

August 22, 2011

Hon Rick Bartolucci, MPP
Minister of Municipal Affairs
Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto ON M5G 2E5

Dear Hon Minister Bartolucci:

RE: SOUTH BRUCE PENINSULA AMO DELEGATION WITH PARLIAMENTARY ASSISTANT LOU RINALDI, MPP (SEPTIC RE-INSPECTIONS AS THEY RELATE TO THE ONTARIO BUILDING CODE ACT)

In 1999, the Town of South Bruce Peninsula was created by the amalgamation of the Township of Amabel, the Township of Albemarle, the Town of Wiarton and the Village of Hepworth.

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula is a mixture of rural and urban. Our Town economy thrives on tourism but is also mixed generously with industrial and commercial uses. In accordance with 2006 census data, the population of the Town of South Bruce Peninsula is 8415 permanent residents. It should be noted that the Town has a significant seasonal influx of tourists and seasonal residents. At any given time during the summer months, the population can swell to well over 25,000. The Town is proud to have Sauble Beach, a Blue Flag beach, contained within our boundaries.

At the time of amalgamation, the Town gained ownership of many years of research and study with regard to septic systems and the potential for municipally owned and managed sewage collection systems. Areas of our Town (especially in Sauble Beach) were experiencing difficulties managing their septic waste and maintaining healthy and potable water. At that time, the local Public Health Unit enforced Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code.

Forward movement was made by the Town to implement a municipal sewer system. In the meantime, the Town of South Bruce Peninsula entered into a contract with the Public Health Unit to initiate a septic re-inspection program. From 2004 until 2007, the Public Health Unit performed re-inspections of systems in areas of our Town (Mallory Beach, Chesley Lake and Sauble Beach). Inspection area mapping is attached for your information. In 2008, the Town Building Department took over enforcing Part 8 of the Ontario Building Code.

The newly elected Council are very eager to provide solutions for residents with regard to septic and sewage management. During public meetings to discuss moving forward

with a Wastewater Treatment Plant concerns were addressed in regard to existing septic systems. Council wish to explore all options to correct existing problems. The public also voiced their concern on whether or not there is a scientific need for municipal sewers. Part of this investigation is the reinstatement of the septic re-inspection program. Council has concerns with the number of aging septic systems; some in excess of 30 years old. The majority of these older systems are in low lying areas close to Sauble Beach and Colpoy's Bay. Sauble Beach has a high water table with most homes having sand point wells or shallow drilled wells. They also have a history of positive E. coli testing.

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula has chosen to lobby the Ministry of Municipal Affairs in an effort to obtain information and timelines for changes to the Ontario Building Code. The Town is aware of the fact that a new Code is anticipated for release but also that the release has been deferred.

In 2011, the Town discussed the implementation of a discretionary on-site septic re-inspection program. The Building Code was at the stage of being re-written and we were hoping that there would be a standard or regulation to be enforced throughout the Province. Without the release of the new Code, Council chose to delay the re-inspection program. They felt that it would have been inappropriate to start the re-inspection program without specific knowledge of the new Code requirements. Council did not want to place undue financial hardships or inconveniences on residents.

The Council for the Town of South Bruce Peninsula respectfully asks of the Ministry to provide any information available with regard to an anticipated release date for the updated Ontario Building Code. Knowledge of a release date would provide much needed direction for Council as they proceed into 2012 budget deliberations. Council will need to institute an education program in conjunction with the re-inspection program and lead time is crucial to the success of the program. Council would also respectfully ask if the Ministry is aware of the anticipated requirements for discretionary inspections and if there will be standard guidelines which will be provided to municipalities to ensure success. The Town also respectfully asks for information with regard to grants or funding programs for septic re-inspection programs and the management of human waste.

The Town of South Bruce Peninsula is dedicated to the health and welfare of our residents. We want to be able to promote our community as a place with a thriving economy and excellent, clean water free from the contamination of septic waste.

We thank you for the opportunity to present our position and look forward to your response.

Yours very truly,

John D. Close
Mayor