

**A first step towards the dynamic use of the territory of our rural communities**

Cowansville, Thursday, June 16 2011 - During the year 2010, the Brome-Missisquoi region drafted a development plan for agricultural zones (PDZA) that established a land use strategy focused on the development and the vitality of rural communities. As well, in the spirit of the PDZA, the Brome-Missisquoi MRC, in cooperation with the 21 municipalities in the territory, undertook reviews under the framework of part 1 of article 59 (application regarding a collective approach) of the Act respecting the preservation of agricultural land and agricultural activities (LPTAA).

This effort aims to recognize the non-agricultural nature of certain sectors located in agricultural zones, and give the power to allow the construction of new residences to fill vacant spaces, and this, without adding additional constraints on agricultural activities. These sectors, where one sees a concentration of residential uses in an agricultural zone are called destructured tracts of land. After many months of work, the Brome-Missisquoi MRC and the municipalities identified 185 destructured tracts of land located in agricultural zones.

Last May, the MRC presented a request to the Commission de protection du territoire agricole (Quebec's agricultural land use commission, or CPTAQ) so that it could analyze the proposal to allow destructured tracts of land.

It is therefore following the analysis of these proposals by the interested parties that important negotiation sessions between representatives of the CPTAQ, the Union des Producteurs Agricoles, the MRC and the municipalities of Brome-Missisquoi were held on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>.

At the end of the second day of negotiations, the parties reached an agreement in principle on 172 of the destructured tracts out of 185. Of the 172 tracts accepted, 28 of them were divided into two or three sub-tracts in order to better reflect the on-site reality of these areas. Over the course of the coming weeks the CPTAQ, the Union des Producteurs Agricoles and the MRC will carry out a cartographic validation and specify the standards and criteria that will apply to the construction of new residences.

Over the next few weeks, the CPTAQ will write up its preliminary orientation and its final decision is expected before the fall. After that the MRC must draw up an Interim Control Bylaw in order to bring this decision into effect. These new clauses are expected to come into effect by the end of 2011.

Without being able at this time to reveal the actual number of new residences that could be built within these destructured tracts, it can be said that this effort will allow us to welcome hundreds of new families to the magnificent countryside of Brome-Missisquoi, and this, without putting increased pressure on the milieu and agricultural activities.

For more information on this issue, contact Francis Dorion, assistant director general and director of the land use management service at 450-266-4900, extension 237.

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