

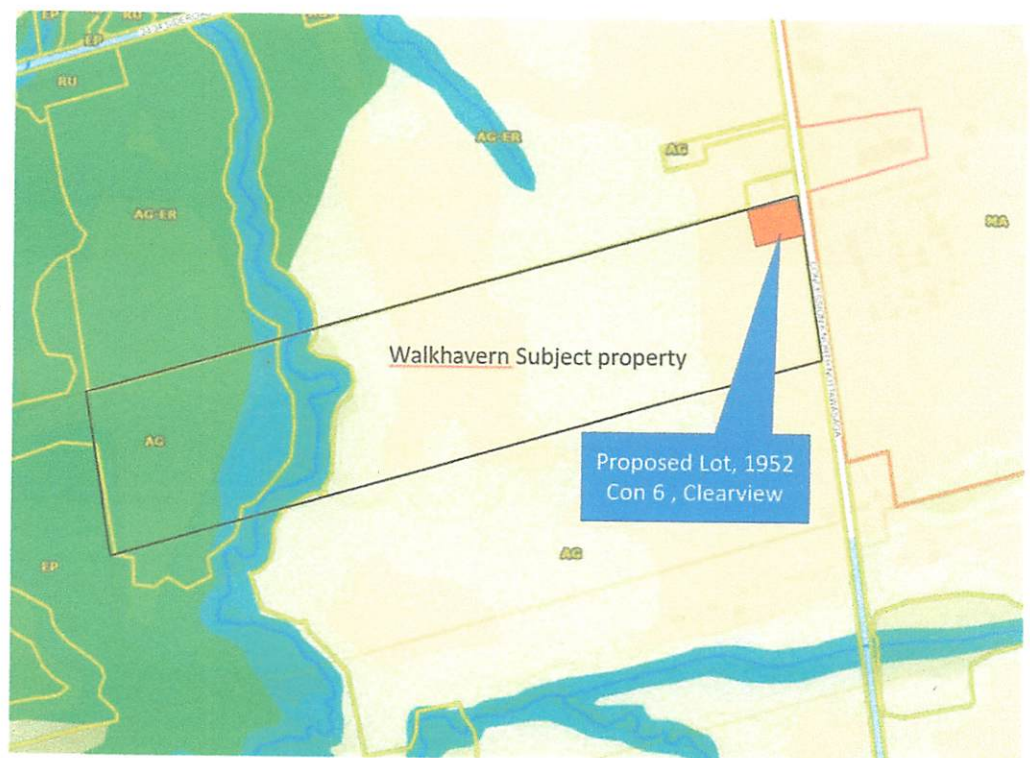
## Walkhavern Farms – Justification Report

### Severance of Surplus Residence at 1952 Concession Road 6 North, Clearview

#### Site Description

The subject land is located at 1952 Concession Road 6 North, in Clearview. It is Concession 7, Lot 32 in the Township of Clearview and the County of Simcoe. The Roll number is 432901000568700. It is a 100 acre farm that has never had any lots taken out of it in the past. There are no barns or outbuildings on the property. The house is around a century old and is on the northeast corner of the property close to the road. The requested lot to go with the house is 2.1 acres, leaving approximately 98 acres of agricultural land for Colin, Tanya and their family to farm. The surrounding land uses are agriculture to the north, west and south of the property, with the airport in the property across the road from the property. There are 2 residential lots that have been severed out of the property to the north of this property that Collin and Tanya own.

Walkhavern Proposed  
Surplus House Severance



#### Proposed Surplus Lot Severance

The proposed lot is 2.1 acres and would be severed neatly out of the corner of the farm. It also would boarder a residential severance that is north of the proposed lot, creating the least amount of headlands and interaction between the farm and the residences (least field boundary with a residential neighbour). There will need to be an Official Plan Amendment to Section 9.4.2 of the Township's Official Plan to permit a farm consolidation severance where the applicant does not own the adjacent land. As outlined in Sections 3.3.6 of the Township Official Plan (2024), a primary goal of the Township is to maintain and preserve agriculture viable farm unit operating within the Township's historical agricultural community. As a general rule, new lots in agricultural land is discouraged. As a Professional Agrologist and farmer myself, I will give my opinion to justify the severance of the residence from the agricultural land and why it will be beneficial to the community for council to grant this consolidation and allow the house to be owned by another member of the community.

