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Puslinch has concerns with proposed Townline Road takeover

by Mike Robinson

ABERFOYLE - Both residents and councillors in Puslinch are worried about the proposed acquisition of a portion of Townline Road by the City of Cambridge.

Some of that concern lies in the proposed widening of the road allowance, which could result in Puslinch property owners losing 10 feet of frontage on their properties.

Puslinch councillors recently received correspondence from Cambridge regarding earlier discussions on the city's proposed acquisition of Townline Road between Wellington Road 34 and Roszell/Black Bridge Road.

The letter stated, "As the Cambridge Transportation and Public Works Department proceeds with the Black Bridge Road Environmental Assessment, it has been determined that there is merit in all of the lands in the study area being held in the ownership of Cambridge."

Some conditions of the agreement would include the transfer of the land for \$1 and the city would assume responsibility for all future maintenance and operation costs associated with the subject road segment.

The correspondence indicated the most easterly one-foot of road would remain in ownership of Puslinch to provide for clarity as to jurisdiction for real estate taxation, and to enable Puslinch to continue involvement with planning applications, and driveway entrance permits involving township properties.

The issue came up for discussion among Puslinch councillors on May 20.

Councillor Matthew Bulmer said there are a number of times when a person thinks about where they were when a significant event happened - such as John F. Kennedy being shot.

Bulmer said he was on council discussing the south end of Townline Road and defending property rights - when airplanes hit the twin towers in New York in 2001.

"We stood our ground back then
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Spring rural romp - Families had the opportunity to learn about local food and experience farm life in Mapleton, Minto and Wellington North as part of TasteReal's 2015 Spring Rural Romp on May 30. Katie Gad from Guelph holds a chick for Ellie Campbell and Maeva Campbell at Mapleton's Organic Dairy. **Additional photo on page 28.** *photo by Olivia Rutt*

Councillors fed up with inflated costs

by Patrick Raftis

GUELPH - Some Wellington County councillors want to see changes to the province's Conservation Authorities Act after approving a \$700,000 tender for the replacement of a culvert on Wellington Road 22 in Erin.

At the May 28 meeting, council approved a roads committee recommendation to award the tender to replace the culvert, located 200 metres east of Wellington Road 23, to SLR Contracting Group of Windsor for \$496,000. Professional fees of \$143,000 plus HST, county labour and materials costs, and a \$46,000 contingency reserve boost the total project cost to \$710,000.

Erin Mayor Alan Alls said much of the project cost is connected to engineering and environmental requirements.

"The contract price is \$500,000 - I'm speaking in round numbers - and the total project cost is \$710,000. Much of that is coming from the conservation authority," Alls stated.

"We've got to get a grip on this," he said, "because eventually we're going to be spending more time talking about projects than doing projects."

Noting several projects in Erin involve "similar situations," Alls said bridge projects "are costing the taxpayer way too much money ... simply because the fish might be upset for a day or two while we do it."

Guelph-Eramosa Mayor Chris White pointed out the province has committed to reviewing the Conservation Authorities Act, which will provide an opportunity for municipalities to have input.

"I think it's important they hear from as many municipal folk as they can," said White, who agreed with Alls that project costs are out of control.

"With that \$700,000 culvert, the culvert portion is probably \$28,000 and the rest is paperwork."

Warden George Bridge said, "These projects now have so many layers of planning involved. I'm glad to hear it's coming up for review."

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'Futuristic, fantastic' dairy facility opens

by Olivia Rutt

ELORA - A project 10 years in the making has finally come to fruition.

With the May 28 grand opening of the \$25-million Livestock Research and Innovation Centre - Elora Dairy Facility, this "super barn" will thrust the dairy industry into a new era.

The centre is a collaboration between the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA); the Agricultural Research Institute of Ontario (ARIO); the University of Guelph; and the Dairy Farmers of Ontario.

The Ontario government contributed \$20 million toward the facility, the federal government provided \$3 million, the Dairy Farmers of Ontario

\$1 million, and the rest came from individual donors.

