



OHBA ACTIVITY Summary

Keeping Members Informed

DATES TO NOTE

- February 14: OHBA Health and Safety Committee
- March 7: OHBA Board of Directors Meeting
- March 14-16: CHBA Conference Meetings

FEBRUARY 2012

OHBA PRE-BUDGET SUBMISSION

The OHBA 2012 Pre-Budget Submission contains input for the upcoming provincial budget on behalf of our 4,000 member companies. Key recommendations include:

- OHBA is supportive of the *Seniors Healthy Homes Renovation Tax Credit* to allow seniors to improve accessibility and to age-in-place. As part of the program design, OHBA is advocating for the collection of receipts will support legitimate business and assist to combat underground economic activity. OHBA has recommended that both the provincial and federal governments implement a more broad based permanent tax credit to encourage consumers to utilize legitimate contractors and to create a paper trail to limit underground economic activity.
- Over the long-term OHBA believes the HST threshold for the new housing rebate (\$400,000) is too low for most modest income new home buyers and should be reviewed on a regular basis to reflect inevitable increases in average new home prices. This would substantially improve housing affordability for the middle class new home buyer.
- OHBA supports core infrastructure funding for roads, transit, water and waste-water facilities to ensure that the province remains economically competitive. OHBA recognizes that as the province shifts to a new period of budget austerity that infrastructure investment may decline. Therefore, it is critical the long-term capital infrastructure plan focuses on targeted core infrastructure investments in support of economic growth as priority investments.

IMPLEMENTING THE GROWTH PLAN

OHBA remains concerned with respect to regulatory inertia slowing conformity for the *Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe* which impacts housing affordability, land supply, and creates uncertainty for business employment investment. OHBA is strongly advocating public policy adjustments, infrastructure investments and tools to support intensification. In early February a multi-ministry roundtable will be convened with OHBA with BILD to report on the growth plan implementation process and regulatory initiatives to reduce the barriers to intensification.

After the consultation process on the *Proposed Amendment 1 to the Growth Plan* and the involvement of the Provincial Development Facilitator, the Simcoe Sub-Area amendment came into effect on January 19, 2012 and set out a made-in-Simcoe approach. To access the updated Growth Plan please visit www.placestogrow.ca.

Local Associations in the GGH include: BILD, Brantford, Greater Dufferin, Durham Region, Guelph & District, Haldimand Norfolk, Hamilton-Halton, Niagara, Peterborough & the Kawarthas, Simcoe County and Waterloo Region.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA) – BOBOLINK & EASTERN MEADOWLARK

With the listing of both Bobolink and more recently, the Eastern Meadowlark as ‘threatened’ - grasslands and some agricultural lands are of increasing conservation interest. The Ontario government passed a regulatory amendment that temporarily exempts agricultural operations from the permitting requirements of the ESA for activities affecting Bobolink, for a period of three years. OHBA has requested a 90 day resolution to the lack of transition policies for the new housing and development industry for the Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.

OHBA believes that the province should be providing investment and business certainty by transitioning approvals that have been granted through the regulatory planning approvals process and by providing appropriate transition when new policies come into force. An ESA permit without appropriate transition has resulted in new requirements being brought forward at the very end of a long complex approvals process.

An OHBA subcommittee with BILD & GOHBA members is engaged with MNR with two objectives:

- Working towards appropriate, fair and balanced transition provisions;
- A simplified process that establishes a rational approach to the *Overall Benefit Permitting* process for both Bobolink and Eastern Meadowlark.

ENERGY EFFICIENCY DESIGN SUMMARY FORM

OHBA in conjunction with OBOA, LMCBO, EnerQuality and MMAH prepared a simplified Energy Efficiency Design Summary form to be used with building permit applications requiring the use of SB-12 after January 1, 2012. The joint working group hoped that the form was complete and without errors when it was first released in December, but there have been implementation problems and concerns raised over who should sign the bottom of the form. In an effort to remedy this problem, the joint working group has made some minor revisions that should add clarity and eliminate concerns. It is anticipated that the revised form will be available through local municipal building departments shortly. OHBA will have the form available for download on our website under the Resources tab.

REMINDERS / AVAILABLE FROM OHBA

- ✓ OHBA Growth Plan Amendment Submission (Simcoe County)
- ✓ Ontario Housing Issues Status Report: Fall 2011
- ✓ OHBA Magazine Winter Issue
- ✓ OHBA Endangered Species Act Submission
- ✓ OHBA 2011 Membership Directory
- ✓ YOUR VOICE – How OHBA Works For You
- ✓ OHBA Pre-Budget Submission
- ✓ Engine That Drives Ontario’s Economy



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