

## Denise Holmes

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**From:** Jennifer Luxton [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Friday, January 21, 2022 6:36 PM  
**To:** Denise Holmes; Dennis Jamieson; [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** On farm business/by-law amendment

Jan 21, 2022

Melancthon Township Council & All Concerned:

First let me emphasize that I echo the comments and concerns already submitted to council by Mr. David Thwaites and Mr. Harvey Lyon. I have read and dissected the issues addressed and could not agree more or have said better what has been suggested in their letters. Considerable time should be spent by the council contemplating what these men have pointed out.

I work away from my property and often go before the neighboring businesses are up and going. Today I had the day off, when leaving to go to an appointment I was reminded to write this letter to the council. Stepping outside my door I was instantly breathing paint fumes coming from the next farm over, a grandfathered "on farm business".

The last time issues were raised about "on farm businesses" we, the residents of Melancthon Township, addressed our concerns. A lot of time and MONEY was spent trying to comply with previous by-laws and to reasonably conform and adjust to the so called advancements in our community by implementing a new by-law. Understanding that the then new by-law would protect our agricultural nature and yet allow for some infrastructure in the community, I felt we had all come to an acceptable agreement. The industries that had been passed by council and built previous to the by-law of 2012 are still in operation and continue to impede on what was once an agricultural neighborhood. I had to resign myself to the fact that nothing would be done to lessen the impact by the grandfathered businesses surrounding my property, now I find myself faced with the possibility of yet more industry being added to the neighboring "farms". Mr. Lyon referred to our farm in his letter to council and I applaud his attempt to protect it as it has been FARMED by my family for over 70 years. Clustering is what we were trying to avoid and now we are going to open the door to it??? Agricultural land has become untouchable to the next generation of family members, part in parcel to the fact that buyers with intent to construct industrial factories have tremendously inflated the price of FARM land in Melancthon and our nearby townships. Amending the by-law already in place will again cost an enormous amount of money to the townships tax payers and yet only benefit a few. There would be significantly more trucks on our roads and a negative impact to the environment we so desperately want protected. The monies previously spent will have been wasted and any good faith the residents have in council to protect the nature of our community will have been lost.

The previously written by-law has been exactly that, written, not governed or followed in its entirety. Several of, if not all, "on farm businesses" are the primary, not secondary, use and primary income to the land owners. Hours of operation are tested constantly, employee numbers exceed that of the by-law, outside storage is a guarantee, the list goes on and on. Lessening restrictions on these businesses will not be in the best interest to the rest of us that wish to continue to reside in Melancthon. I am disappointed that the council does not wish to preserve our agricultural land. There are industrial parks for big business for a reason. Farms are not disposable and are becoming fewer and farther between without crowding them with commercial (that's what they are) businesses.

Our roads have taken a huge toll since the introduction of big business in Melancthon and they were not built to sustain the added truck traffic already running them. The beautiful paved roads that we were proud to have are being converted back to gravel (seems the opposite of progress to me) and that is undeniably because of the increased heavy

truck traffic. Half load restrictions are not governed often and that should be a simple random request for weigh bills from the factories to ensure they are complying to keep our roads in shape, shouldn't it? How is adding more businesses going to help this matter? Just gravel them all? An argument for another meeting...

I am also interested in knowing if there is any conflict of interest with the council making these decisions for the rest of us? Are any looking at selling their own property in the future to the community buying the farmland with intent to start up business, or are any selling and profiting from the sale of the lands by other means such as real estate sales? Has this question been asked and addressed by the council as a whole?

To say the least I am not interested in being surrounded by more big business, driving on gravel roads or having to continue to revisit the issue of amending by-laws put in place to protect our rural Melancthon Township.

Thanks in advance for your consideration of my concerns and those like minded.

Jennifer Jamieson Luxton

P.S. The fact that the meeting minutes are no longer available on the website is also a huge disservice to those of us that work full time and can not leave to make a meeting. Who benefits from that?

