

Mayoral candidates talk delay in Caledon's official plan adoption

Current Councillors Groves, Innis both think delay is a good thing.

By Zachary Roman

The Town of Caledon is not rushing to adopt its new official plan.

The idea to delay the plan's adoption was discussed at Town Council's June 8 planning and development committee meeting.

"We acted on the community feedback we received of Caledon creating a plan with its own identity. This move to 2023 will allow Caledon to direct its Official Plan to ensure a 'Made in Caledon' plan is adopted," said Mayor Allan Thompson in a media release following the meeting. "With the Region of Peel's 2051 Official Plan yet to be approved by the Province, this move will enable Caledon to gather more information, advocate and direct our future Official Plan."

A planning and development meeting was held on June 21, where the Town's Director of Planning services provided an update on the official plan, titled "Future Caledon." Specifically, the update focused on growth in Caledon.

At Council's upcoming June 28 meeting, a final decision on delaying the official plan is set to be made.

The Citizen spoke with current Caledon councillors, and mayoral candidates, Annette Groves and Jennifer Innis about their thoughts on the delay "considering if the new official plan was adopted in 2023, a new Mayor and Council will be in office.

Innis said the plan that Caledon is putting forward doesn't coincide with the official plan the Region of Peel is putting forward.

She said Caledon should be planning Caledon, not Brampton and Mississauga planning Caledon.

"They're our partners, and they're our infrastructure partners, but they shouldn't be determining how Caledon grows. So, I think that taking a step back and making sure that we have a made in Caledon solution is essential for our community. And we need time to do that," said Innis.

Groves said the Region of Peel did a good job with its official plan and that Caledon had time to comment and work with the Region. She said one of the reasons the Town is delaying its official plan is that Caledon is asking for more urban boundary land than the Region has allocated it.

"Our own constituents asked us to delay approving the urban boundary expansion. We had delegations, hundreds of letters to us from residents, asking us to delay approving the boundary expansion as a Region," said Groves. "I am very happy that we are delaying (the official plan) because I do think that there's still a lot of work to do. What I don't think we should be doing is adding more (urban lands)... than what the Region has already approved."

Innis said the Town needs to ensure it secures enough industrial-commercial lands so the Town can have a stable tax base and be financially viable in the future. She also said the Region of Peel's official plan did not respect the province's policymaking.

"They don't acknowledge the 413; the 413 is coming. So, we'd better plan for it. We'd better be at the table? we're building the communities around (the 413) so you better be at the table and have a plan for it, not put your hands up and pretend like it doesn't exist," said Innis.

"Whether you support it or you don't support it, you have to be at the table planning for it."

Innis also said the Region of Peel did not respect the provincially significant employment zones on the eastern side of Caledon.

Groves said she knows Caledon will grow, but that a big concern of hers is how that growth is going to be paid for.

She said she supports the delay in the official plan's adoption and wants to see more planning as it relates to fighting climate change, and building infrastructure and community.

She doesn't want to see Caledon end up looking ?just like another urban city.?