possible licensing regime. The public will be kept informed as we move through this process of regulating short-term accommodation rentals."

When noise complaints, garbage and parking problems started piling up in 2001, the municipality tried a "zero tolerance" policy and strictly enforced its noise and parking bylaws, which didn't stop the complaints, the OMB decision said.

Blue Mountain Ratepayers' Association president Michael Seguin said on Saturday the situation became intolerable. He said the town "basically" turned all noise complaints to the police to handle to safeguard its own employees.

"They were afraid for their bylaw enforcement officers because they were not trained to deal with these people. These people can get very violent, especially after they've been drinking all night."

Blue Mountains is a four-season recreation and resort destination that attracts more than 730,000 visitors annually, the OMB report says.

Demand has grown for short-term accommodations and of the 5,619 dwellings there, 52 % are permanently occupied, leaving a pool of seasonal residences available to rent.

Blue Mountain Resorts Limited and Intrawest ULC mostly supported the town's position at the OMB. Appellant Denis Martinek and Tyrolean Village Resorts concurred, after concerns were resolved early in the hearing.

Without any municipal regulation of short-term accommodations in residential areas, ratepayers group president Seguin said, peaceful neighbourhoods were being ruined.

"What comes with that is a lot of noise, abuse, garbage, break-ins . . . what we call party houses . . . in residential neighbourhoods that were once considered quiet, and safe for families to live in."

The town now defines short-term accommodations as commercial operations offering guest rooms for up to eight people total, for fewer than 30 days.

It will demand certain standards be met concerning parking, noise control, garbage, setbacks, buffering, servicing with a view to "show sensitivity to surrounding residential uses," says the town's official plan amendment, which the OMB approved.

Seguin, who also ran unsuccessfully for a position on Blue Mountains council, for the deputy-mayor post, also said the decision should help Blue Mountains and other communities better regulate their own rowdy tourist lodgings in residential areas.

Rosen, who owns The Lodges at Blue Mountain Corporation, said he feels "a tremendous amount" for suffering neighbours with noise and garbage complaints.

"We've done everything that Blue Mountain Resort has done. We have 24-hour security on the weekends. We have all kinds of precautions to prevent this."

The decision says The Lodges manages 80 rental properties in the area and owns 15 of them, 14 of which are classed as short-term accommodations.

Though 20 of the units managed are located in low-density residential zones where short-term accommodations are not permitted, they could remain as a legal non-conforming use.

"In fact they will be watched very carefully and the licence will restrict them from doing things that they weren't restricted from doing before," Seguin said of all short-term rentals that would be subject to future licensing.

[sdunn@thesuntimes.ca](mailto:sdunn@thesuntimes.ca)

## **Rondi Penfold email**

From: [Rondi Penfold](#)

Sent: Monday, September 12, 2011 5:16 PM

To: '[James W. Wright](#)' ; '[Terry Jang](#)'

Cc: [uhastings@rogers.com](mailto:uhastings@rogers.com) ; '[Judy & Steve](#)' ; [ally.john@gmail.com](mailto:ally.john@gmail.com)

Subject: RE: Tamarack Lane

Thanks Jim,

Thanks for your note.

My concern with renters Jim is that we never know who is there and never sure if we are safe, if our paddleboats need locking every time we go to town or whatever. We are not sure what septic systems Bill Copeman has but we do know that in each of his cottages he generally rents from May 24 to September have 2-3 vehicles per building at all times. The road has been fixed by Ulrike and I have paid what I can to help her however Bill refuses to contribute. If Bill contributed to the cost of upkeep on the road behind his two rental properties I don't think we would have as many issues as we do with him.

He never if ever stays there with his family. It has been income property (does he ever pay tax on them as his tenants have told us they must pay CASH) since he purchased his Fathers and his Father purchased the property beside me from Jean Dunbar. He does NOT own his waterfront. He does cut the grass, roof and paints his properties. They are well maintained – but city people won't rent anything that is not clean. If we can write something into the upcoming plan, I would be happy to hear what is involved as I'm sure Ulrike would also.

