

**CITY OF GREATER SUDBURY FIREARMS REGULATION TASK FORCE  
INFORMATION SESSION AND PUBLIC INPUT  
WARD 2**

**Club 50 Rayside-Balfour  
25 Main Street West, Chelmsford**

**Wednesday, September 7, 2005  
Commencement: 7:00 p.m.**

Chair

**ROY POLSKY, VICE-CHAIR PRESIDING**

Present

Michael Pilon, Member, Firearms Regulation Task Force;  
Councillor Ron Bradley, Ward 2 and Member, Firearms  
Regulation Task Force

Councillor Claude Berthiaume, Ward 2

City Officials

Angie Haché, Acting City Clerk

Welcome and  
Opening Remarks

Mr. Polsky welcomed the twenty-four (24) citizens in attendance and advised the purpose of the meeting was to provide an opportunity for the public to provide comments and suggestions on the proposed by-law to regulate the discharge of firearms and other weapons in the City of Greater Sudbury.

**PUBLIC INPUT**

Submissions were heard in the order that they appeared on the Speaker's List.

Allan Guse  
Pilon Crescent  
Chelmsford

Mr. Guse advised he has lived in the Sudbury area most of his life. He resides on a hobby farm outside of Chelmsford, where he and his family raise horses and enjoy the outdoors. A big part of his life has been hunting and much of his spare time during the fall as a teenager was spent hunting with family members on his grandfather's farm in Balfour Township. One major reason he lives in the country is, he enjoys going for a walk in the bush with his shotgun and occasionally shooting a partridge or two. He owns rifles, bows, shotguns and a pellet gun. He stated that the proposed by-law will severely restrict his enjoyment and that of his family on their property. They own 78 acres in a rural area, but if the by-law is passed he will not be able to discharge any of his guns or bows anywhere on his property. They would be forced to travel greater distances to enjoy something they have always had in rural and bush areas around Dowling and Chelmsford.

Allan Guse

(Continued)

Hunting and shooting activities are becoming increasingly restricted through changing laws and increased loss of access to traditional hunting and shooting areas. In reviewing literature regarding the proposed by-law, it appears that the proposed by-law has taken the worst and most restrictive of the former by-laws and extended them to the entire Greater Sudbury Area, with little or no thought towards traditional uses of these land areas. The by-law is also being proposed for safety reasons, despite the fact that police and MNR witnesses to your committee have stated that there have been no concerns with firearm use in the area in the past. He sees no basis, either safety related or otherwise for the wording of the proposed by-law. He is extremely upset about the prospect of this by-law being passed as is. There should be major revisions, with input from people who actually know what they are talking about, before any further proposal is made. Consideration should be given as to what the reasons are for the by-law, what safety or other concerns there may be and how to address these matters for specific types of firearms and bows and how they are being used.

Jim Little  
Dowling

Mr. Little stated that the public session was poorly publicized. He indicated that hunting season brings in transients who tend to come through his property. As well, during hunting season there is increased traffic on his property. With the increased traffic on bush and camp roads it may increase incidents of theft and vandalism. He indicated that vehicles go cruising by his home, up and down bush roads travelling at considerable rates of speed. He is looking at putting up obstacles, such as speed bumps to reduce speeding. He would like to see signage and some restriction with respect to the discharge of firearms. He indicated that people should be more knowledgeable about what areas they can or cannot discharge firearms. Bears are coming onto his property, as there is a bear baiting station nearby. He is not against bear hunting but is against wounded bears near his dwelling. He suggested that bear baits be moved to at least 2 kilometres to minimize wounded bears from his property. There should also be signage indicating there are active bear baits in the area as well as the trail where the bear baits are located.

Yvon Goudreau  
Chelmsford

Mr. Goudreau stated that the previous speaker spoke about bear baits, but reminded him that he built his home in the bush. Mr. Goudreau likes to go in the bush to hunt. He understands concerns regarding safety. He stated that last

Yvon Goudreau

Chelmsford

(continued)

week he was called by a resident of Bonin Street with five bears in his back yard. When someone calls the Greater Sudbury Police regarding the discharge of a firearms they are told by the Police service that they will weigh all the evidence. He stated there should be a by-law for bears, as bears are about the safest hunt there is – set up a bait area and shoot them at the bait area. For safety reasons, it should be taken into consideration that bear outfitters be permitted, when called upon to shoot bears, not moose or birds.

Andy Zandarin  
President  
Copper Cliff  
Gun Club

Mr. Zandarin, President of the Copper Cliff Gun Club sees no reason to change the present by-law, except for discharging a rifle because a bullet can travel 400 yards. The opinion of his club is that for a rifle the distance should move back from 400 to 500 yards.

Kirk Koski  
Michael's South  
Shore Road  
Dowling

Mr. Koski has been hunting in the Dowling area since he was 15 years old. The proposed by-law requires 1.6 km from the nearest residence and agrees with that distance for the City of Sudbury however, it is not the same in the outlying communities. If a 1.6 km circle were drawn around every dwelling in Onaping Falls all areas to hunt would be eliminated.

Tim Burns  
Dowling

Mr. Burns asked who is putting forward the proposed by-law.  
  
The Chair responded the Firearms Regulation Task Force is holding public hearings in all wards of the City to collect input concerning the draft by-law.

