

Welcome to the 2023 second quarter update from your Bayfield Ratepayers Association (BRA). There are a number of issues affecting Bayfield which the BRA is actively monitoring and providing input on.

### **Short Term Rental (STR) By-Law**

Council has now adopted by-law 68-2023 to license, regulate and govern the operation of short-term rentals (STR). STRs are habitable living spaces that are rented out for less than 30 consecutive days. They may be operated by an owner out of their own home or they might operate out of a property specifically purchased for purposes of renting to others for a short period of time. Bed and breakfasts (B&B) are also considered short-term rentals for the purpose of the licensing by-law.

The short-term rental by-law came into effect on June 19, 2023 and existing owners of short term rentals must register by July 4, 2023 in order to be considered “existing short term rentals”. To qualify as an existing STR the owner/operator must provide proof that the STR existed between April 30, 2022 and May 1, 2023.

All existing STRs and new STRs must apply for a license, however existing rentals will be exempted from location limits set out in the by-law. Property owners starting or continuing to operate a new short-term rental are required to obtain a municipal license prior to the applicable, required implementation date.

If you are a new STR there are two location limits that will prevent a license from being issued and are set out in the licensing by-law;

1. There is a licensed short-term rental abutting the property for which a short-term rental license is being sought.
2. The number of licensed short-term rental premises exceeds 15 % of all premises fronting on the street for which a short-term rental license is being sought.

The following are a few details regarding licensing of an STR:

- An application for a license is considered completed once all required documents and payment of the \$750 license registration fees is received. A license will be issued on a ward-by-ward basis.
- The STR license must be renewed annually unless it has been revoked.
- The owner/operator may continue to operate an STR once they have submitted the application, however, a municipal license must be issued by the implementation stage date for the STR to continue to operate after that date.
- The owner/operator must comply with all the rules and regulations contained in the by-law or fines and a demerit point system will apply.
- If an owner/operator operates an STR without a license a set fine of \$900 will be payable for each occurrence of a rental
- In addition, the demerit point system gives negative points to rentals that do not comply with the licensing by-law or other municipal by-laws. If a maximum number of demerit points is reached, the license may be revoked.

Further information and all details regarding licensing and the new by-law and the application can be found on the Municipality of Bluewater website.

[www.municipalityofbluewater.ca/municipal-office/by-laws/short-term-rentals/](http://www.municipalityofbluewater.ca/municipal-office/by-laws/short-term-rentals/)

## **Bedrock Energy**

Bedrock Energy Corporation recently introduced a plan to develop a Compressed Air Energy Storage (CAES) facility in Bluewater at Council “in camera” and to the public at a virtual meeting. The principle of CAES and the proposed project is to support the Ontario electrical grid by compressing and “storing” air in two unique underground formations (“reservoirs”) during periods of low energy use and to be released to produce power and add capacity to the system as needed during peak usage periods.

Bedrock’s plan is to build main facility in Stanley Township east of Goshen Line at Blue Bluff Road and will be built on approximately 120 acres of existing farmland. Concrete “Well pads” and large holding tanks will be built over the reservoirs, the larger of which is between Centennial Road, Staffa Road, Bronson Line and Goshen Line. The smaller reservoir is located north of Mill Road between Bayfield and Varna. The facilities are projected to be completed in 2028, employ over 800 people during the construction period and providing approximately 40 sustainable jobs when completed.

Bedrock indicates its philosophy is “to actively engage with the First Nations and the community” and that its planning decisions acknowledge landowner interests. They indicate First Nation participation and equity ownership is “desirable” and that landowner involvement has been “supportive”

Bedrock identified a number of potential benefits to the community in its presentations to Council and the public including:

- Over 800 jobs during construction and commissioning
- Approximately 40 full-time jobs when operational
- Contribution to Bluewater’s revenue
- A “community benefit plan” supporting Bluewater and its residents
- Contribution to Ontario’s energy needs
- A “green, no emissions projects with minimal footprint

However, Council’s consideration of the Project must also take into account the following in assessing any potential “net” benefits to Bluewater:

- The credibility of Bedrock and its financial plan. Bedrock is a new private corporation incorporated in Ontario in 2017 with no operating history or publicly available financial information.
- The technical feasibility of the Project. The CAES technology has only been implemented a few times on a much smaller scale to date and the Bedrock project will be the first CAES facility of this scale.
- The views of landowners at and near the facilities and particularly the property rights of affected property owners.

- Impacts on the community particularly the construction period including traffic, noise and the disruption relating to accommodating up to 800 workers during the construction period.
- Environmental impacts both during the construction period and while operating.
- Decommissioning the facility after its useful life or if Bedrock Energy proves to not be viable.
- The nature and amount of the economic benefits to Bluewater including the value of any community benefit plan.
- Any other long-term effects on the community

The proposed project will be complex and disruptive, particularly during the construction period and Council will need to consider and evaluate the project with care. It should consider its approval cautiously ensuring the project will clearly be a net benefit to the community over both the short term and long term and that it is supported by affected landowners, neighbours and the communities.

Public input will be critical to Council's deliberations so that residents of Bayfield and Bluewater need to become informed in order to advise and direct Council in their decisions. Hence, additional forums, including public meetings attended by Bedrock representatives, will be required if residents are to be sufficiently informed.

On its surface, the CAES technology represents an interesting opportunity to use natural features in Bluewater to support the Ontario electrical grid. However, Bedrock's proposal to develop this opportunity leaves many unresolved questions the most important of which may be whether an "industrial" facility of this scale is appropriate in Bluewater – that is, can it be built and operated without fundamentally negatively affecting our community. The BRA is skeptical and opposed to the project in its current form without further information on the company and its viability and the concerns raised above about the project.

We encourage our members to follow this carefully and express concerns as appropriate.

### **BRA Annual Meeting**

Our annual meeting will be held August 5, 2023 upstairs at the Bayfield Community Centre. We encourage you to attend to vote for directors and get the latest update on issues affecting Bayfield.

### **Directors Needed**

We are looking for new people to join the Board of Directors. Three of our existing directors' terms are up and they will not be renewing. We need your support to fill their positions and continue the BRA.

On behalf of the board and our members, I would like to thank Ian Matthew and Bob Campbell for their contribution to the BRA Board over the last three years. I would also like to express a special thank you to Dave MacLaren who will not be continuing on the board. Dave has been a board member in various roles including president for over 20 years. Dave is a major reason the BRA continues to this day and we greatly appreciate his contributions.

### **Annual BRA Membership Fees**

The BRA annual year is from July 1 to June 30. As such, your 2023 annual dues of \$20 are due by July 1, 2023. We welcome you to pay this at the Annual Meeting or by eTransfer on our website. [www.bayfieldratepayers.ca](http://www.bayfieldratepayers.ca)

Don Schafheitlin  
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Bayfield Ratepayers Association