Thanks again for your note and please keep me posted on if/how we can support you.

Rondi

## **Sundridge Noise By-law**

THE CORPORATION OF THE VILLAGE OF SUNDRIDGE

BY-LAW NO. 2007-016

Being a By-law to prohibit or regulate noise likely to disturb the inhabitants of the Village of Sundridge

WHEREAS Section 129. of the Municipal Act, 2001 S. O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, provides that a local municipality may prohibit or regulate noise unless a permit has been obtained from the municipality for such noise and may impose conditions for obtaining, continuing to hold and renewing the permit, including requiring the submission of plans; AND WHEREAS the Council of the Village of Sundridge deems it necessary to pass a by-law to prohibit or regulate noise within the Village of Sundridge;

NOW THEREFORE the Council of the Corporation of the Village of Sundridge enacts the following:

1. Short title

This By-law shall be known as the Village of Sundridge Noise By-law.

## 2. Definitions

“Council” means the Council of the Corporation of the Village of Sundridge;

“Noise” means any unwanted sound;

“Point of Reception” means any point on the premises of a person where sound originating from other than those premises is received.

## 3. Prohibitions

### 3.1 No person shall:

i) ring any bell, blow or sound any horn or cause the same to be rung, blown, or sounded;

ii) shout or create, cause or permit any noise or unusual noise; likely to disturb any inhabitant of the Village of Sundridge, at anytime. Except when required by law or when specifically exempted from this by-law.

3.2 For the purposes of this by-law and without limiting the generality of the foregoing the following may be deemed to be noises likely to disturb the inhabitants:

a) the operation of any electronic device or group of electronic devices

incorporating one or more loudspeakers or other electromechanical transducers and intended for the production, reproduction or amplifications of sound;

b) yelling, shouting, hooting, whistling or singing

### 4. Exemptions

4.1 Public Safety  
Notwithstanding any other provisions of this by-law it shall be lawful to emit, cause, or permit the emission of sound in connection with emergency measures undertaken unless such sound is clearly of a longer duration or nature more disturbing than is reasonably necessary for the accomplishment of emergency purposes such as:

i) for the immediate health, safety or welfare of the inhabitants, or

ii) for the preservation or restoration of property.

### 4.2 Permits granted by the Corporation of the Village of Sundridge

i) When deciding whether to grant an exemption Council shall give the applicant and any other person opposed to the application an opportunity to be heard and may consider such matters as it deems appropriate;

ii) a breach by the applicant of any of the terms or conditions of any exemption granted by the Council shall render the exemption null and void.

## 5. Enforcement

This by-law shall be enforced by any Police Officer or the By-law Enforcement Officer appointed by the Council of the Village of Sundridge.

## 6. Punishment

Any person who is found in contravention of any section of this by-law and upon being found guilty of that contravention is liable to a fine of not more than the maximum permitted under the Provincial Offences Act, exclusive of costs and every such fine is recoverable under the provisions of the Provincial Offences Act.

## 7. Repeal

By-law # 98-008 is hereby repealed.

8. This by-law shall take effect on being passed.

INTRODUCED AND READ A FIRST, SECOND AND THIRD TIME  
THIS 27th DAY OF NOVEMBER, 2007.

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Mayor Elgin Schneider

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Clerk-Treasurer Lillian S. Fowler

# Noise By-law Enforcement Lambton Shores

## **Budget boosted to battle rental rowdies**

*Gord Whitehead, Special to the Times-Advocate*

LAMBTON SHORES — Lambton Shores council has reaffirmed its commitment to “the safety and peace” of residents by adding \$5,000 to this year’s bylaw enforcement budget.