"It's an exciting day for agriculture in Wellington County," said Wellington-Halton Hills MPP Ted Arnott.

"For with this new dairy facility, where research will lead to discovery, where that discovery will lead to innovation, and where that innovation will lead to success in the market place, Wellington County is poised to become the centre of the dairy industry in Ontario and the promise of its future."

Arnott was among many dignitaries present for the official opening of the facility, including Dr. Franco Vaccarino, president of the University of Guelph; Stewart Cressman, chair of

the ARIO; Ralph Dietrich, chair of the Dairy Farmers of Ontario; Rich Moccia, associate vice president and research professor at the University of Guelph; and Ontario agriculture minister Jeff Leal.

"This centre is an excellent example of how we've worked together to ensure Ontario's livestock sector remains a leader in innovation and competitiveness around the world," said Leal. "The provincial government is extremely proud to contribute \$20 million to ARIO towards this new facility."

The idea began a decade ago after a visit from Animal Care Society recommended upgrades to the existing
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Wellington County connects with Netherlands through business delegation

by Patrick Raftis

ABOYNE - Local officials say some great connections were made between Wellington County and the Netherlands during a visit from a delegation of Dutch business representatives to the area last week.

The county provided a reception and tour of local sites of agricultural and historical interest to delegates from 38 Dutch businesses on May 27.

The delegates were part of a group of 46 businesspersons visiting as part of the state visit to Canada of Dutch King Willem-Alexander and Queen Maxima from May 26 to 30.

The county worked with the City of Guelph and University of Guelph to host the delegation, providing a full day tour of university facilities, Mapleton's Organic Dairy and a visit to the Wellington County Museum and Archives, where the visitors enjoyed a reception and dinner after touring the

national historic site.

The visitors, along with county representatives, then attended a Feeding the Cities conference on May 28 and 29, including business match-making sessions, where Wellington companies were matched with Dutch company representatives for face-to-face sessions.

Wellington County economic development officer Jana Reichert noted the exchange was very timely, as the county's recently-completed investment strategy identified the Netherlands as "a natural economic partner."

"The Netherlands was looking at us as saying these guys have a lot of land and they have a lot of innovative processes and were looking at them and saying we could learn a lot in terms of their sustainable practices and in terms of their experience feeding the urban consumer," she stated.

"So it was really current and it was

really topical and relevant."

Reichert feels some good direct connections were made during the "open match-making" sessions on Friday.

For example, she noted one Dutch ingredient supplier on the tour specialized in organic mushrooms.

"Basically they were looking for any kind of processors in our area," said Reichert.

"So we connected them with canning businesses with ... pizza businesses ... the (Dutch) business wanted to get as many face-to-face meetings as possible, so that's what we were trying to do. That's where the value really comes in, is understanding what your business base is and what they really do."

Warden George Bridge said he was especially pleased with the connections made at the government level.

"The big thing we got out of it, that

I was excited about, was the connections to the Dutch government," said Bridge, noting Dutch agriculture minister, ambassador and staff from the Netherlands' Washington embassy were among the contacts made.

"Those are big connections," Bridge said.

Mapleton Mayor Neil Driscoll, who accompanied the group on the tour through Wellington County, said the Dutch visitors were a "really fun" group that was especially impressed to learn about the strong Dutch influence in the region.

"We already have a historical connection with them ... We have a natural connection and a lot of our communities have a strong foundation of Dutch businesses," said Reichert.

During the conference, delegates publicly stated they were pleased with the opportunity to get outside the city and get a true sense of the local areas.

Showcase

"They were so glad that Wellington County hosted them," noted Reichert.

"It made sense. We're good hosts and we've got great local food and we want to showcase what our lands look like ...

"We can do that in a meeting boardroom in Toronto, but why not come out and see what we do."

With trade between Canada and Europe expected to increase in the coming years, Reichert said opportunities for direct connections such as the Dutch visit will become increasingly important.

"There are future opportunities; the world has shrunk significantly," she said.

"The formalized trade agreement between Europe and Canada means this is going to be even more important and those relationships are crucial."

See related photo on page 24.