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Statement from Mayor McGee Galilee Lands Potential Development

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I am writing this to provide clarity on an issue that has gathered increasing attention in recent days. Namely, the recent sale and speculation regarding some of the lands surrounding the Galilee Centre at 398 John Street in Arnprior.

The Galilee Centre lands are zoned a combination of Future Development (most of the site) and an area along the Ottawa River shoreline as Environmental Protection. As such, an amendment to the zoning by-law would be required prior to any development of the lands. Additionally, any development will likely require either a site plan application or a subdivision application depending on the type of development proposed. A site plan application is used when the development will be on a single lot such as for an apartment building, whereas a subdivision application is used when lots will be sold separately such as when a group of single-family dwellings are built.

As part of the development review process, either at zoning by-law amendment, subdivision or site plan stage, developers are asked to provide several plans, studies and documents. Any significant development of this site would require submission of an environmental impact study, stormwater management report and plans, servicing study and plans, and traffic impact study. These studies are then professionally reviewed on behalf of the Town and/or County of Renfrew. Once these studies have been reviewed, they will inform the final shape of the development. For example, a traffic impact study may recommend road improvements such as turning lanes, traffic lights, or stops signs that may be required to accommodate increased traffic volumes anticipated.

Currently, no planning applications have been submitted regarding development of this site. This means that at this time there is no formal means for the public to make comments on a specific application. When an application is received, the requirements for a public meeting, options for public comments, and appeal rights once Council has made a decision differ by application type. The Province has some great resources available at the following link about various application types and the process to expect: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/land-use-planning>

Development will require a change to the zoning of the property. The Ontario Planning Act (Provincial regulations) requires that when a zoning by-law amendment application is received and is deemed complete:

- The Town will give a minimum 20-day notice of a public meeting to be held to get comments from the public. Comments can be made in person or in writing.
- Once comments are received staff will prepare a report to Council considering the proposed Zoning amendment based on the Planning Act, Provincial policies as set out in the Provincial Policy Statement (PPS) 2020 (or the Provincial Planning Statement 2024 if the application is received after October 20, 2024), Town of Arnprior Official Plan policies, and comments received from the public. Staff will make a recommendation to Council for consideration. The recommendation of staff needs to be consistent with the PPS.
- Council will make a decision regarding the application.
- Once a decision is made notice of the decision will be sent to anyone who, once the application is received, requests in writing to be notified of the decision. Once the notice of decision is issued a 20-day appeal period will begin. Appeals can be submitted by individuals authorized under the Planning Act. If an appeal is received in this timeframe the application is forwarded to the Ontario Land Tribunal for consideration.

The site plan process and subdivision process do not require public meetings under the Planning Act and cannot be appealed by residents. I want to highlight that it is a Provincial Act that determines what application types require public meetings and which ones can be appealed.

While the community does have a say in development applications, staff and Council are required by Provincial legislation to make decisions that are consistent with the Planning Act and Provincial Policy Statement (or Provincial Planning Statement). In cases of future development lands in the Town of Arnprior, Provincial policies generally support development, however, comments from the public can help shape what that development might look like such as where a park is located, pedestrian connections, sidewalk locations, etc.

Once again, there are currently no planning applications submitted regarding the development of the Galilee Centre lands. This means that at this time there is no way to make comments on a specific application.

At this time, the purchase and sale of these lands is a civil matter between the two parties.

Kind regards,
Lisa McGee

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