



Report to Council

To: Mayor & Members of Council
From: Adele Arbour, Planner
Date: February 18, 2025
Re: **Proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment for Saunas**

Recommendation:

That Council receive the report from the Planner regarding the proposed Zoning By-Law Amendment for saunas; and further

That Council direct staff to proceed with a Public Meeting to be held at the March 18, 2025 Council Meeting; and further

That the draft Zoning By-Law be available for public review.

Financial Implications:

There is a proposed 2025 Budget amount of \$120,000.00 for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment Maintenance. The 2024 Budget amount of \$46,000.00 was increased to undertake a Comprehensive Zoning By-Law review and update to bring the document into conformity to the County Official Plan. It would be appropriate to use this GL account for municipally initiated amendments.

Background:

At the October 1, 2024 Council Meeting, Council received a planning report which recommended a municipal-initiated amendment to define and permit saunas as an accessory use in shoreline areas. On the basis of this report, Council directed staff to prepare a draft Zoning By-Law Amendment specific for saunas, to incorporate a definition along with appropriate zone regulations.

As indicated in the October 1, 2024 planning report, the Municipality has processed three (3) site-specific Zoning By-law amendments for saunas in a water yard within the last four (4) years. The regulations approved are as follows:

Minimum water yard setback:	1m (3 ft.)
	8.74 ft. (28.7 ft.)
	7.7 m (25.5 ft.)

Maximum ground floor area: 7.4 sq. m (79.5 sq. ft.)
12.12 sq. m (130 sq. ft.)
7.11 sq. m (76.4 sq. ft.)

Side yard setback: 1.12 m (3.7 ft.)

Current Regulation:

The Building Department has advised that a building permit is required for any building intended to be used as a sauna is over 10 sq. m (107 sq. ft.) (as it is not a “storage building”) and Zoning By-Law setbacks are applicable.

During the most recent site-specific zoning amendment for a sauna, concern was raised regarding fire safety aspects of saunas and the Municipality was provided with an information sheet from the Office of the Fire Marshall and Emergency Management and the Electrical Safety Authority regarding safety issues associated with electrical saunas.

For Council’s information the following structures are currently permitted in the water yard as per Section 4.30.1.3 of Zoning By-law 2014-070:

- gazebo
- trellis
- detached deck

Applicable regulations (Section 4.30.1.3) for the above structures include:

- i) Maximum floor area 15 sq. m (161 sq. ft.);
- ii) Minimum setback from the high water mark for a gazebo or trellis shall be 3 m (10 ft.), whereas a detached deck may be constructed at the high water mark;
- iii) the structure must comply with all other zone regulations and setback provisions; (i.e. lot coverage and side yards);
- iv) the maximum height of a gazebo or trellis shall be 3 m (10 ft.) and the maximum height above grade for a detached deck shall be 0.3 m (1 ft.) above the adjacent grade.

The Planning Department is of the view that an amendment to Zoning By-Law B2014-070 to include provisions specific to saunas would conform with the Official Plan as the Official Plan allows non-habitable accessory structures in the water yard as long as it does not negatively affect the waterfront environment. On this basis no corresponding Official Plan Amendment would be required. These types of structures are not uncommon in shoreline communities.

A sauna being an accessory use is also consistent with the Provincial Policy Statement as it would be considered accessory to a resource-based recreational use.

The Planning Department, in consultation with the Municipal Planning Consultant Chris Jones, has reviewed eight (8) municipal zoning by-laws from other areas of the Province which included definitions and regulations for saunas. It is noted that no other municipalities within the County of Peterborough include a definition of sauna nor regulations in their respective Zoning By-Laws to permit saunas.

On the basis of this review, the following is a summary of the regulations employed in other municipalities:

- i) minimum setback from the high water mark ranged from 7.5 m (25 ft.) to 20 m (66 ft.);
- ii) maximum floor area ranged from 9 sq. m (96.7 sq. ft.) to 19 sq. m (204 sq. ft.);
- iii) maximum height ranged from 3.5 m (11.5 ft.) to 4m (13 ft.); and,
- iv) minimum side yard setback was double the side yard setback specified in the respective zoning by-laws.

Proposed Sauna Regulations:

Planning staff are recommending the following definition and regulations for Council's consideration and public consultation:

Sauna means a small-scale, fully enclosed, non-habitable accessory building or structure without a bathroom or kitchen facilities or any plumbing fixtures that generates dry heat and/or steam for direct exposure to humans as a form of health measure. A sauna shall include a heat source that is certified by the appropriate authority for use in a sauna but shall not include a wood burning appliance or stove.