Mr. Burns indicated that he would not have known about this evening's meeting, if his father had not read about it in the Sudbury Star. He indicated that both sets of his grandparents were homesteaders and everyone had a gun. He stated that this is a God given right in this country. This is bush area, and provided safety is exercised and common sense, the use of firearms should be permitted. He indicated that the proposed by-law will handcuff everyone. Bears in this area have no fear – there were no problems until the spring bear hunt was cancelled. He stated they have a right to protect their cattle and themselves without calling the police or the MNR.

The Chair of the meeting advised that all citizens currently have the right to dispose of an animal for safety reasons.

Mark Laberge  
Michael's South

Shore Road  
Dowling

Mr. Laberge grew up in Levack and has been hunting since the age of eleven with his father and brother. He indicated that the biggest problem he has heard this evening is safety. Mr. Laberge stated that there has not been any shootings or shots through houses – he is baffled at the comments on safety issues. He indicated presently there are so many laws on the books that deal with the unsafe use of firearms and this is just another way to handcuff people. He advised that he provided a written submission to the Task Force. In his written submission he includes articles of what is done in the United States and pointed out they have more open ideas about fire arms. The Americans permit the discharge of firearms within one mile of a dwelling unless the owners allows a closer distance. The biggest restriction in the by-law is the 1.6 km distance from a dwelling, which does not make sense for the use of shotguns and bows. He indicated that hunting is part of why young people want to stay in Sudbury area and why they want to return to the area. He does not believe a by-law is needed. All that is needed is common sense.

Daniel Mainville  
Chelmsford

Mr. Mainville pointed out it is not just a question of bears – coyotes are out more and more. He has ducks, chickens and a two year old daughter and bears/coyotes come to his backyard. He requested that the farming aspect be taken into consideration because crops and animals must be protected.

Alymer Guse  
Gordon Lake Road

Mr. Guse stated that anyone who is not heard and does not voice his/her opinion is missing an opportunity because at the end of the day, all comments will be counted. He owns a farm and has shot many bears. In subdivision areas there are bears in the back yards. The only good bear is a dead one. He heard of a bear attack yesterday where a lady was killed and stated that people going in provincial parks should have a rifle because there can be a cantankerous bear in the area. With respect to farmers having geese in their fields, there should be no limit on what a farmer can do to protect his crops, using common sense. Why do we need legislation that makes no sense whatsoever? Again he encouraged people in attendance to speak their opinion and exercise their rights otherwise they are being eroded.

The Chair advised that in Rayside-Balfour you can presently discharge a firearm within 400m of a dwelling.

Jim Busch  
Walford Road  
Sudbury

Mr. Busch stated he heard several people this evening speak regarding protecting themselves from bears and farmers protecting their fields from geese and does not understand how anyone could want to stop that. His concern is the sport of hunting. He grew up hunting, continues to hunt and takes his children hunting. He moved to the Sudbury area because he can hunt and fish just like he did in Fort Frances. The Sudbury area encompasses some of the best waterfowl and woodcock. He pointed out that there have been no incidents of people being shot by hunters.

Aaron Ayotte  
Pilon Crescent  
Chelmsford

Mr. Ayotte would like the Task Force to consider all the former towns that kept their existing by-law. He understands the by-laws have to be meshed together, but would be happy if Ward 2 could retain it's current by-law.

Mark Laberge  
Michael's South  
Shore Road  
Dowling

Mr. Laberge stated that the current Onaping Falls By-law would be better as it permits discharge of firearms within 300m of a dwelling.

Jim Little  
Dowling

Mr. Little stated that what is needed is more "hunter education" with respect to signage and respect for people's property. Whatever is proposed in the by-law, Mr. Little and the person who has bear baits will need to discuss problems and come up with a plan. He is a landowner who is concerned about safety. He chooses not to hunt and disrupt the environment he lives in. He has had many encounters with bears and has not had a problem. He stated that everyone should become more knowledgeable about bears and hunting and how to do it safely.

Allan Guse  
Pilon Crescent  
Chelmsford

Mr. Guse indicated there are already extremely rigid gun laws which make you feel like a criminal. With all these laws and high penalties, he does not do anything illegal with his gun. There are many existing gun laws to protect citizens and they must be used. If a by-law must be passed, the distance factor for a rifle must be different than that of a pellet gun, bow, or shotgun as they are completely different things. With respect to the distance from a dwelling, there should be an exception if the person owns the property or has the permission of the owner. He also referred to the economic impact of hunting pointing out that serious hunters spend a lot of money. He indicated that Dowling and Rayside have by-laws that he can live with.

Claude Berthiaume  
Councillor

Ward 2

Councillor Berthiaume advised he was present as an observer to listen to the public's comments. His chance to provide input will be when the final report is submitted to Council. The Task Force will decide on whether there is a need for a by-law and if one is needed what will it include. He has heard the comments this evening with respect to Ward 2 maintaining what currently exists.

Ron Bradley  
Councillor  
Ward 2

Councillor Bradley indicated that he too has heard the public's comments and that the current by-laws in Ward 2 should be maintained. When Council were discussing the proposed Firearms By-law there were some Councillors that asked why change was needed. Council knew the recommendation might come back that the by-law is not needed but Council agreed that public input was needed.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Polsky advised that minutes of each of the public input meetings will be provided to the Task Force who will review all comments. He expressed appreciation to those present for their attendance and input at this meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

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Roy Polsky Presiding

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Angie Haché, Acting City Clerk