



**The Corporation of the Town of Saugeen Shores  
Regular Council Meeting Minutes**

**Monday, July 14, 2025, 6:30 p.m.  
Council Chambers  
600 Tomlinson Drive  
Port Elgin, Ontario**

Present: Luke Charbonneau, Mayor  
Diane Huber, Deputy Mayor  
Mike Myatt, Vice Deputy Mayor  
Dave Myette, Councillor  
John Divinski, Councillor  
Cheryl Grace, Councillor  
Bud Halpin, Councillor  
Rachel Stack, Councillor

Members Absent: Justin Duhaime, Councillor

Staff Members: Dawn Mittelholtz, Clerk  
Mark Paoli, Director, Development Services  
Jay Pausner, Manager, Planning and Development  
Candace Hamm, Development Services Officer  
Ashlynn Kennedy, Licensing and Records Clerk

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**1. Call To Order**

Mayor L. Charbonneau called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**2. Land Acknowledgement**

Councillor Deputy Mayor Huber read the land acknowledgement.

**3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest and Nature**

No pecuniary interests were declared.

**4. Additions, Deletions, Amendments**

None.

**5. Adoption of Minutes**

**6. Public Meeting**

**6.1 Local Official Plan Amendment L-2025-011 (Cultural Heritage Amendment)**

Council received a Planning Report regarding an application is to amend the Town of Saugeen Shores Official Plan related to cultural heritage. The amendments implement land use planning policy-related recommendations from the Town's Cultural Heritage Master Plan (CHMP).

**Mayor Charbonneau declared the public meeting open and indicated the purpose of the public meeting.**

**Mayor Charbonneau asked if any members of the public would like to address Council on this matter.**

Jay Pausner and Jake Bousfield – Bastedo, provided a brief overview of the report and amendments being proposed.

**There were no other members of the public wanting to speak to Council.**

**There were no additional written submissions.**

Council members had the following clarifying questions:

- A question was raised regarding an example of a site of conscience could be given. It was clarified that site of conscience is not in the draft Official Plan or being specifically recommended but brought up in a rationale discussion. It's raised there to provide justification for the slight modification under that objective of the two words "where appropriate" but that objective focuses on the ability for heritage resources to attract economic tourism opportunities associated with the site. There may be certain sites with culture heritage value where it may not be appropriate to focus on the economic opportunities that could be associated with the site. An example is the ongoing discussions with First Nations and as they contemplate what to do with existing residential school buildings. In some communities these are sites of pain, and the appropriate course of action is to remove it. However, in others, like the Woodland Cultural Center in Bradford, the decision has been made to preserve them.
- Questions were raised regarding the application of the term's "redevelopment" and "development" as referenced throughout given the different meanings and conservation of cultural heritage values. It was clarified that the section was being updated in the by-law to condense those terms into one, not to remove redevelopment as a consideration. The Provincial Planning Statement definition of development includes redevelopment.
- A question was raised about the kind of recourse Saugeen Shores has when a heritage property has been demolished, destructed, or there has been inappropriate alteration or use of a cultural heritage resource. It was clarified that legal recourse would be limited to sites with designation or on the heritage register under the *Ontario Heritage Act*. A designated site has a protective by-law associated with it and the *Ontario Heritage Act* can be relied on for a site on the register. If a demolition permit came in for a site on the register, there is a 60-day window for Saugeen Shores to consider whether a designation should proceed. The policy is there to inform broader planning discussions if a development proposal came forward and to allow Council to weigh in.
- Questions were raised regarding the future policy or plan to define the town's character as a community, and if it would consist of additional changes to the Official Plan or by-laws. It was clarified that there are recommendations within the master plan to define what character is and what compatibility means. Obtaining Council direction to identify areas to examine and make recommendations for how to protect sites through a planning policy, zoning provisions or a permit system that aligns with identifying, protecting, conserving, enhancing and maintaining character of sites, which would be created in the future. At this time, there has not been any sites that have been identified to be unique, other than the objectives. Southampton being one of them, which has a particular

character but to determine specific features that should be preserved or conserved through a planning policy would be the next step.

