



**Meeting Date: March 10, 2021**

**Submitted by: James Hutson, Municipal Clerk**

**Report No: CLK-08-2021**

**Subject: Procedure for the Review of On-Farm Wedding Venue Liquor Licence Applications**

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**Recommendation:**

THAT Report CLK-08-2021 re: Procedure for the Review of On-Farm Wedding Venue Liquor Licence Applications be received;

AND THAT Council endorse the Procedure for the Review of On-Farm Wedding Venue Liquor Licence Applications attached hereto as Appendix A1;

AND FURTHER THAT Council endorse a fee in the amount of \$25.00 per submission for the review of Municipal Information Form requests and to provide the related agency correspondence.

**Purpose:**

The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of an internal procedure which has been developed for the review of liquor licence application requests related to an on-farm wedding venue.

**Background:**

Staff have prepared the Procedure for the for Review of On-Farm Wedding Venue Liquor Licence Applications in response to the recommendation contained in Report #PLA-46-2020, which relates to Official Plan Amendment (OPA 49) and Zoning By-law Amendment (ZBA 02 2020) Applications for the property located at 9661 Ivan Drive.

The recommendation in this report contained the following clause which was adopted by Council at their meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of September, 2020.

THAT Official Plan Amendment No. 49 for land legally described as Concession 7, East Part Lot 2, Municipality of Middlesex Centre, be adopted, and forwarded to the County of Middlesex for consideration of approval;

AND THAT the Zoning By-law Amendment, for land legally described as Concession 7, East Part Lot 2, Municipality of Middlesex Centre, be approved;

AND FUTHER THAT municipal staff be directed to prepare for Council's consideration a 'Farm Wedding or Events Licensing By-law' subsequent to any potential future approval of Official Plan Amendment No. 49 by the County of Middlesex.

Based on the above clause, By-law Enforcement staff undertook a review to seek out similar by-laws related to the regulation of farm wedding venues, and was not able to find reference to such a by-law in existence. Conversely, a Special Events By-law does exist in other Ontario municipalities, but was not found to be commonly utilized to regulate venues which intend to host on-farm wedding events on a regular and ongoing basis. Examples of these Special Event By-laws were found to exist with the intent to regulate various special events occurring in a community, such as a sporting, cultural, business or other type of unique activities, occurring for a limited or fixed duration (one-time, annual).

In addition to this research, and as was noted in Report #PLA-46-2020, certain operational matters can be addressed through existing regulations such as the Fireworks By-law, Open Air Burning By-law, Parking and Traffic By-law and other by-laws.

Based on this research, staff opted to prepare an internal staff procedure for the review of on-farm wedding venues which aligns with current legislative requirements in place surrounding the issuance of liquor licences by the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario.

### **Analysis:**

As part of the establishment of an on-farm wedding venue which proposes to sell liquor to the public, a licence would be required from the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario (AGCO). In order to support an application for a new liquor sales licence or an outdoor addition to an existing liquor licence, the AGCO requires that a Municipal Information Form be completed and signed by an applicant's local municipal Clerk's office and returned to the AGCO. As part of this submission, three municipal agency letters of approval (also known as "compliance letters") are required from applicants as part of their liquor licence application. These compliance letters are prepared by the following agencies: Building Department (Building Code Act, 1992), Fire Protection Officer or Fire Marshal (Fire Protection and Prevention Act, 1997), and the Public Health Department (Health Protection and Promotion Act). In addition to these compliance letters, the municipality has an opportunity to provide specific concerns with zoning or building compliance in writing to the AGCO within (30) days of receipt of a request.

Although the Municipality can object to the issuance of a liquor licence through agency letters noting non-approval, the Municipality cannot act as an approval authority to deny or grant someone a liquor licence. Based on the above process as established by the

regulatory authority, municipal staff have prepared a procedure which ensures that upon receipt of Municipal Information Form, there is a pre-defined process in place to ensure review of the submission by staff occurs and that the appropriate response letters are provided to the AGCO within the time frame.

Ultimately, by advising the AGCO that a request does not meet zoning, building, fire or health standards, the municipality does have an ability to impact the approval of a given application by the AGCO.

### **Financial Implications:**

A standard fee in the amount of \$25.00 per submission is recommended for staff to review and respond to Municipal Information Form requests and to provide the related agency correspondence. This fee is justified seeing that the Municipality is the conduit to ensure that administrative processes are in place having to liaise both internal and external to ensure conformity. The fee will change in accordance with the annual fees by-law as part of the budget process review.

### **Strategic Plan:**

This matter aligns with following strategic priorities:

- Responsive Municipal Government

The preparation of this report aligns with Middlesex Centre's prioritization of providing timely responses to requests for information or follow-up by staff which are made by members of Council or the public.

### **Attachments:**

A1 - Procedure for the Review of On-Farm Wedding Venue Liquor Licence Applications