

Hello,

As a Newmarket resident, I'd like to voice my concerns over the development proposal on sensitive and protected Oak Ridges Moraine land.

The reasons these lands were protected in the first place are not only still relevant, but more so. The incredible value of wetlands and forests in absorbing carbon need to be factored in the equation. Where cities and towns around the world are pledging carbon neutrality, increased urban forest targets, increased access to greenspaces, how can Newmarket be considering the opposite? Especially in light of the new population numbers we are to expect.

If you are under the impression this land is not truly of ecological importance, look back at historical maps of our town. The rivers and wetlands there, abutting the spectacular forests on the other side of Bathurst, make this land a vital ecological corridor. Despite the large proportion of agriculture on the current land, restoration on those parcels would not only be possible, it would be appropriate given all the development our entire region is facing.

Please note I am not anti-development, but do believe new development needs to be aligned with the best land use practices and exemplary models we should be emulating for our future Newmarket residents.

A forward thinking Newmarket should understand the future includes serious concerns around our very survival under the real and urgent climate crisis and biodiversity loss before us. Paving over the last remaining greenspaces in town is very short sighted. Entire new subdivisions, of low to medium density housing, is not the way forward, nor will it make much difference in meeting the housing needs of the present and future. The most urgent housing needs are affordable and rental - neither of which this proposal would achieve. Developing this unique and special part of Newmarket in the status quo way is last century planning around car-centered lifestyles not communities that are walkable and connected, vibrant and healthy. We can do better, and should.

I moved here from a GTA city that maxed out its urban sprawl several decades ago. I grew up in a new subdivision, just like the one being proposed. How rich of me to NIMBY this development you may think. To which I say, while my childhood home was spacious and new, its effect was that it made me realize other values of greater importance. It's an area 30 years later still devoid of large trees or features that allow for the missing connection to what ultimately sustains us - nature. My experience as a ten year old looking unsuccessfully for any signs of life that first summer in a sterile patch of land propelled me into a career in conservation, trying in earnest to make amends for humanity's many mistakes. It never really felt like a respectful home and its why I had no remorse leaving that town. Our proximity to nature in Newmarket is a treasure, a legacy. It is why I love it here.

Towns get to make these decisions only once. In your upcoming considerations on how to move forward, look forward to what the future generations will value and need. Look to smart growth recommendations. Look to full cost accounting. The economics of the world will quickly shift to account for our new challenges and opportunities. Is this really just about a new tax base? How

about new town costs for those roads and runoff, infrastructure, amenities. How will carbon taxes influence all our lives? With some imagination Newmarket, the case study town that chose necessary nature over profit, would be quite the reputation. What is at stake of being lost will be gone forever.

Sincerely,
Melissa Rosato