

The Independent

Serving Petrolia and Central Lambton

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WORKING OVERTIME



Farmers across Central Lambton were in the fields whenever they could be this week trying to get their corn and soybeans planted since the fields finally had a chance to dry. This farmer was out on the field just outside of Alvinston on Nauvoo Road around 10 pm, spraying his crop.

Heather Wright Photo

Long term fix for composting close

Compost depot not as popular as compost site was

Heather Wright
The Independent

Petrolia's Chief Administrative officer says there could be a more permanent solution to the town's composting problem in the next two weeks.

In April, the Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change came to the Maude St. Extension site for a surprise inspection. It listed 14 areas of concern, everything from poor bookkeeping to not keeping track or a record of the types of materials in the compost site.

The town closed the site down and worked with Waste Management to set up seven composting days on Progress Drive. Residents are expected to buy a \$20 pass at town hall to use the site on the appointed days.

Monday, in a report to council, Mike Thompson, director of operation, wrote the depot has been operating with "great suc-

cess" but some people voiced concern they have more yard waste than they can dispose of in one trip. Thompson suggested, and council agreed, that instead of allowing just one trip per compost day, the passes would be for eight trips whenever the user wanted. And Thompson said they could purchase another pass once the eight trips are done.

Thompson says part of the reason for the limitations is budget restrictions. The town set aside \$18,000 for the Waste Management depot.

"We have a budget amount for compost and we're trying to stay within that amount," he says. "We're trying to curb the costs of it and still supply the service... We're trying to keep the tonnage down. If we make it carte blanche and they bring as much as they want... we go over budget. We've curbed the usage to hit the budget."

Thompson says fewer people are using the site, he believes because of the restrictions in place. "There weren't any rules before," he told councillors. "We're not selling as many passes."

SEE COMPOST PG 2

Focused growth key in Health Care Village

Heather Wright
The Independent

Picture a town where the streets are lined with trees, everything is within walking distance including health care and housing for seniors.

It's the vision Antonio Gomez Palacio, the principal of planning and urban design with Dialog, pitched to about 80 people at a public open house organized by the Town of Petrolia.

The town and Bluewater Health are working together with the group on a Health Care Village Concept. The hospital is making plans to redevelop the interior of Charlotte Eleanor Englehart Hospital. It's already received \$7.5 million from the province for planning and redevelopment with more expected.

But the town's role in the plan hasn't been as clear. It is also working with Dialog to create what was first explained as a senior-friendly community. Palacio

admits there has been some confusion what a Health Care Village will look like in Petrolia mostly because the concept is still developing.

But he told residents there are a couple of ideas the group is working with now. Palacio says the steering group wants "focused growth," developing vacant properties close to existing neighbourhoods. Palacio says it is more difficult than taking a vacant field and developing it, but infilling will create more walkable cities. "It is about being more sustainable, being able to sustain an intimate quality of life."

The concept also includes interconnected streets "small blocks are easy to navigate and walk" making it easier to walk around town and this will also allow more room for housing.

Palacio says the group believes it is also important to enhance the streetscape by improving sidewalks, adding benches and lots of trees.

SEE HEALTH VILLAGE PG 2

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