### **Introduction to Walkhavern Farms**

Walkhavern Farms is a family dairy and cash crop farm that milks 96 cows at 2302 County Road 42 operated by Collin and Tanya Walker. Their son, Connor Walker, graduated Ridgetown collage June 2025, and is now full time on the farm. Their daughter, Larissa, is actively involved on the farm and intends to attend the University of Guelph once she is done highschool. The Walker family has farmed in the area for 55 years and looks forward to enabling a new generation to provide safe, affordable food for local consumers.

### **Pre-Consultation Response: Issue #1**

Noted: The surplus residence is to be severed off the land at 1952 Concession Road 6 North

### **Pre-Consultation Response: Issue #2**

Collin Walker has specified that the subject land at 1952 Concession Road 6 is 4.8 km from Collwest Elevator, where most of the production from this farm will go. The grain produced on this farm will be shipped from the farm using licensed heavy highway trucks. The combine and planting equipment will come in from other farms the same as they do for any small farm in the area. The equipment will be large but will only make 1 trip per activity on the land in this farm (ie. 1 larger sprayer making 1 trip since it can carry enough product to treat the whole farm, opposed to a small sprayer making multiple trips. These pieces of equipment, like modern cars, have more road safety features than smaller, older pieces of equipment. The newer road safety features such as improve lightings and flashers, signal lights, improved braking and emergency

braking systems, better visibility, more mirrors and rear view cameras increase the safety for the public and the operator over smaller and older equipment that would typically be used on 100 or 200 acre farms.

Clearview Township also sets out the goal of supporting their farmers to preserve agriculturally viable farm units under Section 3.3.6 of the Township OP. Farms have grown over time to capture the efficiency of scale that allows them to be viable. I have completed a recent nutrient management plan that was approved by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness on November 8, 2024. It includes 96 lactating cows using a new robotic milking system. It is more efficient with resources such as water and labour and the cattle have individual health records kept from each milking to monitor animal health and welfare. Efficiencies like these require a farm to be at least average sized. Currently the average farm size for Canada is 96 milking cows with Ontario dairy farms averaging 78 cows. Walkhavern Farms is a near average sized farm for their industry. Collin and Tanya are relatively young farmers (average is 56 years old), with the next generation eagerly awaiting their chance to grow into the dairy industry.

In a 2017 study of 70 farms called the Ontario Dairy Farm Accounting Project, it was found that the difference between the bottom 15 farms and the top 15 farms was herd size (43 vs 120 cows, more milk sold per cow (7,389 litres vs 10,470), increased milk sales per cow and lower labour cost per cow (143 vs 72 hours). These economic realities are pushing farms like Walkhavern milking 96 cows to become larger to remain sustainable and to ensure the farm is viable for the next generation.

### **Pre-Consultation Response #3**

Please see the attached MDS letter of explanation and calculations. The property at 1952 Concession Road 6 North does not have any barns or livestock on the farm. Walkhavern Farms will not have livestock housing facilities on this location in the future, since the livestock is centralized at 2303 Couty Road 42.

### **Pre-Consultation Response #4**

The issue in the pre-consultation response refers to Section 11.9.8.12 a) of the Township OP (2024) which reads: 12. A new lot may be created for a surplus dwelling, provided that: (a) the surplus dwelling is no less than 15 years old;

Please see the attached arial photos as evidence of the dwelling existing for more than 15 years.

The repairs to the house were quite limited to stairs, trim, kitchen, renewed septic to keep it environmentally safe, decks and porches. The house was usable during this time. The house was NOT tore down and rebuilt, but went under renovations that are typical of a house of this age to maintain its usefulness and its appeal. Collin and Tanya are pleased to be able to improve the visual presentation of the house to complement the aesthetics of other properties in the neighbourhood.

Section 11.9.8.12 a) does not consider if the residence is habitable or not. The Walker family followed the advice of municipal staff with the renovation of the existing residential structure. The structure did not at any time change its purpose. We would also suggest that the structure would not be considered a new residence, since it was built to century old standards, and on current building code standards. The residence was renovated and not reconstructed. If it were reconstructed, the dwelling would have needed MDS 1 applied to it, and we see no evidence of this. Considering the age of the residence and the need to maintain and increase housing availability in Clearview and in Ontario, we would suggest that an existing dwelling that has potential to be habitable would best serve the community by not using the option for demolition. Using the option to remove the building would not be in the spirit of providing affordable housing (considering old houses being more affordable than new houses).

