



RECEIVED FEB 24 2020

Request to Address Council

If you would like to attend as a delegation before Council for the Township of Douro-Dummer, you must complete this form and submit it to the Municipal Office.

Please note that the deadline for delegation requests is at noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting.

A copy of any presentation being used (i.e. Power Point) is also required to be submitted at noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting.

Name of Individual(s): JIM COYLE (PRESIDENT)

*Note: Delegation(s) shall have no more than two (2) persons to speak on behalf of the delegation and 10 minutes to present. Council asks that delegations adhere to the 10 minute time limit.

Name of Organization: BPOA (BIRCHVIEW PROPERTY OWNERS ASSOCIATION)

Email: jgcoyle999@gmail.com

Phone number: 705-761-2633

Nature of delegation request: ATTEND MARCH 3 COUNCIL MEETING TO
ASK COUNCIL TO RECONSIDER DECISION NOT TO FUND
FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY
ADJACENT TO BIRCHVIEW ROAD IN THIS YEARS' BUDGET.

*Please attach a separate sheet if more room is required.

For the purposes of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, by submitting this form, I/we authorize and consent to the use by, or the disclosure, to any person or public body or publishing on the Municipal website any information that is contained in this submission and recognize that my/our name may become part of the public record.

Please submit the completed application to:

Crystal McMillan,
Clerk/Planning Coordinator
crystal@dourodummer.on.ca
Fax: 705-652-5044
Phone: 705-652-8392 Ext. 205

or

Martina Chait-Hartwig,
Deputy Clerk
martinac@dourodummer.on.ca
Fax: 705-652-5044
Phone: 705-652-8392 Ext. 210

To be completed by Municipal staff:

Meeting Date: March 3, 2020 Time: _____

***Presentation to Douro-Dummer Council (3/3/20) for
Sidewalk or Pedestrian Walkway adjacent to Birchview Road***

My name is Jim Coyle and my wife and I have owned property on Bryson Road since 1999. I am currently President of the Birchview Property Owners Association (BPOA) and in that role it is my responsibility to deal with the concerns of our members. We have approximately 85 members at the present time. The number 1 issue is and has been for some time Road Safety and there is unprecedented concern that if we do not do something soon, we will have a human fatality on the road. We all use Birchview Road as our sidewalk.

Our primary area of jurisdiction is the 8km stretch on Birchview Road from Fiddlers Lane to the bottom of the hill just past Salmon Bay Road including the side roads to the lake (Salmon Bay Rd, Dunford/Bryson Rd, Tedford Lane, Birchcliffe Rd, and Fiddlers Lane). There are approximately 220 property owners in this area which equates to approximately 27 property owners for every kilometer of Birchview Road in our area of jurisdiction which is a fairly high level of residential density. The 220 property owners in our area of jurisdiction contribute approximately \$1,000,000 to the annual tax revenue brought into the Township which is close to 25% of the total annual tax revenue raised in the Township.

We approached council in September 2018 with this issue and council agreed we needed to do something. They recommended a working committee of Township staff and Birchview Road property owners be formed to study the feasibility of a pedestrian walkway adjacent to Birchview Road. Bruce Johnson, the chair of our working committee to plan the scope of the feasibility study with Township staff, posed a question to the 120 or so people at this past summers

BPOA annual flotilla/BBQ social; “How many of you folks have experienced a dangerous situation with a pedestrian on Birchview Road?” Almost everyone raised their hands. An RFP was sent out this past fall and a recommended consultant was selected. The cost was to be between \$20,000 to a maximum of \$25,000. The study was more encompassing than just the feasibility of a pedestrian walkway. It was to look at all aspects of road safety for cyclists, vehicles and pedestrians.

Two Council meetings ago, Council was doing their budget deliberations and decided that they would not fund this feasibility study in the 2020/2021 budget year. The BPOA executive was to say the least “Stunned and Shocked”. We do understand and appreciate the difficulties for Council in establishing priorities on the allocation of limited resources as part of their annual business planning cycle which includes the budget. I am here tonight to ask you to reconsider your decision and put this feasibility study back into the business plans for the 2020/2021 fiscal year.

I read in the newspaper that Council received a letter from Connie Baker suggesting Council not fund the study. Sam Baker has been on Birchview Road for probably 70 years and knows the road better than anyone. I personally spoke to Sam and Connie this past summer trying to solicit Sam to join the working committee with the Township. Both Connie and Sam agreed that a pedestrian walkway would definitely make it safer for pedestrians. To date there have not been any accidents involving pedestrians but over the recent past with increased road use, we have increased the possibility of such an accident. Sam agreed to act as advisor to the working committee if and when needed. They did say that they could not support anything that would raise their taxes and I can tell you that they are not alone with their thoughts. I was hoping that Sam could join me this evening and share his wisdom with you but he and Connie are enjoying some of the warmer climate in

Destin, Florida. Wendy and I have delayed our return to Sarasota, Florida so that I could be here with you this evening to ask you to reconsider your decision on funding the feasibility study.