Stepping up financial resources to emphasize a municipal priority was recommended in a March 19 mid-way report from council’s short term rental accommodation committee. That will allow the north area bylaw officer to employ additional officers to cover additional hours, said clerk Carol McKenzie.

As reported previously, special enforcement emphasis will be placed in the upcoming tourist season on the area known as Plan 24 in the heart of Grand Bend.

“With this stated as a priority of council, resources necessary to achieve this goal can be included in the budget, appropriate direction given to staff and discussions will be arranged with local law enforcement officers to stress that this issue is a municipal priority, and that Lambton Shores will be expecting support for the initiatives,” McKenzie stated on behalf of the committee.

A first draft of the 2012 operating budget had allocated \$29,075.59 for contracted bylaw enforcement, up from \$28,578.24 in 2011. Originally proposed total expenses for bylaw and parking enforcement for this year were projected at \$207,977.67 which would have been a reduction from 2011’s \$228,213.86.

The clerk also reported, “Letters will be sent to the residents and landlords in Plan 24, once again outlining the plans for 2012, and that bylaw officers have been instructed to use a ‘zero tolerance’ rule with respect to calls for service and will be issuing tickets to those on site, as well as the landlord, each time they are dispatched to a property and the noise is one that is determined to be ‘likely to disturb’ the residents.”

McKenzie added, “It will be reiterated to landlords that it is their responsibility to ensure that the people renting their premises adhere to municipal regulations, or else they will be fined. In addition, it will be restated that if the landlords do not police their tenants, the municipality will be forced to take stronger actions.”

Her report recapped points made at the Jan. 14 community meeting (reported in the Times-Advocate’s Jan. 18 edition) and offered the comment, “It should be noted that one of the positive outcomes of the Jan. 14 meeting was that the area landlords are currently discussing the formation of a landlord association that would work with the municipality.”

# Council taken to task

Posted 1 month ago

A Sauble Beach business owner blasted South Bruce Peninsula council over what he said was the town turning a blind eye to a growing number of "illegal businesses" in the Lake Huron resort community.

Frank Stolp, the owner of Sunny Birch Cottage Resort, wants council to adopt a bylaw to regulate short-term cottage rentals as The Blue Mountains has done.

In an appearance before council Tuesday Stolp said his tourist cottage rental business is being undermined by people renting out cottages that are zoned and taxed as residential properties.

"Numerous owners are renting from Easter to Thanksgiving. There are some private owners who do rent their cottages for nightly accommodations just like a motel or resort and do supply linens, blankets, towels. Is this not a commercial operation?" he said.

"We also have private cottage owners who have transformed their garages, lofts and sheds to sleeping accommodations and are renting them. These additional places are used without building permits issued, inspections done . . . They even have water and sewer hook up."

Stolp, who said he also has interests in resorts in Aruba and other Caribbean locations, appeared before council in October 2011 with the same complaints.

Council's response so far has been to file a report at a meeting on March 6 prepared by Wayne McFadden, the town's chief building official, about cottage rentals with a promise that McFadden would make a further report "once more information regarding rental of private cottages is know."

McFadden's report noted South Bruce Peninsula has "property owners who own multiple cottage and rent them out seasonally and year round" and that the town's zoning bylaw "does not prohibit the use of a cottage as a rental unit."

Stolp said in an interview that the town has told him council is waiting on a court challenge to Blue Mountain's short-term rental bylaw, which has already weathered an appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board, before looking at the matter any further.

The Blue Mountains bylaw, among other things, prohibits accommodation rentals for periods of less than 30 days in traditional single-detached dwelling neighbourhoods. It was passed in response to complaints about noise and other problems associated with so-called party houses.

