

Ottawa energy storage for renewable energy

The Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee today approved amendments to the City's Site Plan Control By-law. Site plan control is the process the City uses to ensure land development is safe, functional and in line with the City's standards for construction. The amendments approved today would require site plan control for all battery energy storage systems, natural gas generation facilities and renewable energy generation facilities proposed in Ottawa.

Additional changes to the by-law would ensure it complies with recent amendments the Province made to the Planning Act to exempt residential buildings with 10 or fewer dwellings from site plan control. In addition to such residential-only buildings, the Committee also approved exempting small mixed-use buildings from site plan control, provided they meet certain conditions. Applicants proposing to add up to five units to an existing building would also be exempt, provided there are no changes proposed to the building's exterior.

The Committee approved amendments to the Official Plan and related planning policies to delegate minor zoning applications to staff for decision. To help simplify and shorten the process for certain zoning amendment applications, the proposed changes would update the criteria for considering an amendment to be minor.

City staff would be delegated authority to consider surplus farm severances. These routine applications occur when a lot zoned Agriculture (AG) is purchased to be used for agricultural purposes while the farmhouse lands are severed and must be rezoned to prohibit future residential development.

The criteria would also be updated to include applications seeking a height increase up to five storeys or 25 per cent of the current permitted building height. That would ensure height-increase requests are proportionate to existing permissions and would prevent an applicant from seeking significant additional height through a minor rezoning. Applications that do not meet the amended criteria would still be processed as major re-zonings.

Recommendations from today's meeting will rise to Council on Wednesday, November 13.

The facility in Edwardsburgh-Cardinal, Ont., would be Canada's largest battery energy storage system, with a capacity of 390 megawatts, surpassing the 250-megawatt Oneida Energy Storage facility under construction in southern Ontario, the ISEO said.

That plant was one of seven announced last year, including a battery energy storage facility planned for Napanee, when the province made its first move toward battery storage as a source of energy for its electricity grid as part of its larger plan to meet growing energy demands and reduce emissions.



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Audience Relations, CBC P.O. Box 500 Station A Toronto, ON Canada, M5W 1E6

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WhatsApp: 8613816583346