I, for one, would feel partly to blame if I did not push this envelope to get a sidewalk or pedestrian walkway built alongside Birchview Road to protect our residents from being hit by a vehicle or a cyclist. I would think you as elected officials would also feel partly to blame if you did nothing when we all know that the circumstances are ripe for an accident to happen. I often wake up in the middle of the night worried that a vehicle had hit a pedestrian on Birchview Road and we had lost a life. Would I personally be liable or our BPOA executive be liable in some way because our executive knew of the problem and did nothing about it? Would the Township be liable because they own the road and knew of the problem and chose not to move forward with the feasibility study?

Times have changed since my wife and I moved to Birchview Road in beautiful Douro-Dummer Township in 1999. Properties have been sold, buildings demolished and new homes have been built. Construction trucks are prevalent on the road. McCrackens Landing, Wildfire Golf Club, and Stoney Lake Market, to name a few, have all been developed and are destinations for vehicular traffic using Birchview Road. Birchview Road is now marketed as a cycling destination and we have recently witnessed a significant increase in cycling traffic on the road travelling at good speeds. Camp Kawartha is expanding and there are more and more parents delivering kids to camp in their vehicles. Michaels Way is getting more use. We have school buses and garbage trucks using the road regularly.

Birchview Road is approximately 20' wide with no lane markings. There are no shoulders to walk on. Ditches and culverts are sparse and there is one creek that crosses the road and a large culvert to accommodate

it. The Township has a 66' road allowance some of which could possibly be used for a sidewalk or pedestrian trail. There are many blind corners and hills so vehicles cannot see what pedestrian traffic they may confront.

Excessive speed is the norm on Birchview Road. We can reference the speed statistics that were collected in recent years from the digital speed signs that were placed on the road.

Pedestrian traffic on Birchview Road has increased significantly over the years. It is our sidewalk. It is generally used from May 24 weekend to Thanksgiving weekend. We have a number of young families vacationing here on Birchview Road as well as a number of families who have grandchildren who also vacation on Birchview Road. It is not uncommon to see kids in strollers, kids on tricycles, kids and adults on bicycles, adults walking dogs, walkers and joggers using Birchview Road as their pedestrian walkway to name a few.

I have a financial background and do appreciate the difficulties you have in making tough choices in allocating the resources you have for the 2020/2021 fiscal year. I would like to think that the opportunity to save a human life would be top of mind. I retired recently from our family business which had 300 to 400 employees in 8 manufacturing facilities in southern Ontario and one facility in upper New York state doing several hundred million dollars in annual sales. One of the things I enjoyed most in my role as Chief Financial Officer was meeting with our key management personnel at business planning time and working through the Key Result Plans with those individuals. One of the items that got significant weighting was the plans to convert fixed costs to variable costs. The total cost does not change but the percentage fixed to variable did. By having a higher component of variable cost, we had more flexibility in budget deliberations and we also had the comfort

that we could respond to significant changes in market conditions and minimize the effects on our employees.

The Township, I am sure, have similar plans in place. There are certainly some frightening head winds that are on the horizon that need to be considered. There are some schools that suggest our real estate is grossly overvalued and we are overdue for a correction. We only need to look south of the border and see what happened in late 2007 when real estate values dropped 25% to 40% across the USA. If this were to happen in Douro-Dummer, the Township's annual tax revenue would shrink by 25% to 40%. It would be nice if the Township had up to 40% of their annual cost as variable costs so that they could minimize the effects on their ratepayers and employees. We also have the notion discussed that a portion of the property tax revenue associated with properties adjacent to the Trent Severn Waterway should be used to maintain the dams and locks that keep the lakes as lakes. This would also have a significant effect on the revenues in Douro-Dummer Township.

In conclusion, we would like the Township to consider eliminating \$25,000 in variable costs associated with maintaining Birchview Road in the 2020/2021 fiscal year so that we can fund the proposed study in the 2020/2021 budget. We can put up with potholes in the road for one year. We can encourage property owners to cut the grass in front of their properties that are adjacent to Birchview Road so the Township does not have to send out their grass cutting equipment to cut the grass growing on the shoulders of the road. I am sure that where there is a will there is a way to get this \$25,000 back into the 2020/2021 budget plans for Douro-Dummer.

Thank you for listening to my presentation and hopefully I have convinced you to reconsider your previous decision and decide to fund the feasibility study in the 2020/2021 budget year.

