

BEAVER VALLEY RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2010

The primary focus for the BVRA has been WATER. Your Directors have attended Drinking Water Source Protection meetings and have actively engaged with Grey County Planning Department to monitor the activities of the proposed Beaver Valley Village Subdivision.

The following report authored by Cathy Little outlines the progress of the BVV subdivision application, which supports a 45 lot subdivision, on individual septic systems and individual wells, on a 29.7 Ha area bounded by Windy Lane, Bowles Bluff Road and the 7th line.

OUR WATER and THE PROPOSED SUBDIVISION

Having studied the documentation for this application, it is our opinion that the applicant's studies are neither extensive enough, nor thorough enough to provide assurance that future development will not negatively affect the quality and quantity of water for property owners in the area of the proposed subdivision.

Additional agency and peer reviewer comments are anticipated. We will continue to monitor the process. In the meantime, we are researching the feasibility of retaining our own groundwater expert to help promote BVRA concerns to Municipality and County decision-makers and, if appropriate, to the Ontario Municipal Board.

A brief summary of the sequence of events until December 11, 2009 is provided below.

- Initial comments from the Niagara Escarpment Commission, the Ministry of the Environment (MOE), R.J. Burnside and Associates Limited, a private consulting firm (RJB), and Marcus Buck, an independent karst expert, expressed concern that the studies completed by the applicant do not provide sufficient evidence that

- water quality and quantity would not be negatively impacted for existing and future residents in the area. (Fall 2008)
- The County directed the proponent to conduct a Settlement Capability Study (SCS), to assess the impact of individual services on water resources within the entire Escarpment Recreation Area. The study was completed and circulated to agencies and peer reviewers for comment. (Spring 2009)
 - In response, agency comments and peer reviews continued to express concerns about the potential impact to the quality and quantity of water in the Beaver Valley Village Settlement Area (BVVSA), from future development.
 - The MOE responded that previous concerns stood as unaddressed because the Settlement Capability study draws conclusions based on the assumption that individual wells and septic systems are the most appropriate way to service these lands in an environmentally sustainable way.
 - RJB stated that the Settlement Capability Study does not provide complete confidence and confirmation that the size of development proposed on individual services is appropriate and environmentally sustainable especially with regard to the quality and quantity of water resources within the settlement area.
 - Discussions, held between the applicant's agents and Grey Highlands planners, to address specific concerns, resulted in an updated Karst Evaluation Report (KER) and a Supplementary Hydrogeological Evaluation Report (SHER). These reports were submitted to both Municipal and County planning departments and circulated for comment. Only Grey Sauble Conservation Authority (GSCA) has responded to date, to the updated KER. (Summer, Fall 2009)
 - The updated KER is a response to the criticism that a deficiency of the original KER was a failure to document springs along the escarpment slope. Additional field studies were done in September 2009 to investigate the location and characteristics of the spring(s) in Bowles Gully. Conductance, temperature and depth were measured. Water samples were tested for nutrient and selected metal concentrations. The updated report also addressed other comments, such as flooding and contamination hazard, drainage relationships and impact on ANSIs. (10/16/09)
 - The GSCA, in its letter, noted 3 factual errors in the updated KER, including the assertion that the creek blow Bowles Gully spring seasonally ceases. (12/19/09)

- For the SHER, 2 additional wells were drilled and tested during September 2009. Well testing results and interference potential were summarized. Responding to a peer review comment suggesting that current utilization wells downgradient from the proposed development be identified, a figure showing all wells in the vicinity of the proposed development (from the MOE water well database), a summary of wells with viable location data and conclusions with respect to well yield, were included in the report. A door-to-door survey was considered not viable, and a mail survey not undertaken because it would have required the consent and participation of the municipality. (10/19/09)
- Marcus Buck responded to both the KER and the SHER. He made several recommendations. His letter can be viewed on the new BVRA blog.

In conclusion we await additional responses to the updated Karst Evaluation Report and the Supplementary Hydrogeological Evaluation Report, from agencies and other peer reviewers.

AND IN THE CATEGORY OF “WORTH REPEATING”

Our Village of Markdale sustained several impacts this past summer and fall. A tornado passed through a section of the village, and fortunately no lives were lost. Chapman’s Ice Cream endured a debilitating fire, but arose from the ashes. David and Penny Chapman have been acknowledged nationally (Globe and Mail, MacLeans Magazine) for their commitment to their employees, and to keep their ice cream flowing. Lastly, a proposition for the concept of a rural health centre that would integrate hospital services, (with all acute care services, 24 hour emergency service, labs, day surgery, and physiotherapy), has been presented to the surrounding community. The trade-off would be fewer hospital beds, but with the strong likelihood of attracting more doctors and ancillary health care workers.

KEEPING YOU POSTED AND TALKBACK

As mentioned above, your executive has started a brand new blog. Take a look and leave a comment at www.beavervalleyratepayers.blogspot.com

Our official BVRA website, www.beavervalleyratepayers.ca does a good job of informing the general public about our organization and making our

newsletters available on-line. We wanted an additional way of communicating that would be timely and more engaging.

It is important to all of us that interested members know what is happening, as it happens. Currently, our biggest concern is the proposed Beaver Valley Village subdivision. There was a great deal of public interest when news of this plan broke, and our 2008 AGM was packed. Since then, it probably appears as if little has happened. We want to correct that misconception, and do a better job of keeping members “posted”.

We are keen to discuss the issues with members. We are interested in your advice and will need your support, especially once the studies are deemed completed and the official decision-making process is underway. Your comments on posts, provides the opportunity for dialogue, not just with the executive, but also with other members.

Check out www.beavervalleyratepayers.blogspot.com right now, and be sure to leave a message.

BOARD MEMBERS

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Interested and committed persons are welcome to join this board. Watch for notice of the AGM

www.beavervalleyratepayers.ca

