

Township of Mulmur

DRAFT NOTES

Strategic Planning Session

Wednesday, March 14, 2012

9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Township of Mulmur Municipal Office

Your facilitator:

Sue Powell, Ag & Rural Economic
Development Advisor

OMAFRA

IN ATTENDANCE

Keith Lowry
Janice Kogelhede
Morley Brown
Fay Smith
Susan Brown
Ron Mills, *Planner*
Peter Walker
Kevin Greer
Rhonda Campbell Moon, *Deputy Mayor*
Heather Hayes, *Councillor*
Zita Harper
Julie Pollock
Earl Hawkins, *Councillor*

Lynn Hilchey, *Councillor*
Dave Clark
Don MacFarlane
Ross Bailie
Cheryl Russel
Carl Tafel
Zolton Potovsky
Paul Mills, *Mayor*
Terry Horner, *CAO/Clerk*
Kerstin Shillum, *Acting Deputy Clerk-Treasurer*
Harry Bunker *Treasurer*
John Willmetts, *Director of Public Works*

Regrets:

Chester Tupling
Carl Cosak

Comments noted below are from each individual's introductions which included their own comments regarding what outcomes and thoughts they would like to walk away with after today's discussion/strategic planning session:

YOU SAID:

- Support vision, plan for the future-doing a strategic plan
- Mobilize community interest
- People will rally around the now and the future
- Know what is happening in Mulmur-info exchange-connectivity
- Want to have input into future of Mulmur
- Strategic Plan document – not focus on ideas that will sit on a shelf
- Fiscally responsible planning
- Implementation
- Sustainable planning – how can we make change that is not affordable
- Unify community – 40% are not full time residents
- Heritage, natural environment, Bruce Trail – Mulmur all this – great place
- Goals that are sustainable and achievable; keep Mulmur's rural character; be fiscally responsible
- A Strategic Planning session is new to Mulmur, should be reviewed every 6 months to a year to check-in and revise etc.
- Good relationship/business climate between the township, planning department and residents

- Lack of engaged people – few attend council meetings – held twice a month, once in the day and once in the evening
- Untapped resources (ie. human capital) in Mulmur
- Feeling of being proactive instead of reactive
- Mulmur is a community of the *Divides* – those from Honeywood, Mansfield, the Valley and Weekenders – want more cohesion
- Mulmur is a unique place to be – a place you would want to put down roots
- Opportunity for hospitality industry, tourism and recreation
- Mulmur needs growth - struggled to find a balanced budget.
- Need increased supply in revenue stream
- The community's common thread is the geography – the landscape – it is beautiful and why many of us chose to live here
- Tired of urban chaos, Mulmur is a paradise
- Protect landscape from threats coming our way ie. Mega Quarry
- Strategic plan is critical to setting out Mulmur's future
- More engaged community
- Better communication
- Sustainable, practical and achievable
- Having several so called distinct "societies-divides" (weekenders and local full time residents etc) in Mulmur is a plus
- Mulmur is a safe place
- Drawn here because of the environment-landscape
- Proud to live, work and play in Mulmur
- Learn more about what is going on
- It is home – family grew up here
- Plan to manage growth: sustainable, fiscally responsible and maintain values (family-friends)
- Will retire in Mulmur – currently come on weekends
- People weekend here but eventually stay
- Two distinct "societies" – one group who makes a living in Mulmur – the farmers; one group who does not
- Farming is changing – no longer 100 acre farms - what is Mulmur becoming
- Need to ensure we maintain "rural character" – as outlined in Official Plan
- Huge % of population of Mulmur will be retirees
- Full time farmer – 5th generation – like to see plan for sustainable farming
- Farming is essential to economic prosperity in Mulmur
- Plan to build access to local food
- Youth have lack of job opportunities
- What kind of business can Mulmur nurture?
- Recreation is a huge draw – but need visitors to spend \$ in Mulmur
 - What do we need here to make that happen?
- Demographics suggest a young group of commuters
- Meet people today and provide input
- People don't understand or know how to get involved in this community
- People have valuable resources they wish to share
- Missing at the table is young adults – aged 20-30 years old
- Mulmur's current Population 3,391 – a 2.2% increase since 2006
- Mansfield subdivision is mostly young couples with no children
- Do not shop locally – shop where work
- Weakness is Communication
 - Information to residents
 - Council information sharing
 - Need a communication strategy

- Honeywood – community is important – family is first
- Have wonderful resources in Mulmur
- Have policies in place to protect our natural environment - NEC, Oak Ridges Moraine, OP and Places to Grow legislation so will protect us from huge residential growth
- Ski Club in Mansfield is a private club but open to the public at specific times
 - Mulmur's major employer
 - Concerned about club's future regarding Mega Quarry, threat because it may impact on the Pine River which is essential to the club

