June 18, 2021

Township of Perth East

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Dear Council members and staff,

The Perth County Federation of Agriculture (PCFA) represents the unique farming interests of Perth County farmers. After 75 years, we are proud to represent over 1,800 farming families in Perth County. PCFA believes the protection of prime agricultural land for agricultural use is of paramount importance.

PCFA would like to thank Perth East representatives, Mayor Ehgoetz, Deputy Mayor McDermid and CAO Campbell and the project representatives, for reaching out to PCFA to attend our June 17 meeting to discuss the proposed industrial park land use Official Plan amendments outside of Milverton. PCFA appreciates the communicative relationship with Perth East Council and staff.

The proposal presented by the Consultant has many flaws as we are sure you are aware. Members of the PCFA Board asked questions about various portions of the presentation around planning, Official Plan Development, Justification Reports, Employment issues, possible MDS (Minimum Distance Separation) issues and the distance from the Milverton town limits of the parcel of land being considered for development.

In our review of the material and from our experience, we have several questions and concerns.

What are the specific challenges to using the previous Official Plan for this development?

What has been the feedback from Stellete Farms?

There seems to be a great deal of land already set aside around Milverton that is not developed. We are concerned that this new parcel is being considered before you infill.  Good planning requires infilling.

We have no confidence in the desire or ability of Ministry staff to step up to the plate for reviews, reports or anything else that needs to be reviewed prior to issuing any MZO, again this has been our experience.

We are not opposed to sensible, well planned additions to our local communities.  Leapfrogging beyond the boundaries though, exposes even more land to potential development and we would caution Council on this move.

The fact that the Perth County Official Plan is not yet complete is not sufficient reason to move forward with an MZO. Good planning takes time, and we see no compelling reason to rush forward rashly.

We note that the experience of the Stratford Glass Plant fiasco was a failure of everyone involved to apply due diligence to an important land use issue.

PCFA appreciates the need to support local businesses and their growth opportunities. However, these additions to our communities need to be carefully planned.

PCFA remains opposed to the increased usage of MZOs in areas with Official Plans.

Sincerely,

Sara Wood, President

Perth County Federation of Agriculture