

May 31 2021

Dear Planner Spencer, Mayor Robinson and Members of Council,

I am writing as a concerned resident to ask that Dark Sky protection be included in the West Grey OP update.

Although I am aware that council has been approached in the past to develop a bylaw and declined I am hoping that they will keep an open mind and reconsider given the changed circumstances and continued importance of this issue.

My understanding is that when the Dark Sky Advisory committee first delegated to council on June 25/19 and explained why protecting our dark skies was important they were discouraged from going any further then revising the existing Dark Sky Proclamation.

In July of 2019 council unanimously declared a Climate Change emergency and yet following that declaration at the C.O.W meeting on Nov 26/19 the committee were told there was no change to councils position on Dark Sky protection, an important factor in maintaining ecosystem resiliency, and it suggested they focus their efforts on educating the public.

With respect the time has come for action while we still have a Dark Sky to protect. New housing developments and the proliferation of lit/electronic signage are two examples of where regulation can ensure that potential harm to the environment is mitigated . The great thing about Dark Sky measures is they can be enforced in a way that still allows for these projects to be realized. It is a rare example of being able to have it both ways. The community still gets the level of light necessary but without excessive impact on our environment.

In addition moving from a Dark Sky Proclamation to a Policy that will support a Bylaw provides a way for council to help meet the municipalities obligation to conform to the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement 2020.

Specifically by increasing ecosystem resiliency (Planning Act Part III (14) , Provincial Policy Statement 1.1.1 (h), 1.7.1 (k)) and energy conservation (Provincial Policy Statement 1.1.3.2(c)) and both (Provincial Policy Statement 1.8.1(f)) while achieving growth in a responsible manner.

I hope and trust that I have made the case for reconsideration and urge council to initiate a renewed dialogue that leads to real progress in protecting our communities Dark Sky resource.

Kind Regards,
Chris Palmer
former Bentinck Twp
West Grey, ON