SWOT Analysis

(Note: individual introductions and thoughts referenced many of Mulmur's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. These comments are not repeated in lists below)

STRENGTHS

- Welcoming community
- Many local people are involved in the community
- Majority care about Mulmur
- It's beautiful!
- Love the natural environment-geography of the Niagara Escarpment, rural landscape
- Bruce Trail
- Diversity of the community: people are: Weekenders; Farmers; from Mansfield, Honeywood and the Valley
- Diverse community has diverse needs and resources
- Diverse income levels
- Wonderful resources
- Mulmur's current Population 3,391 – a 2.2% increase since 2006
- Strong land-use policies in place to protect its natural and rural landscapes
- More full time retirees = more time and more \$
- Love the unassumed roads to explore - peaceful
- Heritage, natural environment, Bruce Trail – Mulmur all this – great place
- Good relationship/business climate between the township, planning department and residents

WEAKNESSES

- Diverse communities = different needs
- Lack of communication
- Lack of engagement – very few people attend the council meetings - events
- Diverse community – 40% are not living here year round - full time
- Struggling to balance budget – tax base is an issue
- Aging population
- Small youth population
- Business growth
- Business Retention
- Limited access to internet which is hampering businesses
- Internet access to high speed although there is currently access to over 5 ISP's
- Limited access to health and social services
- Traffic – exceeds provincially posted speed limits, lots of noise - motorcycles specifically on SR 21 and 17
- Limited control into policy development for renewable energy, Green Energy Act, and Mineral extraction Act.

- Only 2% of tax base revenue is industrial/commercial
- Keeping Mulmur the same = higher taxes = local people may not be able to afford to stay and would move out
- Lack of water in Mansfield area
- Challenge to attract developers – what is required of them – the additional costs for infrastructure etc.
- There is no central, community place - Hub in Mulmur
- Many spend more time in Creemore
- General store in Honeywood closed
- No anchor in communities
- No protection for local Mulmur residents if taxes continue to increase
- No business retention plan for industrial/commercial businesses, farming, retail, and restaurant.
- Each year the municipality loses \$649,000 because residents take advantage of the managed forest tax incentive by CA/MNR for their property
- Keeping visiting people here longer is tough because so close to GTA
- Clash between residents and proposed growth that is allowed
 - Primrose/Mansfield – recreation plan for allowed development - not communicated
- Airport Road, Hwy #10, Hwy #124 are vehicle/traffic thoroughfares for people travelling from GTA and going north
 - Don't stop and spend dollars
 - Nothing to spend money on
 - Not a destination

OPPORTUNITIES

- Strategic planning process provides opportunity to mobilize community interest
- Increase communication
- Connect people
- People care and want to be involved
- Provide opportunity to help people get involved
- Sustainable community – planning
- Sustainable community – fiscally responsible
- Keep rural character and values (family and friends are important)
- Create more cohesion within the community
- Tourism, recreation and hospitality
- Recreation for kids
- How to use resources – Primrose
- Local food – grow access
- Food access – to keep \$ and people here
- Creative place for artists, musicians, fashion, photography etc. and visits to see artists at work
- Ideas for input into budget for cost saving
- Support set up of new home businesses
- Ability to protect what you have – natural resources because of current policies, designated land uses – commercial/industrial
- Innovated budget savings – linking up with other neighbouring municipalities to investigate cost sharing specifically in the public works area
 - Majority of the budget \$ is for Roads/Public Works Dept.
- Boyne River Outdoor Ed Centre – still sitting unused
- Terra Nova Pub

- Hubs and Spokes - Develop virtual hubs with access at physical hubs – facilitate/supported by internet
 - Management of hubs and spokes would have to be community driven to avoid layers of approval via township-driven site
 - Look to outside funding for such a project

THREATS

- Gas prices
- Mega Quarry
- Amalgamation – loss of Rural voice at County – because population increases in Grand Valley, Shelburne, Orangeville could result in Mono, Mulmur, Melancthon and Amaranth/East Garafraxa losing out on votes.
- Declining or no funding of programs/grants from Federal or Provincial governments
- Demand for natural – renewable resources
 - Water
 - Wood
 - Aggregate