## **Presentation by Jim Wright**

Linda, I would like to attend the next meeting, on behalf of the LBPOA ... and to address the following items;

Issues for Council – and Official Plan Input ( next 20 years ), Relate to Strategic Plan (2011)

1. Property Standards By-Law, Noise By-Law similar to Sundridge, Review of Bylaws to have some consistency on Lake?
2. Dock and Boathouse restrictions ( article in the Star ) / Whitestone
3. Shoreline Setback and Use
4. Lake Plan Adoption, Current Plans
5. Consideration for Short Term Accommodation (STA) By-Law, Trailers on Lake
6. Boat Ramp Improvement and South Beach Use
7. Lake Association Message Board ( south beach and checkerboard ), Sailpast for 2013
8. Septic tank inspection status / plans
9. Study to determine viability of summer garbage pickup for seasonal residences, tax study
10. Offer to sit / have representation on the LBPOA Board of Directors

Thank you, Jim Wright

# OUR LAKE BERNARD

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## OUR MOST VITAL RESOURCE

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### OUR LAKE PLAN

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#### HIGHLIGHTS – ISSUES AND SOLUTIONS DOCUMENT

Developed By Representatives

Of

The Lake Bernard Property Owners' Association

In Consultation With

The Municipalities Of Strong and Joly Townships,

The Village Of Sundridge,

Community Residents and Property Owners.

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**Lake Bernard is our most vital resource.** Each of us has heard it. Each of us has probably said it. Each of us believes it. The Lake Plan is a document that supports this belief and includes input from a variety of reputable and reliable sources to deliver a resource to all stakeholders in the Lake Bernard Watershed.

In our vision survey, which was completed during the summer of 2011, the results were clear:

- Lake Bernard Water Quality was the number 1 issue for 86% of responders.
- Water Level Maintenance was number 2 with 68%
- Natural Look of the shoreline and the Fishery were tied for third with 62% of respondents.

“Your lake. Your lifestyle. Your legacy”, is a coined phrase used by FOCA, the Federation of Ontario Cottagers Association, and what could be more appropriate? This Lake Plan delivers the items that each individual needs to consider as a property owner on the lake, as a visitor to the lake and for those of us who stand in awe of the natural beauty of the Almaguin area.

**Vision Statement:** Our Vision is to be recognized as a model lake region in Ontario as measured by the quality of life and positive experiences of residents, cottagers and visitors.

Our Vision will be achieved through the successful stewardship of our lake and watershed as well as the related thoughtful and effective planning of regional economic development.

**Mission Statement:** Our Mission is to engage the communities of Strong, Joly and Sundridge in striving to achieve our Vision by developing action plans and then communicating and implementing those plans to make our Lake Bernard area a model lake region.

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We believe that the science is clear. Each of us needs to do his or her part to maintain the quality of the lifestyle enjoyed on our lake. The following near-term action items, listed in order of importance, are those that will have the most impact;

**1. Issue - Septic Systems (on-site wastewater treatment systems )**

Background – phosphorous loading is the single largest issue affecting the water quality of Lake Bernard. All septic systems contribute phosphorous to the lake, although the rate of adoption varies depending on terrain and vegetation between the septic and the lake.

Action Plan – For 2012, the Lake Bernard Property Owners Association (LBPOA) Board will provide dye tablets at the July 14 Annual General Meeting (AGM) to all lake owners in attendance to voluntarily test their on-site treatment systems. Individual remedial action will be recommended as determined by the results of the testing. This program should be repeated every second year with the next one being in 2014. Consideration will be given to distributing the dye strips to all lake property owners with a method to be determined.

All property owners with septic systems will be encouraged to have their systems pumped out every 3-5 years. Again, the method to achieve this will have to be determined. The Lake Plan Committee endorses action by the Provincial Government to mandate 5 year re-inspections of septic systems. This has already been legislated through the Building Code in specific areas of Ontario.

Reference Material: FOCA – Hot Topics  
at <http://www.foca.on.ca/septics>, [http://inspectapedia.com/septic/Septic\\_Class.htm](http://inspectapedia.com/septic/Septic_Class.htm)

**2. Issue – Shoreline Buffer Zone Management**

Background - There are many nasty things waiting to catch a lift down to the lake with the rain runoff. These include seepage from septic tanks, fertilizers and pesticides, deposits from family pets, as well as oil or gas spilled on the driveway.