#### **Pre-Consultation Response #5**

In response to Section 11.9.8.16 with reference to reasonable distances, we would like to present Council and the Committee of Adjustment the following information in support of the farmlands to be consolidated.

Although the farm is located at 1604 Centre Line Road, approximately 15 km away, other important parts of the farm are shorter distances away:

- 4 km from 1952 Concession Road 6 North to the grain elevator where the crop is shipped, elevated and sold
- 5 km away from another farm that Walkhavern Farms operates
- Crops are mainly moved on the road using transports and trailers that are licensed and safetied annually, along with operating under up to date transport regulations, ensuring a high standard of safety on the road.
- Annual operations like moving the planter or combine to 1952 Concession Road 6 only happen once per year on average. Weather permitting, the planter or combine stay there until the whole farm is harvested or planted. On smaller farms in the past, there may be multiple crops in different fields on each farm, which necessitated multiple pieces of equipment moving to a

remote farm, all during different times of the year. We can understand the reasoning for the by-law to favor clustering farms in the past, but modern farms are not often put together with adjacent parcels. It often takes generations to assemble adjacent land.

-Newer equipment have more road safety built into them, like improved warning lights, better breaking that is sometimes integrated into the towed equipment, more reflective areas and locking mechanisms that keep the equipment in “transport position” while going down the road.

-Farm equipment continually evolves to be safer and more efficient on the road.

### **Pre-Consultation Response #6**

Once consent is given for the new lot to sever the surplus dwelling, we will apply for a zoning by-law amendment (ZBA) for 1952 Concession Road 6 North. The remaining farmland would be zoned as to not have a residence built on it again and the current lot with the severed residence would be zoned residential.

### **Pre-Consultation Response #7**

#### **Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation Statement**

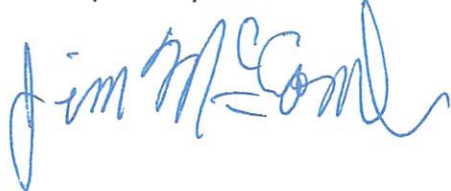
Walkhavern Farms agrees with the Township Official Plan and its commitment to climate change mitigation. The farm has taken many steps to reduce its environmental impact and advocates for soil health. The farm has installed rooftop solar panels and has a net metering system. To improve soil health, Walkhavern Farms uses reduced tillage methods to produce crops, which helps to minimize soil erosion improves soil structure. Collin also grows cover crops which capture carbon while increasing soil organic matter. Walkhavern Farms has been abiding by the Ontario Nutrient Management Act and has adapted best management practices such as using optimal timing for manure and fertility application to reduce environmental risk while improving nutrient use efficiency. Walkhavern’s most recent investment in robotic milking integrates the latest technology to monitor animal health and reduce the energy and resources used to produce milk. The subject land at 1952 Concession 6 North has some Environmental Protection (EP) Zoning in which Batteaux Creek runs through. Batteaux Creek is noted by the Blue Mountain Watershed Trust as being a spawning ground for Chinook Salmon, Rainbow Trout, Brown Trout and Smallmouth Bass at the mouth. Walkhavern has maintained the tree canopy over the Batteaux Creek, which helps keep the waters of this cold water creek cool enough for the aquatic life that relies on it for habitat. As a Certified Wetland Evaluator (OWES), I would consider the creek valley and tree canopy to be an important part of this wetland system,

considering there are other areas of the creek in which there is unshaded water, which increases the temperature of the water, possibly impacting aquatic life. The buffer between the creek and the agricultural land has been maintained, reducing erosion potential and safeguarding the creek from nutrient inputs and pesticides that are used on the agricultural land. Keeping this buffer of mature trees and wetland in place is an important commitment for Walkhavern Farms. Blue Mountain Watershed Trust states that "The best place to see the Batteaux Creek is adjacent to the rail trail near Nottawa at the junction of Sideroads 33 and 34.", which is just south of the subject land at 1952 Concession 6. We would like to think that the large trees and wetland in the buffer around the creek at this farm continues to exhibit these positive aesthetics. See the attached ariel photo of the wetland in the middle of 1952 Concession 6.