SOME GOALS, SOME ACTIONS AND TACTICS

**Ideas... What are we going to do?
How are we going to do it?**

- Organize outreach team to be deployed into the community to find out what people are interested in, what they might get involved in and share what is going on in and around the community
- Marketing events such as the Honeywood BBQ – held always on the 4th weekend in July – but now in conflict with Pine River Road Association’s event
- Need to find out who lives in these hills and what they want – gaps and needs
- Put together info sheet about goings-on in community and send out with tax bill
- Obtain list of all residents and send out a survey
- Target new businesses for Primrose to fill that industrial park
- Target new residents – eg. Teleworkers
- Identify, mobilize and maintain political players
- 6 new businesses to open in Mulmur and employ 80 people
- A widespread awareness of Mulmur’s beauty and opportunity
- All ratepayers aware of issues affecting Mulmur and their pathway to provide input
- Ask the question to ratepayers, “What services would you like to cut?”
- Develop a communications strategy and vehicle for ratepayers to receive and disseminate information
- Grow partnership with DuffBizz
- Focus on growing local community/home based businesses – current OP has zoning and bylaws to support cottage industry/home businesses
- Our benefits are segmented – but both are important
 - Want to save money – a sustainable tax base for municipality – keep taxes down but don’t want to grow
 - Want to unify and build community engagement, spirit, involvement, awareness and communication
- Revenue vs. current services so if choose no-little growth then the future sees cuts in municipal services
 - Majority of budget goes into road maintenance
 - Huge % are commuters

- Roads are #1 importance especially in winter
- Farmers Market – Mansfield parking lot
 - Why do it – community building
- Develop a Marketing Plan for Mulmur
- Consider branding for Mulmur
 - *Rural Character, Rural Characters*
 - You can do your own thing here - anything you want
 - A place to retreat
 - Built on family/friend values

DO YOU WANT TOURISM IN MULMUR?

Yes and no – there are gaps...

- not enough places to eat
- not enough places to stay overnight.
- Currently there are a lot of people enjoying hiking and driving around on our scenic roads. Do we want more? At what cost?
- Must be careful not to promote before key infrastructures are in place to accommodate – places to eat, public washrooms, more B+B's etc.

IF SO WHAT?

- Equestrian-equine
- trials

WHAT DO YOU HAVE NOW?

- Scenic roads
- Bruce Trail
- Boyne Valley
- Motorcycles
- Pine River
- Fishing
- Hiking

WRAP-UP & NEXT STEPS

- ✓ The Mayor asked the group to come up with two or three sentences to describe what happened at this meeting today. Keith kindly drafted up the following message on behalf of the entire group.

“The process of developing Mulmur’s Strategic Plan began with an all-day discussion on the areas affecting and driving Mulmur’s future that need to be addressed in a planned manner.

One working group was established to develop a communications strategy that will ensure necessary information and opportunities for input are provided to all Mulmur taxpayers.

A commitment was made by all participants to meet again to comment on today’s work and establish the next steps in this process. This information including the dates of public meetings will be shared as the process moves forward.”

- ✓ The group was asked to share this message family and friends in the community.
- ✓ Keith Lowry proposed the **formation of a Strategic Planning Communications Working Group** and offered 20 hours. This group would include: Julie Pollock, Morley Brown, one staff person, and one council member (Mayor to identify who those individuals would be) to develop a communications strategy.
- ✓ **This new working group headed up by Keith will speak to the Mayor to set a date for this groups first meeting to develop begin a communications strategy and a time frame regarding presentation to the entire group. This should happen sometime in mid or late April.**
 - Elements within the communications strategy will look at vehicles for ratepayers to receive and disseminate information and the committee to gather information about the strat plan. Tactics discussed include: letter/self-mailer, develop survey on survey monkey – asking for their input /help, and email,
- ✓ **The entire group today expressed a commitment to remain together and champion this plan as the inaugural Mulmur Strategic Planning Steering Committee for at least one more gathering to comment on today's work and establish the next steps in this process.** Sue Powell, OMAFRA has agreed to facilitate them through these next several meetings. **This should happen sometime in mid or late April depending on when the new Communications Working Group completes a communications strategy for presentation to the group.**
- ✓ **Written notes from today's session (25 sheets!) will completed by Monday, March 19th** and forwarded to CAO/Mayor for check and then for distribution to all in attendance.
- ✓ **All will review notes and digest the discussion, and if they wish add any new comments, via email to Terry Horner before end of week – March 23, 2012.**

WHAT IS IN THE PARKING LOT

- Check it out - www.acana.ca
An internet provider with really high speed at \$400.00/year unlimited download
- Fay Smith – Mansfield Ski Club
 - fsmith@mansfieldskiclub.com for more info about room rental and price list
- Headwaters Communities in Action – HCIA
 - www.headwaterscommunities.ca
- Your lunch was provided by Chrissy Bennington-chef/owner of The Artful Caterer
 - 519-940-6082 or artfulcaterer@yahoo.ca
 - www.artfulcaterer.ca