For many cottagers and other waterfront residents, our quiet spot by the lake is a little bit of paradise where we can relax, play, and enjoy being closer to nature. But it is a special place for another reason. The zone where the water meets the land, also known as the “ribbon of life”, is one the most important for the fishery and for nourishing the lake with oxygen. The waterfront is crucial to your lake’s health, providing food, cover and a barrier to contaminants, as well as a living retaining wall for the shoreline.

Action Plan – Increase individual knowledge through educational awareness of the significant value of leaving 75% of the shoreline and the buffer zone (15m to 20m setback from the shoreline) in a natural state. Trees with deep roots are much better in absorbing nutrients than shallow grass or rocks. They also provide a treasure trove of natural attributes for wildlife! Material from MNR will be handed out with the LBPOA notice of the Annual Meeting in May as well as potentially through the Municipalities. At this time, the Committee does not endorse the need for a municipal by-law to restrict buffer zone land use as has been done in some other Municipalities.

Reference Material:

<http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/regions/central/pub/shore-rivages-on/index-eng.htm> , <http://muskoka.fileprosite.com/content/pdfstorage/242E1CAE790B44909DA3DE98C8D79462-ShorelineVegetationBuffers.pdf>, [http://www.severnsound.ca/ssea\\_NatShore.htm](http://www.severnsound.ca/ssea_NatShore.htm)

### **3. Issue – Land Use Planning**

Background – Over the years, municipal by-laws have often reflected the desires of the residents to develop close to the lake, balanced with acknowledgement of any environmental issues leading to a compromise position. Lake Bernard is classified as a “Lake Trout Lake” by the Ministry of Natural Resources (MNR) due to its natural attributes (deep and cold). These attributes allow one of the most finicky and water quality sensitive fish, the Lake Trout, to live and reproduce naturally. “At capacity” MNR guidelines, which essentially mean that human use around the lake is deemed to be at or near its peak, have evolved after many years of research.

Action Plan - Support and promote the MNR “At Capacity” guidelines with Municipal Official Plans and with the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority. The Committee endorses a change to the Official Plans to maintain a 30 metre setback for all potential building on lake front property.

Reference

Material: [http://www.lakeland.greenup.on.ca/documents/P\\_Walsh\\_LLConf.pdf](http://www.lakeland.greenup.on.ca/documents/P_Walsh_LLConf.pdf) & <http://www.muskokaheritage.org/watershed/MSC.asp>

### **4. Issue – Fertilizers and Pesticides**

Background - Lawn and garden fertilizers may contribute phosphorous to the lake. Even products that claim that they are phosphorous free contain nitrogen which is also a problem. There is a need to educate people on the negative effects of growing, fertilizing and maintaining trimmed lawn right to the Lake’s edge.

Action Plan – Implement an educational plan to eliminate use of fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides within 30 metres of the shoreline. At this time, the Committee does not recommend the need for a new by-law from the Municipalities, similar to what has already been instituted in other jurisdictions in Ontario.

Reference Material:

[www.kearneywatershed.ca](http://www.kearneywatershed.ca), [www.livingbywater.ca](http://www.livingbywater.ca), [www.shorelines.lronline.com](http://www.shorelines.lronline.com)

### **5. Issue – Wastewater Management**

Background - Storm water is rain, melted snow or any other form of precipitation that has come into contact with the ground or any other surface. This water seeps into the ground, is absorbed by vegetation, evaporates or runs off the land into storm sewers, streams and lakes.

Wash water from commercial activity, businesses and the road network is currently designed to go directly into the lake, untreated, through the storm sewer system in Sundridge. People camping around the lake and some property owners dump their grey water on the ground, which is typically sandy and not far from the lake. When it rains, this water likely enters the lake without much in the way of natural filtration.

