

Deputation re: Shining Hill Estates Collection Inc., proposal to amend the Official Plan

The list of development-induced **environmental degradations** is long, but includes:

- **It removes farmland and wild spaces** forever; they cannot be rebuilt.
- Paving open land or covering it with houses **lets less water get to the water table**.
- As well, laying pipe can pierce water tables and **cause aquifers to drain**.
- In **car-dependent** neighbourhoods, people have to drive more, with all the **pollution** that causes.

There are **things we worry about** with this specific plan:

- Newmarket currently has almost no real green space. This development will **take away** much of the largest piece of Newmarket's remaining green space.
- Construction equipment spreads harmful plants, especially **phragmites**. Newmarket already has serious phragm problems in Fairy Lake and elsewhere.
- This could be a **slice-and-dice** approach to wetlands, carving it up into thin bands that will become useless for environmental protection, leading to their eventual **abandonment**. This land is already adjacent to developed neighbourhoods, which **will stress the environment**.

If the development goes ahead,

- **Setbacks** from water must be made sufficient to protect wildlife from lawn & garden runoff & seeds, people, pets (esp cats). I have seen homeowners clear a full 10m boundary between their houses & wetland to use as an extension of their yards.
- It must be created as a "**complete community**", a mix of residential, retail, office, commercial, cultural etc facilities, and not just some little dead-end strip mall with a convenience store. Residents must have things to do within **walking and cycling** distance. It must support the **work-play-stay** approach that Newmarket has espoused.
- **Protecting** remaining green space must be a major goal.
- The residential components should not be all single-family dwellings. **Medium-rise**, such as 3- to 5-story buildings, should be part of the mix. Similarly, no more large (monster) homes should be built.
- **The road** proposed to connect Bathurst and Yonge must be designed to protect wetlands, and provide safe passage and migration routes for animals and birds.

We have to be mindful of our Provincial Gov't's many regulatory changes, hostile to the environment and favourable to developers, including: unprecedented and extreme use of MZO's; undermining Conservation Authorities, possibly including last week's creation of a conservation authorities working group with some of the Province's largest developers sitting in an advisory capacity. This is the first time Council has been asked to give ground on this Environmental Protection Area; if you approve it, you should be able to attach many requirements.

Sincerely

Dave Kempton and Peggy Stevens, Newmarket