March 14th AGENDA

9:30-9:40 am
9:40-10:05am

Welcome and Introductions ~ Paul Mills, Mayor

Hello ~ Sue Powell, OMAFRA

- **Round the table introductions:**
 - Tell us who your are, brief resident-info/background and what outcome you hope to come away with following the discussion today (2-3 min each)
- **Review of Agenda** – all ok?
- **Setting the context-Why are we having this discussion today?**
 - ✓ The approach ~Strategic Planning~ is holistically planning into the future. A SWOT-Brainstorming= Clear Vision and Goals, identify measurable objectives & develop tactics to get you there.
 - ✓ housekeeping issues
 - ✓ guiding principles
 - ✓ Parking lot-cards

SWOT ANALYSIS ~ Let's Talk

10:10-10:50am

STRENGTHS

What do you think are the best things about your home - this place your community called Mulmur? (community, people, landscape, municipality, operations/services etc).

What does Mulmur do really well?

What do others see as Mulmur's strength?

“a wee bit of heaven tucked away at the northeast corner of Dufferin County...”

10:50-11:30am

WEAKNESSES

What just doesn't work well?

What needs improvement?

Where are the gaps and barriers?

Where do you have fewer resources?

11:30-11:40am

BIO - BREAK 10 MIN

11:40-12:10PM

OPPORTUNITIES

What opportunity is out there right now that could bring huge results and have an impact in the most positive way? and who benefits?

What strengths could turn into opportunities for Mulmur?

What will Mulmur look like 10 years from now? Blue sky ideas?

12:15-1:45 PM

LUNCH – yummy! Thank you!

1:45-2:30 PM

THREATS

What do you see are some the key external (globally, regionally) threats that could harm Mulmur now and into the future?

What external actions/activities do you need to keep an eye on, be aware of?

What threats do your weaknesses expose Mulmur to?

MORE SWOT Discussion

2:30-3:00pm

ACTIONS AND TACTICS

WRAP-UP & NEXT STEPS

In two – three sentences write down what happened here today and take this statement and pass that message on to all those you know in Mulmur.

- *Did we fulfill our purpose today?*
- *What didn't we address?*
- *What's next?*
 - *Write up of all comments from discussion (Sue) within a week to be circulated to all*

Thank you to Mayor Mills and council for having me lead your discussion today and to all of you - well done- Your engagement is really important!

CLOSING REMARKS

Paul Mills, Mayor

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

YOUR municipality's mission statement

Township of Mulmur

MISSION STATEMENT

We are dedicated to the development of the Mulmur community as a place where we can live, work and enjoy its amenities while preserving its unique rural character. We are dedicated to the courteous delivery of quality services to the Mulmur community. We will preserve and protect our environment in a manner within our means. We will provide the Mulmur community with access to social, educational, recreational and health services that, when appropriately utilized will be conducive to the enhancement of quality living. Council our employees and representatives will perform their duties in the best interest of our public, with responsibility and fairness and with partiality towards none.

Participation Guidelines

- ❖ There are no wrong answers
- ❖ Everyone has wisdom
- ❖ We need everyone's wisdom for the wisest results
- ❖ Everyone will "hear" and be "heard"
- ❖ The whole is greater than the sum of its parts

FYI Overview

What is strategic planning?

- A process to determine a municipality's long-term vision and goals and develop an action plan for achieving those measurable goals

- Plan for the future
- A Holistic Strategic Planning approach establishes a collective vision
 - Via a SWOT Analysis process for example, inclusive engagement (citizens and staff), it can clarify where you have been, where you are now and where you want to go
 - A Community Strategic Plan is one that reflects the community's priorities in the establishment of the municipality's strategic goals and objectives.
 - Community seen as a major stakeholder in the process

Why do it?

- A vehicle for council and senior management to communicate strategic priorities to residents and staff
- Provides direction for internal operations to align their services with the priorities
- Useful information at budget time to help drive funding decisions
- Process itself offers critical Info - identifies gaps and opportunities to grow a strong, prosperous and vibrant community
- Maximize resources
- Identify Communicate priorities

How long? And what cost?

- Optimum time to establish or review a strategic plan is at the beginning of a new council term
- There is no defined time frame to implement a successful planning process however one year is often a reasonable period
- Cost depends largely on whether external consulting resources are utilized. Also the cost of communicating (products, web site, e-newsletter etc.) information and success during and after the process to internal and external stakeholders

Implementation

- There is no perfect system
- Best implemented through a customized system that meets the needs and organizational environment of the municipality
 - ie. Do not need a formalized steering committee, may choose to have existing committee of council to guide the process
 - ie. Do not need an army of consultants to facilitate, organize focus meetings, surveys and implement the plan