The Village of Sundridge storm sewers flow directly into the lake without catch basins. Catch basins are designed to reduce the flow so that floating sediment isn’t deposited into the lake directly.

Similarly, in Strong Township, ditching along the roads has been carried out to protect the road bed and the ditches extend directly to the lake edge with the same detrimental effect of sediment flowing into the lake.

Action Plan - Implement an educational initiative with the Municipalities to reduce sediment entering the lake where possible. The Ministry of Environment (MOE) are subject matter experts on this issue and have material that presents best practices, which include consideration for economic issues.

#### Reference

Material: [http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/subject/stormwater\\_management/index.htm](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/subject/stormwater_management/index.htm), [http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/subject/stormwater\\_management/STDPDPROD\\_076045.html](http://www.ene.gov.on.ca/environment/en/subject/stormwater_management/STDPDPROD_076045.html)

### **6. Issue – Water Quality Testing**

Background – For many years, LBPOA members have tested the water on the lake, as volunteers, at many different locations. Particular emphasis is made at public beaches and known areas of sensitivity such as Joly Creek. This has allowed us to track the changes over the years in water quality; particularly E. coli and coli form changes. MNR and MOE have done similar testing, however, in more detail and not on an annual basis.

Action Plan - LBPOA to maintain current water quality testing program (2 lake tests a summer by our Lake Steward) with the Municipalities financial support and MOE to reflect historical changes. Initiate a 3-year program with MNR and MOE for further enhanced water quality and clarity tests. Maintain the Lake Partner Program with MOE testing for changes in Total Phosphorous (TP).

### **7. Issue – Commercial and Industrial Activity**

Background – Sustainable development is a key phrase used to identify the need and desire for economic, business or residential development in conjunction with environmental awareness and protection. Commercial activity can dramatically affect water quality due to large volumes of material not typically found in the same scale in a residential zone. The railway would be a good example of a commercial activity that could have a dramatic effect on the lake, if an accident were to occur. MOE is responsible for the rules that guide commercial activity, but there are many instances where this isn't enough.

Action Plan - Build environmental awareness with local businesses. Adopt best management practices where available to have the foresight to manage the unexpected. Insure the Municipalities take into account Best Practices on Sustainable Development for all future commercial development applications.

### **8. Issue – Landfill Management**

Background – Strong Township has two landfill sites in the Municipality that are in the Lake Bernard watershed. Steps to reduce, recycle and reuse have reduced the amount of waste that goes into the landfill which the Committee endorses. This does not necessarily stop the hazardous material that may enter the landfill and potentially, the source water system. The north end landfill is only 900 metres from Joly Creek.

Action Plan – The management of the landfill falls under the jurisdiction of the MOE. The site has wells drilled throughout the property to measure water quality. Continue long term measurement through the Ministry of Environment (MOE) of potential contaminants. In addition, develop a program with MOE to measure ground water quality in Joly Creek, upstream and downstream, on a 3 year basis.

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Environmental stewardship and sustainable development can be related and supported components of our journey to achieve our Vision. It is not a race, and the pace of positive and effective change can be slow. The Committee looks forward to interacting with the community at large to engage in activities that promote a healthy Lake Bernard, in

combination with sustainable development in order to leave a lasting legacy for generations to come.

May, 2012

## Lake Plan Report Card

In an effort to report to the stakeholders on an annual basis, a one page report card will be used to track changes to the issues that have the most impact.

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Initiative</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Rating or Score</u>	<u>Date</u>
<u>Septic Systems</u>				
<u>Buffer Zone</u>				
<u>Land Use Planning</u>				
<u>Fertilizers &amp; Pesticides</u>				
<u>Waste Water Management</u>				
<u>Water Quality Measurement</u>				
<u>Commercial Activity</u>				
<u>Landfill Management</u>				
<u>Water Level</u>				
<u>Fishery</u>				