

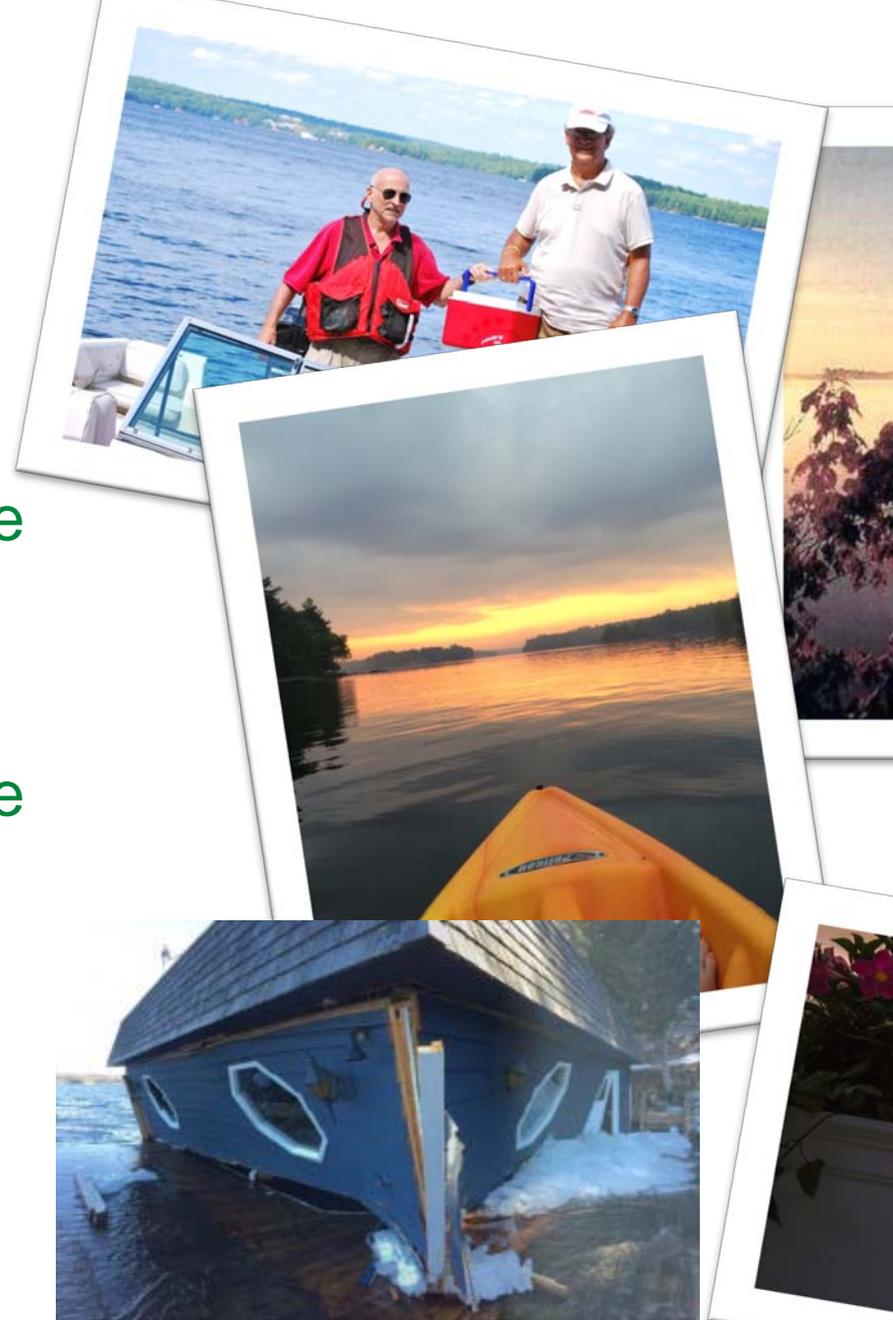
Gravenhurst Official Plan Review

April 30, 2016



MLA Values

- We protect and promote **water quality**
- We advocate for **responsible government spending and taxation**
- We advocate for **responsible land use**
- We lead on **important Muskoka issues**



