

Thank you,

I would like to first thank the Town of Newmarket for the opportunity to submit my views and opinions regarding the subject re-zoning to Town Council. I would also like to commend YRPA and Marianneville Stonehaven Ltd. for pulling together the various reports relating to potential zoning amendments, redevelopment opportunity and associated impacts. I have learned a lot by going through all the reports in detail.

Many years ago, my wife and I chose Newmarket to raise our 3 children, not far from the subject lands, because of the nearby green spaces available. I am writing to Town Council in the hopes that you will truly take into consideration the many conclusions provided by the various reports regarding this zoning amendment and potential redevelopment impact. At first the reports appear to suggest redevelopment is possible with minimal impact to the environment and the existing south east communities. However, with closer scrutiny you will realize the proposal represents a poor use of these lands.

The subject property provides the community with a unique ecological, cultural and recreational perseveration & community enrichment opportunity.

In reviewing the reports, I trust Council will also conclude that the subject property can and should be better utilized. The attempt to align with the Provinces Growth Plan and limit urban sprawl, a well-intentioned goal is commendable, however, this parcel of greenspace does not fit well within the spirit of the Plan. The subject lands are unique in that they are part of an area that includes meadows, wetlands, woodlots, and outdoor recreational facilities. The Town's own Natural Heritage System is comprised of these three designations:

1. Meadow
2. Woodlot
3. Wetland

Wildlife is present and active. I have personally documented 19 species of birds, including Herons, Owls, and Hawks as recent as this past summer. Coyotes, deer, racoons, skunks, and turtles are also present and would be negatively impacted by this development regardless of mitigation. The Planning Justification Report clearly concludes that successful preservation of existing trees is not possible under the current redevelopment proposal. What we should be considering is a reintroduction of native species of trees and plants, thus protecting and enhancing the meadows, wetlands, and woodlots, rather than placing greater pressure on them.

This site is also rich with history, both due to our Euro-Canadian and Indigenous ancestors. The reports clearly acknowledge that given the proximity to Bayview Ave. (a historical transportation route) and Weslie Creek (a source of potable clean water), it is highly likely that these lands are archeologically significant. The Stephens Family Burial Grounds may also contain more than the already identified 32 graves and should not be further disturbed.

We are at a time and place where our history must be preserved for our children and newcomers. The site including the Stephens Family Burial Grounds, old homestead and associated old farmlands provide a great opportunity for our Town to preserve some of our history and it should not be wasted. During the last election I voted for our current Mayor, Mr. John Taylor, largely because of the wonderful support to creatively redevelop the Mulock Farm. I believe that a similar opportunity exists with the subject property. The space was originally designated "Parks and Open Space" for a reason and Council should not undo the

spirit of that designation. The proposal under consideration is devoid of any creativity and completely discounts the value of preserving our history, wildlife, and natural land features.

South east Newmarket could benefit from a more creative plan within the current designation. The YRPA, more than any other organization should recognize the value of retaining inner city green space and how the community can benefit.

During the current COVID-19 pandemic we have witnessed – and continue to witness – the valuable role open spaces play in maintaining positive physical and mental health across all age groups. Although privately owned, the property has always played an important role in the community. Many thanks to the YRPA who have been exceptional caretakers over the years, preserving wildlife and the integrity of its natural features. They permitted, and in fact encouraged, residents to enjoy this beautiful property. Sadly, organized soccer or baseball games could not take place this past summer, but alternative uses evolved. People have been seen enjoying a picnic, walking their pets, playing organized volleyball and practising outdoor Yoga and Tai Chi on site.

Within the current zoning designation, I am confident that our Town Planners, Council, and residents can collectively come up with a much better use for this property; one that benefits all Newmarket residents. These lands clearly have a role to play in our community which goes far beyond simply adding higher density, residential housing.

Most people will understand this proposed development is a potentially lucrative economic undertaking. However, the benefits are limited to the property owners, developers and perhaps tax collectors. Current and future residents of south east Newmarket will be materially impacted through the loss of greenspace, recreational space, added congestion and disturbed places of historical significance. Wildlife will also experience added pressure due to the disturbance of the wetlands and meadows during and after construction. Within proximity of the subject site are two schools, a retirement complex and existing mixed density housing, all of which could benefit from a more creative use of these lands.

I thank the Town of Newmarket for taking the time to listen to our concerns. I believe many of my fellow residents feel as I do, that this proposal lacks creativity and if approved by Council would result in a lost opportunity to preserve our history and to create a site that pays respect to our Indigenous ancestors, protects and restores wildlife and the natural environment.

Thank You,

Frank De Luca