Sauna regulations – a sauna shall be permitted as an accessory use on any lot zoned Shoreline Residential (SR) or Shoreline Residential – Private Access (SR-PA) or Island Residential (IR) zones, provided the sauna complies with the following regulations:

- (1) minimum water yard for sauna with a floor area up to 10 sq. m (107.64 sq. ft.): 15 m (50 ft.)
- (2) minimum water yard for sauna with a floor area up to 15 sq. m (161.46 sq. ft.): 30 m (100 ft.)
- (3) maximum height (measured from grade to peak): 3.5 m (11.48 ft.)
- (4) minimum side yard setback: 4.5 m (14.8 ft.)
- (5) the sauna shall not be constructed on or attached to a deck
- (6) minimum separation from a dwelling unit: 5 m

The draft Zoning By-Law Amendment attached to this report will be available for review on the Municipal website.

Environmental Implications:

There are no environmental implications as a result of this report.


Consultations:

External Planning Consultant Chris Jones

Appendices:

Draft Zoning By-Law Amendment

Prepared by:



Adele Arbour, MCIP, RPP
Planner

Submitted by:



Barbara Waldron, Director of Building
and Planning, CBO

Approved by:

Donna Teggart, CAO/Treasurer

THE CORPORATION OF THE
MUNICIPALITY OF TRENT LAKES

BY-LAW No. B2025-XXX

A BY-LAW TO AMEND BY-LAW NO. B2014-070, AS
AMENDED OTHERWISE KNOWN AS “THE MUNICIPALITY
OF TRENT LAKES COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW”
FOR THE PURPOSE OF PERMITTING A SAUNA IN THE
WATER YARD AND APPLICABLE REGULATIONS

Whereas the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes is empowered to pass By-laws to regulate the use of land pursuant to Section 34 of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990*;

And Whereas the Municipality’s new Comprehensive Zoning By-law is now in full force and effect as per Ontario Municipal Board approval June 30, 2015;

And Whereas the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes deems it advisable to amend By-Law B2014-070, as amended, in order permit as-of-right a sauna in the water yard setback, and to add a definition of sauna and provide regulations as to its location.

And Whereas the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes held a public meeting on February 18, 2025 as required by Section 34(12) of the *Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990*;

And Whereas the matters herein are in conformity with the Official Plan of the Municipality of Trent Lakes, as amended;

Now Therefore the Council of the Corporation of the Municipality of Trent Lakes enacts as follows:

1. Zoning By-law No. B2014-070, as amended, is hereby further amended in the following manner:

a) By amending Section 3 – Definitions by adding a new definition, as follows:

Adding the following new Definition, after Definition 3.250 **Satellite Dish**, and all definitions thereafter be renumbered:

3.251 Sauna means a small-scale, fully enclosed, non-habitable accessory building or structure without a bathroom or kitchen facilities or any plumbing fixtures that generates dry heat and/or steam for direct exposure to humans as a form of health measure. A sauna shall include a heat source that is certified by the appropriate authority for use in a sauna but shall not include a wood burning appliance or stove.

b) By amending Section 4 by adding the following new sub-section after sub-section **4.30.1.3 Gazebos, Trellises and Detached Decks/Patios**

4.30.1.4 Saunas

Sauna regulations – a sauna shall be permitted as an accessory use on any lot zoned Shoreline Residential (SR) or Shoreline Residential – Private Access (SR-PA) or Island Residential (IR) zones, provided the sauna complies with the following regulations:

(1) minimum water yard for sauna with a floor area up to 10 sq. m 15 m

- (2) minimum water yard for sauna with a floor area up to 15 sq. m 30 m
- (3) maximum height (measured from grade to peak) 3.5 m
- (4) minimum side yard setback 4.5 m
- (5) the sauna shall not be constructed on or attached to a deck
- (6) minimum separation from a dwelling unit: 5 m

- 2. In all other respects, the provisions of By-law B2014-070 shall apply.
- 3. This By-law shall come into force on the date it is passed by the Council of the Municipality of Trent Lakes, subject to the provisions of Section 34 of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended.
- 4. The Clerk is hereby authorized and directed to proceed with the giving of notice under Section 34 (18) of the *Planning Act*, R.S.O. 1990, as amended.

Read a first, second and third time and passed this XXth day of April 2025.

Terry Lambshead, Mayor

Jessie Clark, Clerk