- There were questions raised regarding the timeline of preparing a character statement to be adopted within the Official Plan and the process to work towards character statements for the areas of Saugeen Shores. It was clarified that it would be brought forward during budget discussions. The timeline proposed in the Official Plan is that it would be brought forward in the next several years of business planning. There is an estimated cost of between \$30,000.00 and \$200,000.00, the cost would depend on the scale and scope of the character that is being determined, such as if the whole town character is being determined, you would need to look at each neighbourhood opposed to a smaller study that looks at a defined neighborhood. Obtaining a professional consultant advice would also contribute to the cost.
- There were questions raised regarding the meaning of section 1.2.6.2 objectives and whether the existing settlement area will be used for expansion. It was clarified that the policy is not for expansions or locking in existing, as contemplated in County and local Official Plans. The intent of the policy suggests that the best way to preserve the heritage of rural properties, such as large farm parcels, would be to continue to direct growth to the settlement area.
- A question was raised if the wording should be changed to read “to the existing Saugeen Shores settlement area” to clarify. It was suggested that it should not, because the policy should not lock in the boundaries of the heritage conservation, as the boundary discussion is multifaceted.
- A question was raised regarding section 2.4.5.2 which states "The town shall not permit development on site alteration on adjacent lands to protected heritage properties unless the heritage attributes of the protected heritage property will be preserved as demonstrated through the cultural heritage impact assessment." And if this section is found in other plans, as it a significant undertaking since it does not just refer to the property but also adjacent properties being influenced. It was clarified that this is language from the Provincial Planning Statement that has been in place for years and was added to make sure that the local Official Plan is reflecting it. The Provincial Planning Statement has a very rigid definition of adjacent, which is properties that are contiguous, as in share a property line. This section provides the opportunity to flag something early in the pre-consultation phase and removes the element of surprise if it comes up later through public consultation. It is now clear what properties could be affected and there is a limited number of properties which are officially protected in Saugeen Shores.
- A question was raised regarding the contents of the designation by-law and what would it consist of and the stipulations for property owners for their property. It was clarified that the designation by-law would clearly outline the heritage attributes of the home. It is not suggesting that new development must match the characteristics features beside it. However, if one of the attributes of the protected property is the sight line from the waterfront, this could be factored in to maintain heritage attributes.
- A question was raised about the impact on rural properties outside of the settlement boundaries. It was clarified that the impact would only apply to sites within the settlement boundaries.

- Questions were raised about the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment as per section 2.4.5.9 of the by-law, the meaning, if the section was retrieved from the *Ontario Heritage Act* and the impact of the development application will have on cultural heritage resources. It was clarified that the cultural heritage resources is a provincial planning term which encompasses built heritage resources, culture heritage landscapes and archaeology sites.
- A question was raised about the impact of the Official Plan on a structure in the rural part of Saugeen Shores and it being under a designation by-law. It was clarified that the Saugeen Shores Official Plan only applies within the settlement area. It could be designated by the Town's municipal processes, but the County policy would be applicable.
- A question was raised about the conservation of mature trees with cultural heritage value or interest and if it only relates to the settlement area. It was clarified that yes, it would only apply to the settlement area.
- A question was raised on how a living thing, like a tree, can be designated or conserved. An example was provided that a maple tree was designated and the property designation by-law provided language that should the tree become diseased or be removed, the landowner shall plant a maple tree in its place. However, it was clarified that a tree cannot be protected indefinitely.
- There were questions raised with respect to defining the character of the town when the character differs between the different areas of the town and if the language should be changed to allow the Municipality try to define the unique characteristics and not be required to do so when it may not be possible. It was clarified that through the master planning process it was determined that defining the character of the town or its unique areas is required to be able to identify and protect the heritage resources through the Official Plan and Heritage Act processes. It is important to have the definitions defensible through the process. It is not the intention to identify the whole town, but an element or character associated with the building or tree is being identified. The recommendation would be brought to council through the business plan to identify areas. It was a requirement to designate areas, otherwise there is no legal authority.
- A question was raised about whether a property can be designated without first defining the character of the entire town or even the neighborhoods. It was clarified that if an area is being designated there needs to be a supporting document that indicates the character on which the decision to designate is based on.
- It was questioned whether, in the absence of a requirement to define the character of the entire community, designation could still be pursued as it has been throughout the history of the Municipality. It was confirmed that the Municipality could continue designating properties in the same manner as it is currently being done.
- A question was raised regarding the intention that staff and/or the Municipal Heritage Committee may pursue the development and use of comprehensive preliminary inventories of cultural heritage resources as per section 2.4.2.1. It was clarified that the Official Plan is not the operating manual, and Council would provide direction on how the list would be used or what is on the list. The language of this section was provided by a consultant to provide guidance to staff, the community, and the committee to know if

certain properties should be examined. Council is the only authority that can decide from the beginning to the end of the process.

