

Please forward on my behalf to Mayor Taylor and Council and Planning Department. For Public Record.

Dear Mr. Mayor and Town Councillors and Planning Department,

I am writing to you at this time to add my voice to the growing chorus of residents of Newmarket who are shocked and disappointed that you are considering allowing Development on the Oak Ridges Moraine along the south west boundary of the Town of Newmarket.

As many of us in Ontario are aware, the Conservative government led by Doug Ford continues to demonstrate a concerning disregard for the well- fare of Ontario's natural environment. Recently (budget bill, schedule #6) they undermined the importance of the Conservation Authority (established in 1946 to look after the well-fare of Ontario's natural environment and the people who would be adversely affected by floods, droughts, loss of wetlands and green spaces); defanging them; reducing their strength from protection to one of advisory. The government has also decided to circumvent many of the checks and balances that have been in place by giving the MZO a key role in degrading our natural environment , most distressingly the Oak Ridges Moraine (we see the destruction beginning already at Duffin's Creek and in King City) for the benefit of developers.

There are many reasons why you, Mr. Mayor, and the Town Council supported by the Planning Department should be demonstrating restraint and a conscience driven reluctance to follow the lead of Mr. Ford and his government.

Once the land has been destroyed there is no reclaiming it. A point that should be foremost in your decision making. If you err now you cannot redeem yourself later. The saving of the Oak Ridges Moraine was a long, hard fought battle. The moraine is a unique area of environmental, hydrological and geological habitat.

Shame on you if you choose to ignore its value to our community and the community of GTA and beyond those borders.

Let me share with you some of my concerns ~

Urban sprawl has been shown to be a poor model for providing housing - infrastructure is expensive; providing public transportation is costly and ineffective; the car becomes essential adding to pollution ; residents live far from jobs and recreation and entertainment adding to stress and infringing on family time; land and it's flora and fauna are destroyed much of which is integral to our own well being; in the case of the Oak Ridges Moraine, a clean and abundant water source is compromised;

There is a proven link between wellness and green space. This shouldn't be ignored. If you as leaders in our community don't take a stand, then what is your priority? Money over Mental Health.

With this proposal before you, you have a unique opportunity to make an important and far reaching difference. Be a model for other municipalities.

In her book, *To Speak for the Trees*, world- recognized botanist, bio-medical chemist and author Diana Beresford-Kroeger writes, " But now we find ourselves in a special time. On the one hand, climate change poses the most significant threat to our planet that humanity has ever faced. On the other, we are better equipped than ever before to take on that challenge. ... We need to see all that the sacred cathedral of the forest (and wetlands and rocks and streams and grasses...) offers us, and understand that among (our choices) is a way to save the world."

The Globe and Mail(G&M) last week carried an editorial, In Ontario, Ford sells out the future. You have an opportunity to be wise.

Do not follow the lead of someone who is blatantly uninterested in the welfare of our Ontario society's long term needs;

With the defanging of the Conservation Authority it is incumbent upon local councils and planning departments to turn their back on Municipal Zoning Orders (MZOs) and champion, yes, independently regulate, around ... sensitive zones.

Thinking that giving up a small portion of the moraine to urban sprawl will do no harm is the kind of "myopic political thinking that comes home to roost." (G&M);

The Oak Ridges Moraine was put aside and protected for decades, don't give this important land away, there are other ways to provide housing for the future. Density. Newmarket already has a plan in place to carefully develop residential accommodation along the Yonge Street, Mulock to Davis Drive corridor and the Yonge Street to Prospect Avenue corridor; I believe there is development planned for the Town land on Eagle Street west of Main Street. And what is happening with the land north of Davis Drive on the east side of Yonge Street, across from Upper Canada Mall. Why is it sitting idle? As well, the land that borders the moraine in the SW corner of the Town of Newmarket can provide further development opportunities while leaving the moraine as a protected area.

The need to build homes and long term care facilities on the Oak Ridges Moraine is a red herring. There are other solutions. Be creative!

I sincerely hope that you will make it a part of your legacy on Town of Newmarket Council to be steadfast in your respect for the protection of our valuable natural spaces. After all, if not you, who?

Sincerely,
Patricia Montgomery,
Lorne Avenue, Newmarket