Who has been involved

- Gull and Silver Lakes Cottage Association
- Kahshe Lake Ratepayers Association
- Lakeshore Drive Community Association
- Muskoka Lakes Association
- Morrison Lake Ratepayers Association
- Muldrew Lake Cottage Association
- Muskoka Bay Property Owners Association
- Muskoka West Cottage Association
- Pine Lake Ratepayers Association
- South Muskoka Lake Association
- Sunny Lake Association

General Comments

- environment first philosophy - existing OP did a good job of that. The environment as a foundation for the local economy must be recognized and continue to be a foundational principle for all policies
- Given the recent two spring floods we trust that a new examination of shoreline policies with respect to natural hazards will be undertaken. Buffers from the shoreline are increasingly important.
- Gravenhurst has a diversity of lakes and community characters that should have specific policies for large and small lakes
- current official plan policies will prevail unless explicitly revised through the review

Strategic Planning and Economic Development

- Importance of the feel of Gravenhurst as a small town hub, with a vibrant downtown core and an animated waterfront
- Development needs to respect the environment and create opportunities to live, work and play here that are compatible with the community and heritage character

Sustainability and Energy Conservation

- Embed these policies through the document – not an add on. New way of doing business
- Support the application of Low Impact Development/Design for managing storm water in existing developed areas as well as for new or retrofit development
- Support developing policy around renewable energy siting and standards
- New policies around thermal transfer from lake loops

Growth Analysis

- Overly optimistic growth projections can negatively influence municipal budgets by assigning capital to expand services such as fire and emergency services and infrastructure such as road upgrading in anticipation of population/employment demand that does not materialize.
- Careful and routine examination of population numbers and projections to support building units

Urban Centre and Community

- Protect the features that make Muskoka unique - including steep rock faces, wetlands, forests and streams. Even in the Town setting, these features make Gravenhurst unique.
- The development policies in the urban centre appear to be focused on having Gravenhurst be more like the GTA and that is not in keeping with the community or heritage character and tourism opportunities.



Waterfront

- Shoreline development must be sensitive to the context including lot size, shoreline character, as well as shape and size of the lake
- Boathouses fundamentally change the character of the shoreline and may not be suitable on all lots or all lakes.
- 2 story boathouses acceptable on Lake Muskoka subject to meeting lot standards; limits on living space 650 sq ft
- same policies (e.g. 300 ft frontage) as adjacent municipalities
- Retain shoreline coverage standards of 25%



Rural

- This paper pinpoints the issue of residential land uses within the rural area which may or may not be consistent with the other uses in this area.
- As land values continue to climb on the lakes, pressure to build in rural areas will mount and the Town needs to be able to manage the expectations.
- Limit development to be on year round municipally maintained roads for safety purposes

Natural Heritage and Natural Resources

- The feature based approach is one element of good natural heritage planning
- Recommend developing a natural heritage system to ensure the linkages between systems - both physical and hydrological
- Biodiversity in Muskoka is important – not just deer
- Missing discussion of invasive species and forest diseases (e.g. emerald ash borer)



Transportation, Services and Utilities

- Add policies in support of active transportation e.g. connecting trails, paths or sidewalks so that citizens can walk to schools, churches, recreation facilities etc. without having to walk on public highways
- Dedicated walking and bicycle trails should be available throughout the municipality and link communities to other municipalities providing alternate transportation routes
- No reference to Source Protection Plans and policies
- No reference to water conservation policy needs



Implementation Mechanisms

- Better notice provisions (electronic; larger signage; broader distribution)
- Ensure seasonal residents have access to information
- Public meetings at all stages of the development approval process
- Needs reference to other municipal by-laws e.g. dark sky by-law, tree cutting by-law

What was not discussed

- Source Water Protection policies
- Climate Change
- Hazard Management – Flooding
- Invasive Species direction
- Forest Health and disease
- Heritage preservation, including *views and landscapes*