**In the absence of any further questions, Mayor Charbonneau declared the public meeting closed.**

Council had the following comments:

- A comment was made about the amendment that was made which was contained to a signal section that was omitted. Typographical and clarification points can be revisited at the next step.
- A suggestion was made to provide clarity to the reader, is to include the parentheses to the section that defines what a Heritage Impact Assessment is when it is initially discussed in section 1.2.5.2 subsection G.
- A comment was made about the community character and that the current designation process as outlined by the province requires two of the following characteristics or features, one of them talking about the character of the neighborhood and the surrounding buildings. It would not be a huge change from the existing designation guidelines provided by the *Ontario Heritage Act*.
- A comment was made that it is hypocritical that the province to require that Council adapt a Municipal Heritage register when it has mandated that properties not designated by January 1, 2027, must be removed from these registers and cannot be re-added for five years. The Saugeen Shores Municipal Heritage Committee has invested considerable time, effort, and resources into constructing the heritage register, only to have it threatened with the removal of about 90% or more of its entries if properties are not designated by the 2027 deadline. This seems like a waste of time. During the last term, the Municipal Heritage Committee discussed creating an informal heritage inventory of properties, possibly including trees, as a resource of information without any legal protection (60-day window to be protected from demolition). If the County is recommending this wording, the County should advocate, as the Municipal Heritage Committee did, to the province on the importance of the Municipal registers.
- A comment was made about having an informal inventory of trees as a resource. The big tree at Gerry's Fries was used as an example to show that there is an emotionally connection to this tree and if something happened to it, there would be a lot of sadness. A tour of the trees would be a great tourism asset.
- A comment was made that the points about encouraging the adaptive reuse of cultural heritage resources to meet the housing needs and the recognition of the cottage streets design guidelines are liked.
- A request was made to explore the tax reductions, grants and loans for designated heritage properties.
- A comment was made regarding the built heritage and cultural heritage. The first Janes Walk walking tour of Southampton was a huge success and about 75 people of all ages attended. The public interest is there.
- A request was made for an informal list of trees. A lot of interest has been shown by the community in having a plaque for trees, but people do not want to go through the whole process of the designation.
- A comment was made that while everyone agrees on the desire to preserve trees—recognizing that trees tell stories and people often

form emotional attachments to them—they are an important part of the community's history. However, the current language suggests that trees shall be conserved, and if this wording is adopted, the public would have a right to expect that conservation to occur. It was questioned whether this is appropriate from a heritage standpoint, as it would require identifying specific trees and fulfilling their conservation, which may not align with the intent of heritage policies. Other policies already exist to protect trees, and those should be maintained and strengthened. There is nothing preventing the Heritage Committee or other groups from identifying significant trees and sharing their stories, but it may not be necessary to include a formal commitment to heritage tree conservation in the Official Plan.

- An invitation to the community was made to attend the Horticultural Society's August meeting is a tree tour in Port Elgin. It is not necessarily for historic trees but it is to introduce the different types of trees that grow in Port Elgin. There will be a speaker from the Tree Trust at the September meeting. The Tree Trust is a national organization that discusses historically significant trees and assists with ways to fundraise or obtain funding to adopt and take care of a couple of those trees with proper arborists.
- A comment was made that it would be helpful for the community to have clear language defining what is meant by "cultural heritage resources," as the term is referenced in various ways. The Official Plan suggests that additional cultural heritage resources are either currently relevant or may become relevant, and it would benefit the community to have a clear definition of what this category includes.
- A comment was made that the use of the word "shall" is very prescriptive, "may" is a little more opportunistic. The use of the word "shall" does imply that something must happen and that is a bit concerning in some uses, but it is a good update.
- A comment was made about the conservation of trees and changing the wording to "may". This section was not retrieved from the province; it is a way of expressing provincial policy. It was found that the Tree Canopy Plan was not the appropriate avenue, there were comments that trees are important to the community and there must be ways of celebrating, designating or highlighting trees within the community. It was noted that the intention was not to have a by-law that restricts cutting down old trees on private property, as that is too intrusive. Rather, it was intended to identify trees, and what those trees mean to the community, and they can be celebrated. It was noted that the designation of any tree would require the same process as any designation including a report and recommendation from the Heritage Committee and Council's approval of a designating by-law.
- A comment was made that it is important to mention tree conservation in the Heritage Plan. The idea of forming a subcommittee to focus on trees was suggested, and if pursued, it should be included in the Heritage Plan to give the community an opportunity to engage and explore what actions they can take.
- A comment was made that the heritage summer student is in the process of creating various assets to help with the communications out to the public and walking tours. One of the items that is underway provides additional information about heritage designations and could provide additional information about cultural heritage resources.