## Denise Holmes

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**From:** Dennis Jamieson [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Sunday, January 23, 2022 10:30 PM  
**To:** Denise Holmes  
**Subject:** On-farm diversified uses By-law

I submit this letter of concern to be presented at the Jan 25 council meeting. Understand this to be my opinion based on what knowledge and understanding I have of the situation.

To Mayor White and Council.

When the Corporation that initiates and directs the on-farm industries moved into Melancthon Township it seems the Administration of the time chose to believe they were dealing with a small number of farmers wanting to build machine shops on their farms. Consequently it appears they didn't follow the direction of the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) stating that "general purposes commercial and industrial uses should be located outside of prime agricultural areas". "They should direct growth and development that is not imperative in prime agricultural areas to settlement areas (hamlets, villages, towns) near the active agricultural areas". I assume the council at the time was happy to have the extra tax revenue so it appears little due diligence was exercised. The PPS also states that "municipalities should require evidence demonstrating that inputs for these businesses are primarily produced in the area or customers are primarily farm operators in the area". These elements were not attended to and soon it became too late as manufacturing plants were established.

The 2012 council eventually put forward some policies. However, it was soon evident that the businesses in this corporation had little intention of complying with several of the rules of the policies such as not being a nuisance to neighbouring properties concerning such items as noise and fumes. Enforcement of the policies being virtually absent, the corporation has taken the next step toward a bigger goal of increasing the hours of operation and increasing the density of factories by reducing the distance between such businesses by more than half. This is a typical pattern of big corporations to deregulate and expand and you can expect more efforts to change policies in the future. To ignore the obvious and plead ignorance when the 'unexpected results' arrive is simply criminal malfeasance.

I understand that the Municipality has the legal right to set policy. I also understand that the corporation is large and holds much more power than a handful of citizens so I expect they will get their requested changes approved. Just know that there are people who are not in agreement.

A statement in the power point reads, "not aware of any complaints"

REALLY? REALLY!

Thank you for your attention to my opinions.

Sincerely, D. Dennis Jamieson

[REDACTED] 4th line NE  
[REDACTED]

At this time I request notification of the results of the policy review.

Please respond by replying at this email address or

To: Mayor White and Council Members of Melancthon Township

Re: Melancthon Draft BYLAW ON-FARM DIVERSIFIED USES

January 21, 2022

I must admit that I am a little perplexed with the On-Farm Diversified Uses Draft Amendment.

As the shops began popping up one by one on farm land through out the township some 10-15 years ago, I always wondered why these large shops were allowed to be located on agricultural land.

After review of the Zoning Bylaw Amendment 33-2017 and the On-Farm Diversified Uses Draft Amendment I now understand why.

I don't believe this Draft bylaw as written will serve the township of Melancthon well and could easily be called "On Hobby Farm Diversified Uses " with the relaxed provisions/regulations notably;

The deletion of Section 3 (a)(ix) Supplemental sources of on-farm income that support and sustain on-farm agricultural operations and production. In my opinion this sentence enforces the requirement that On-Farm Diversified Use is secondary and subordinate to the active and principle agricultural use occurring on a property and should remain part of the Bylaw.

Section 3 (b)(v) The minimum lot area shall be 20.23 hectares with at least 70% of the land area in an active state of agricultural use. In my opinion this minimum lot area combined with the new 70% agriculture requirement further undermine the requirement that On-Farm Diversified Use is secondary and subordinate to the active and principle agricultural use occurring on a property. On my first read the 70% looked reasonable, however, once I started calculating what this represents in land area this represents a further loss of agricultural land.

20.23 hectares = 50 acres

70% of 20.23 hectares = 14.16 hectares or 35 acres of land in an active state of agricultural use.

That leaves 6.07 hectares or 15 acres for a dwelling, a Diversified Use structure and the agriculture buildings regardless of the 0.4 hectare or 1 acre requirement in Section 3 (b)(vii). This loss of agricultural land is worsened when the 70% requirement is applied to 40 hectares or 100 acres.