**Description of the Author of this report, Jim McComb, BSc(Agr), P.Ag.**

It has been my pleasure to work with Walkhavern Farms on this report and previous Nutrient Management Plans dating back a couple decades. Along with my family, we own a consulting company called the Farmer's Edge Agri-Coaching which has provided credible agricultural consulting for 22 years. I am a professional Agrologist and Certified Nutrient Management Planner since the inception of the Nutrient Management Act in 2003. I am also a Certified Wetland Evaluator under the Ontario Wetland Evaluation System (OWES) which I obtained in 2024 from Nipissing University. I graduated from the University of Guelph with a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, along side Collin Walker in 2000. I have been involved in MDS throughout my career and provide reports for both farmers building barns and landowners building hoses or severing land. I am past president of Quinte Region Soil and Crop Improvement Association, a member on the Ontario Soil Network, and serve as a director for the Beef Farmers of Hastings County. With the help of my wife and two girls, we also farm 1000 acres and have 100 head of beef near Marmora, Ontario.

Thank you for your consideration to this matter,



Jim McComb, BSc(Agr), P.Ag.

The Farmer's Edge Agri-Coaching



Above: Google Earth Image, July 2007



Above: Google Earth Image, July 2011



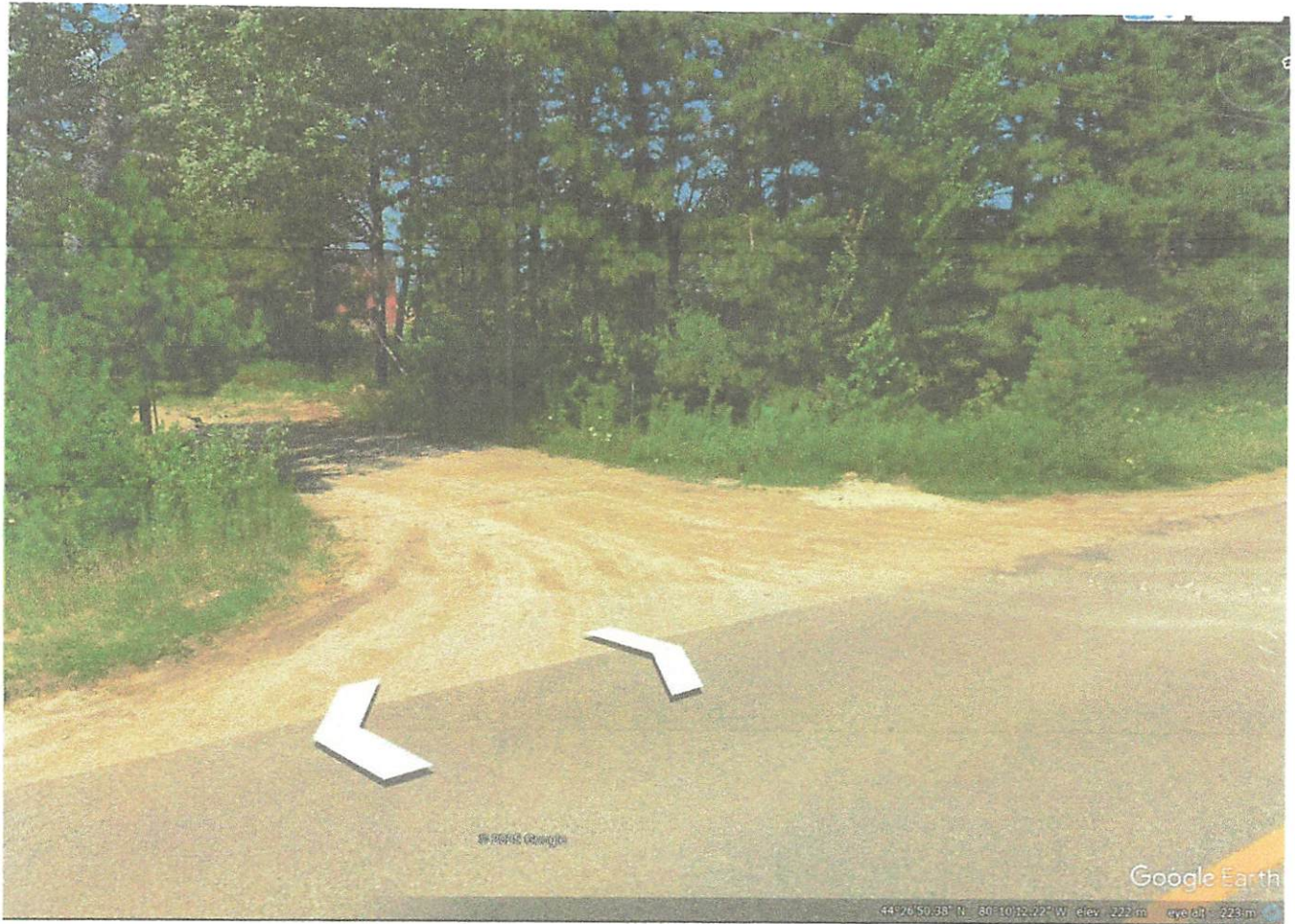
Above: Google Earth Image, June 2015



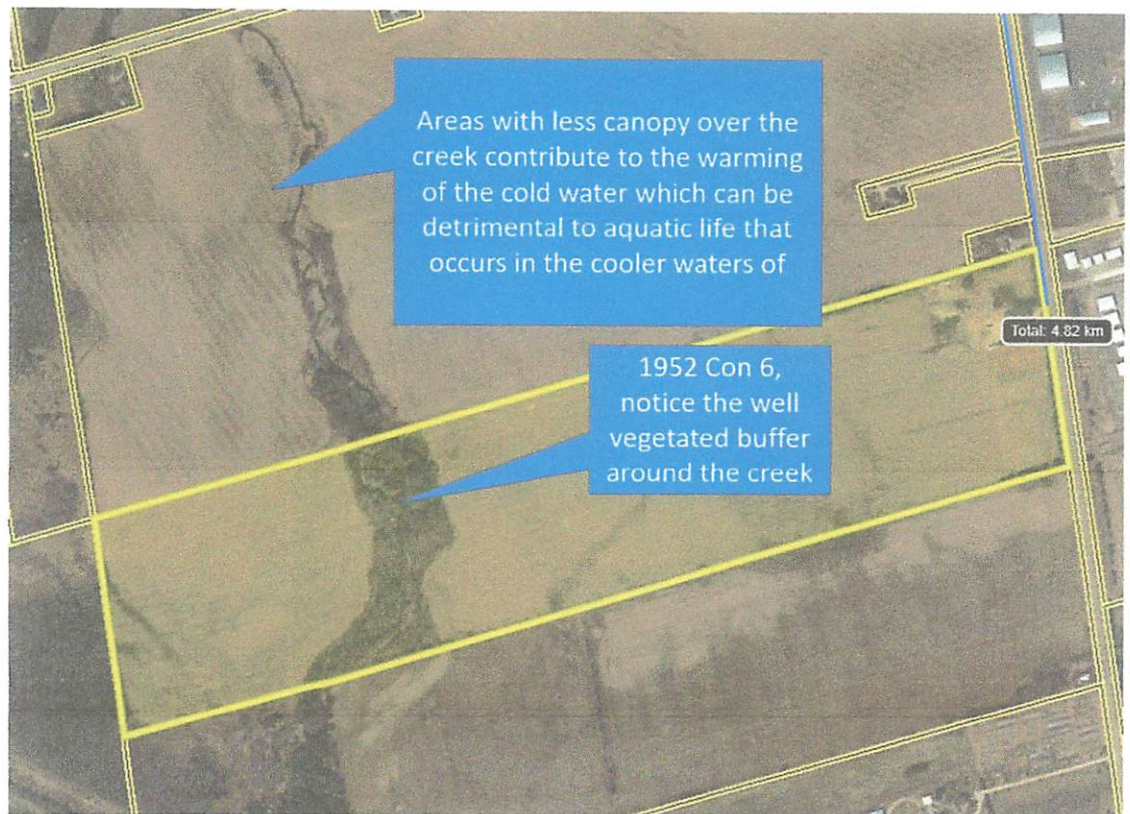
Above: Google Earth Image June 2023



Above: Google Earth Image (Streetview) Aug 2023



Above: Google Earth Image (Streetview) Aug 2023



Above: The Batteaux Creek wetland at 1952 exhibits good tree cover, allowing the spring fed waters to stay cool for aquatic life that thrive in the cold water.