- A request was made to change the language to indicate that trees that have been designated shall be conserved, to clarify that the process must be followed before it is protected.
- A comment was made that given the pace the province changes the heritage rules, the word designation may have more staying power. As it is worded, it does not expand the reach of the policy.
- A comment was made that someone of the public reading this may say that they have identified a tree of having cultural significance or the community has identified it and that from their perspective would be enough. The Official Plan must be about a process. A request to amend the language to read that trees that have been identified by council as having cultural heritage authority significance shall be conserved.
- A request was made to use the term "cultural heritage significance" instead of "value" or "interest," as "significance" is a defined term in the Provincial Policy Statement. It was also noted that it would be acceptable as long as it is made clear that Council is responsible for making that determination.
- A comment was made regarding the word "shall" and whether it should be "may," as there may be instances where it is not possible to conserve the tree. It was suggested that changing the wording could help lessen the impact.
- A comment was made regarding the character of the neighborhood and the comments that have been heard about this subject and to commend staff.
- A comment was made that the revisions in red are the recommended changes to the bylaw.
- A comment was made in support of the recommended wording intended to define the unique character of different areas of the town, including the town's overall character as a community through future policy or planning. It was noted that the character of the neighbourhood east of Highway 21 is distinct from the waterfront cottage streets in Southampton. The character of the neighborhood is frequently discussed and would require a thorough report.
- A comment was made that the policy or plan is a long-term response that may be completed over many years but will be proposed in the business plan. The workload requirements, whether through external consultants or completed in-house, are required and the cost would be presented through the business plan, that is the intention of the report from May that outlines future character studies.
- A comment was made that terms were not concerning because if someone had an issue with a particular tree that needs to be cut down, concessions are provided on a case-by-case basis. Saugeen Shores has demonstrated in the past, when it is necessary the appropriate permissions are sought through Council as required by the Ontario Heritage Act and amendments to the designating by-law may be considered. The term "shall" or "may" are not that relevant in the end because changes are made as required.
- A comment was made about the character of the town and the east and west concepts. It appears that the heritage and characteristics on the west side of the highway is prioritized over the east side. There is a tendency to protect Southampton and the cottage areas near Port Elgin over the east side. If the character of the town is going to be discussed, it is important to remember the people, who

pay taxes on the east side and those properties deserve as much attention to the character as the waterfront properties. There are two sides to the town that deserve equal protection.

- A comment was made related to making character defensible, character statements need to be made to define character. The conversation is going to go on for years and by the time it is defined, it will be changed again. The definition of character still needs to be defined and there will be a cost factor to Saugeen Shores to create these character statements, but it is almost every area of the community. Even the newer areas are creating a character and they could relate to any part of Saugeen Shores.
- A comment was made that the east side of the highway in both Southampton and Port Elgin have interesting character areas that relate to settlement patterns and property owners that go back to when Southampton and Port Elgin were created, but none of it applies without the character statements.
- A comment was made that the problem will be the defining what the character is. The character basics of any of those neighborhoods is very difficult to say, even in the most historically consistent parts of town there are construction spanning over many years.
- A comment was made that it is important to be able to stand behind the statements in these documents and that the actions included are completed.
- A comment was made that when private properties are being listed, it should come to council first to determine if it is needed, prior to work being completed by the Committee.
- A comment was made that the overall concept and work is good, but some changes need to be considered before it could be adopted.
- A comment was made that the residents have raised concerns at past Committee of Adjustment and Planning Meetings that items being discussed is not keeping up with the character of the neighborhood. Without it being defined, it cannot be defended by staff. Defining the characteristics of the community as a whole would require significant resources and perhaps they should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis, one file at a time.
- A comment was made that one of the most important methods of identifying character of a neighborhood would be its architectural forms. It does not all have to be the same, and variety in the characteristics of the homes is a good feature of a community. It is important to include several types of characteristics to define character as similarities may be found in properties across different areas of the community.
- A comment was made that when it comes to the Committee of Adjustment, residents seem to be referring to single family dwellings opposed to multiple family dwellings. It is not necessarily about the amount of family it accommodates but can be keeping up with the existing character.
- A comment was made that changes are made to Official Plan's all the time. There has been a significant amount of time spent on talking about the Cultural Master Plan, but there are homeless people who don't have housing and sleeping at the library. There have been no discussions about this and there is no plan to deal with it. There needs to be a discussion about the issues that matter to people's lives and the ability to sustain our community for across the economic spectrum and spends a little less time about

protecting trees and heritage. People who want it protected will fight to keep those homes and culture of the town.