I know of only one crop where one could make a living off of 35 acres of land. That crop is illegal unless the proper licensing is obtained.

One only needs to travel a short distance to wonder if even this minimum requirement is being adhered to. A four-stall horse barn with a large shop next to it surely doesn't qualify as an active and principle agricultural use occurring on a property. It appears the envelope is being pushed and, in some cases, completely ignored.

A review of the Provincial Policy Statement, OMAFRA Policy 851, the Dufferin County Official Plan and the Melancthon Official Plan as well as the Township of Melancthon Strategic Plan yielded no evidence of what clearly defines a farm property in terms of acreage. These Statements and Plans, however, are consistent on how Prime Agricultural areas are to be used and protected.

#### **Provincial Policy Statement**

**2.3.1 Agriculture** Prime Agricultural areas shall be protected for long-term use for agriculture.

**2.3.3.2 Permitted Uses** In prime agricultural areas, all types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards.

#### **Dufferin County Official Plan**

**4.2 Agricultural Areas** Lands within the Agricultural Area designation consists primarily of prime agricultural lands and are designated on Schedule C. Prime agricultural areas will be designated in local municipal official plans in accordance with Provincial guidelines. This Plan requires that these lands will be protected for agriculture uses unless appropriate justification is provided for alternative uses.

**4.2.1 (c) Objectives** Protect the County's prime agricultural area from fragmentation, development and land uses unrelated to agriculture.

**4.2.2 (e) Permitted Uses** On-Farm Diversified Uses are secondary to the principal agricultural use on the property, and are limited in area. Proposed On-Farm Diversified Uses will be compatible with, and will not hinder, surrounding agricultural operations. The local municipal official plan will establish land use policies and provisions related to On-Farm Diversified Uses.

#### **Township of Melancthon Official Plan**

**5.2 (a) Agriculture** The principal planning objective of the Agricultural designation is to protect prime agricultural areas for long term use of agriculture.

**5.2.1 (a) Permitted uses** Agricultural uses, agriculture-related uses, and on-farm diversified uses are permitted in the Agricultural designation. Agricultural uses include all agricultural operations that are determined to employ normal farm practices as defined herein using the terminology of the Farming and Food Production Act.

**5.2.2 (a) Planning and Development Policies** All types, sizes and intensities of agricultural uses and normal farm practices, including those practices consistent with the Nutrient Management Act and related regulations, shall be promoted and protected in accordance with provincial standards, the policies of this plan and the provisions of the implementing zoning by-law.

Section 3 (b) (x) The minimum separation distance between On-Farm diversified uses shall be 500 meters. In my opinion reducing this separation to 200 meters will only further undermine the requirement that On-Farm Diversified Use is secondary and subordinate to the active and principle agricultural use occurring on a property. With the large number of 20.23 hectare or 50 acre properties in Melancthon we could potentially have a 418.06 meter or 5000sq.ft. shop on each of these properties. This would turn these properties in rural industrial parks.

As I wrote earlier, I don't believe this Draft bylaw as written will serve the township of Melancthon well and could easily be called "On Hobby Farm Diversified Uses "with the relaxed requirements/regulations.

Lastly, the Draft Bylaw does not consider the implications these changes could have on the township infrastructure, namely, the roads. In my opinion, adding more heavy truck traffic to the local road network would only add to the maintenance requirements of the township and the safety issues already experienced by the township residents

It is already common to see 6 axle steel transport trailers on the 5th Line and 4th Line NE as they deliver steel to the shops in Melancthon and continue on to the shops in Grey Highlands further north. Heavy truck traffic has been discussed in Council and the Roads Sub Committee, by committee and concerned public members prior to and since the adoption of the Road Management Plan. Potential road upgrading and truck routes should be a consideration when approving an On-Farm Diversified Use.

**Respectfully Submitted**

**Bill Neilson  
Melancthon ON**