

Committee: Combined Committee of the Whole – Administration and Finance - Public Works, Environmental Services and Facilities

Date: February 13, 2023

Department: Building

Topic: Amendments to Building Permit Fee Schedule

Purpose: To review a report and recommend proceeding with the amendments to the building permit fee schedule.

Background:

Small Buildings

In April of 2022 a Ministers Order amended the minimum area of a building not requiring a building permit. The Ontario Building Code was not amended to reflect this. The minimum area for a building went from 10 square meters to 15 square meters. This means that all accessory buildings for storage purposes such as sheds, gazebos, greenhouses etc. are exempt from requiring a demolition permit or building permit, as long as they do not exceed 15 square meters (161 sq. ft.), do not contain plumbing and are no higher than one story and not attached to any other structure.

Many of the small buildings being constructed or installed on a property in this municipality fall within the 15 square meter in area, are generally rural in nature and as a result will not be reviewed to ensure that the location of the building meets certain setbacks required in both the building code and the municipal zoning by law. For example:

- All structures must have a distance separation prescribed in the building code from a septic tank and leaching bed.
- Small buildings without foundations must be tied to the ground with ground anchors at each corner.
- Accessory buildings must be 2 meters from a residence on the same property and 1 meter to a side or rear lot line in an urban area and 3 meters in all other areas.
- Structures along a waterway may require a permit from the Conservation Authority.

Without a building permit or zoning certificate these concerns cannot be easily enforced.

Amendments to Fee Schedule

The fee schedule should be amended to reflect a more reasonable fee value for industrial, commercial and institutional building permits. For example, for the last Quarterly report there were permits issued for construction valued at \$3,173,000.00 with building permit revenues of \$2,330.00. In many instances building inspections can be more than double that of a residential dwelling.

Staff is proposing that the building permit fee for Industrial, Commercial and Institutional building permits be increased from \$0.40 to \$0.80 a square foot.

Further staff are recommending that the Base fee be increased from \$95.00 to \$115.00 to better reflect the cost of a plan review. The Base Fee is non refundable if a permit is canceled before it is issued and deducted from the overall building permit fee when issued. Also, it is proposed that the cost per square foot of construction be increased from \$1.30 to \$1.35 per square foot for the main floor including a foundation and from \$0.80 to \$0.90 for each additional floor. Building permit fees for Accessory Buildings and attached garages would increase from \$0.40 to \$0.45 per square foot. The minimum Building Permit fee would be \$115.00 increased from \$95.00.

Fence Permit

In May of 2022, Council adopted a new Fence bylaw for residential fences. There are a few restrictions within the fence bylaw that should be addressed prior to erecting a residential fence such as the following;

- Residential fences must be a distance of 18" from a sidewalk or road allowance.
- A resident may require a survey by an Ontario Land Surveyor to confirm their lot lines.
- Site lines regulated by the zoning bylaw must be observed on corner lots.

A consultation with the property owner before issuing a fence permit will help to alleviate future lot line disputes regarding the location of a residential fence. A permit fee of \$115.00 is suggested.

Policy Implications: A public meeting under the Building Code Act is required prior to adopting the proposed amendments to the building permit fee schedule. The new building permit fee schedule would be proposed to take effect April 1, 2023.

Financial Considerations: If the proposed Building Permit Fee schedule is adopted it will provide additional revenue for the building department and provide a mechanism to ensure compliance with the building code and zoning by law.

Recommendation: That the Committee recommends that Council direct staff to hold a public meeting under the Building Code Act to review the proposed amendments to the Building Permit Fee Schedule and prepare a bylaw following the public meeting.



Chief Building Official



CAO