- A comment was made about the heritage districts and what they mean. There is a tendency for people to say that they want their private cottage protected from multi-million dollar developments that lessen the value of their properties. To some the cottage districts means cottage parks, ice creams stores, and bed and breakfasts and those things need to be protected as well.
- A comment was made that part of the struggle is that there are three plans coming together and determining how they fit together - the Official Plan, the Cultural Heritage Master Plan, and the annual Business Plan.
- It would be helpful for staff to clarify the language around character, and if it should not be addressed in the Official Plan. The takeaway for staff would be to eliminate that section from the amendment. Interest was expressed for it but some concern for the timeline.
- A comment was made questioning why there are the Saugeen Shores and Bruce County Official Plans, instead of just having a separate chapter for Saugeen Shores in the Bruce County Plan. It was noted that when the County makes changes, Saugeen Shores then must amend its plan to align with the County's plan.

A Motion to Amend the By-law was made but not voted on.

Council determined that discussions need to continue. Council deferred the item to allow for members to formulate suggested revisions.

That Council adopt By-law 72-2025, for Local Official Plan Amendment L-2025-011 (Cultural Heritage Amendment), and that it be forwarded to Bruce County for approval.

#### **DEFERRED**

Moved by: D. Myette  
Seconded by: R. Stack

That Council amend By-law 72-2025, for Local Official Plan Amendment L-2025-011 (Cultural Heritage Amendment).

#### **Resolution Number: 201-2025**

Moved by: D. Myette  
Seconded by: C. Grace

That the Local Official Plan Amendment L-2025-011 (Cultural Heritage Amendment) be deferred.

#### **CARRIED**

## **7. Report of Municipal Officers / Committees**

### **7.1 Zoning By-law Amendment- Z-2024-054 (Rae)**

Council received a Planning Report regarding an application is to rezone the lands from Highway Commercial (HC) to Highway Commercial Special (HC-35) with special provisions. The rezoning would recognize a reduced rear yard setback, reduced landscaped open space located in the front yard, and reduced parking aisle width, where Concession 6 shall be considered the front lot line. The rezoning would also identify that certain provisions relating to Accessory Dwelling Units in the Highway Commercial Special (HC-35) zone do not apply. If approved, the effect of the proposed amendments will facilitate the development of a three-storey,

16 residential unit and commercial mixed-use building on the subject lands.

**Resolution Number: 202-2025**

Moved by: B. Halpin  
Seconded by: M. Myatt

That Council approve Zoning By-law Amendment - Z-2024-054 (Rae) and By-law 73-2025; and

That Council resolve that no further notice is necessary with respect to the minor changes in the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment in accordance with the provisions of Section 34(17) of the *Planning Act*.

**CARRIED**

**8. Consent Agenda**

**9. Motions and Notice of Motions**

**10. Closed to Public**

**11. Report and Business Arising from Closed Session**

**12. By-laws**

**12.1 By-law 72-2025 – Amend Local Official Plan - Cultural Heritage**

**12.2 By-law 73-2025 – Amend Zoning By-law (Rae)**

**Resolution Number: 203-2025**

Moved by: B. Halpin  
Seconded by: J. Divinski

That By-law 73-2025 is hereby read, passed and sealed this 14th day of July, 2025.

**CARRIED, AS AMENDED**

**13. Confirmatory By-law**

**13.1 By-law 74-2025 - Confirm the Proceedings of July 14, 2025**

**Resolution Number: 204-2025**

Moved by: B. Halpin  
Seconded by: R. Stack

That By-law 74-2025 being a By-law to confirm the proceedings of the Council of the Town of Saugeen Shores is hereby read, passed and sealed this 14th day of July, 2025.

**CARRIED**

**14. Adjournment**

**Resolution Number: 205-2025**

Moved by: R. Stack  
Seconded by: C. Grace

That this Regular Council meeting of July 14, 2025, hereby adjourns at 8:25 p.m.

**CARRIED**

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Luke Charbonneau, MAYOR

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Dawn Mittelholtz, CLERK