

BY EMAIL: planning@bracebridge.ca

March 18th, 2024
Planning and Development Committee
Town of Bracebridge
1000 Taylor Court, Bracebridge, ON
P1L 1R6

Attention: Chair D. Smith and Members of Planning and Development Committee

Dear Chair Smith and Members of Planning and Development Committee;

**Re: Public Meeting Wednesday, April 3, 2024
regarding proposed amendment to Bracebridge Official Plan
OPA No. 15 (OPA 15)**

The Muskoka Lakes Association (MLA) and Friends of Muskoka (FOM) would like to express support for Bracebridge's proposed Official Plan Amendment OPA No. 15 to improve consistency and clarity in the public notification and consultation process in light of the community newspapers of Muskoka ceasing publication in print format in 2023. We appreciate the Town's proposal to find alternative methods to notify and make residents aware of Planning Act applications.

Specifically, the MLA and FOM support Bracebridge's Official Plan Amendment OPA No. 15 to address any shortcomings in the public participation process by adopting alternate methods of providing notice.

The MLA and FOM support the update by adding measures to Section J13 – Notice Requirements of the Town of Bracebridge Official Plan. We believe that the alternative notification measures will reach a greater number of our members and other members of the public. We support the proposed amendment to add a variety of alternative notification measures in accordance with the Planning Act including:

- i. personal service or prepaid first class mail;
- ii. e-mail;
- iii. public notice signs;
- iv. surveys, electronic or mail-out;
- v. neighbourhood open houses and/or public information centres;
- vi. neighbourhood working groups or focus groups;
- vii. information meetings;
- viii. statutory public meetings;
- ix. electronically circulated newspaper;
- x. Town website or internet engagement platforms; and/or,
- xi. any other methods as deemed necessary by the Town and established by amendment to this plan.

We would also encourage the Town of Bracebridge to investigate methods to expand e-mail lists as these have proven particularly effective in reaching our membership.

It may be beneficial to coordinate expansion of email lists. The communication sent with tax bills could provide information to residents about how they can request to receive email communication on planning notices through the engagebracebridge.ca portal. In addition, while we acknowledge that the Planning Act sets standards for circulation of planning applications, we would encourage the Town to strive to extend notice beyond the minimum standards. Lake associations may be helpful in this regard.

Please accept this letter as written request to be notified of the decision of the Town of Bracebridge on the proposed Official Plan Amendment (OPA 15).

Sincerely



Susan Eplett
President, Muskoka Lakes Association



Laurie Thomson
President, Friends of Muskoka

cc:

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