

Our thoughts on Old Main Street Tertiary Plan

We, Everett and Trudy Baker are the land owners at 218 Old Main Street. We purchased the property about 20 years ago as investment for our retirement. At that time, we and other neighbours spoke with a Town of Newmarket representative about our plans to develop the lot at or near our retirement. We were assured that to be OK.

We are pleased to read the opening sentence of the tertiary plan: "Newmarket is poised for growth." We are happy that the Town of Newmarket plans call for substantial investment in a new infrastructure, to allow for improved stormwater management facilities, the establishment of new pedestrian connections, gateway features, and the enhancement of Old Main Street. Such a bold endeavor costs money, hence we support the proposed increase in population density so that the full burden of the tax required does not fall on the current homeowners, our neighbours on the street. Of the initial proposed plans, plan # 3 appears to best allow for enough density to subsidize the cost of the planned infrastructure. We would like to see blocked development. As well we like to see street-frontage semis with a private road with a mix of semis and towns. Private roads on the West side of the street will help maintain the rural, cottage-like character of Old Main Street. The recent (Jan 14) introduction and acceptance of a Private road on the West side of the street will help maintain the rural, cottage-like character of Old Main Street, and allow for the infill of more housing, of the types and sizes people need. It will also support the costs of developing the infrastructure.

We are seriously concerned about the designation of a large area on the West side of Old Main street as heritage lands. The area is not currently considered a protected area. Our property is listed as part of the 'future' heritage designation yet most of the trees are Scots Pines which have died and are dying. In fact, Scots Pines are detrimental to neighbouring native trees.

In an article written by the Ontario Invasive Plants Council I read that many imported Scots Pine were planted in the 1950s and 1980's because they were one of the most sought-after Christmas trees at that time. They are fast growing trees with a short live span producing many seeds that spread and develop into aggressively growing seedlings which outcompete native wildflowers, grasses as well as native oak, maple and pine species. The Scots Pine has invasive characteristics and provide a home for some insect pests (also imported) and diseases which spread to valued native tree species. source http://www.ontarioinvasiveplants.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/OIPC_BMP_ScotsPine_FINAL_Mar292017_D4.pdf

There are a couple of large Oak trees just outside our fence line, large Oaks but they have not nearly reached their 400 years expected life span. Also, there are 3 young oaks about 6 to 10 feet tall, on our property. Five years ago, those Oak trees were healthy and well. Today the large Oaks are showing an unusual large amount of dead wood in them, and 2 of the 3 young Oaks are totally dead.

Why would anyone want to allocate an area with diseased imported trees that spread diseases and insects to native Oaks and Maples as Heritage lands?

We really like living on Old Main Street. It is a very unique location in Newmarket with small-town charm close to big-city amenities. At this time in our lives, however, maintaining our

rather large property is becoming difficult. We would love to see meaningful development with new building typologies, interspersed with a select number of native feature trees, and be able to buy back into a new home of our choice and remain residents of this very special neighbourhood in Newmarket. We, like so many others, appreciate being close to the Davis Drive corridor, walking distance to public transportation, being able to get around with minimum use of a car, close to the Tom Taylor Trail for the opportunity to go for long walks enjoying the natural environment.

We appreciate the opportunity to have input into the process. We love the Town of Newmarket for their top-quality services and programs which provide a quality of life second to none. We are concerned about the future of people who wish to live close to public transportation to protect the environment. We are concerned about the presence of diseased imported trees that threaten native species. We are concerned about the costs of the plan and hence applaud the opportunity for meaningful infill of more homes of the types and sizes people need.

We request and strongly urge the town to delay the decision about what to allow for development of Old Main and do further study of the concerns raised today by many of our neighbours living on the street.

Respectfully submitted

Everett and Trudy Baker

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