

Fern Petrie

Thank you to the mayor and city councillors for the opportunity to speak to you today. I've submitted a letter of objection to the Argo proposal to develop a portion of Millcroft golf course but I also felt compelled to speak today.

We have been residents of Burlington for almost 60 years and of Millcroft for over 25 years. We originally lived on Muirfield Court and raised our family there. We retired and now live on Taywood Drive backing onto the 15th fairway. I grew up in this city and when our family was transferred back to Burlington from London Ontario in 1995, I knew immediately that this was where we wanted to live. The Millcroft Community strikes an admirable balance between residential and open space/parkland allowing for the enjoyment of its innate characteristics. The large lots and beautiful homes with the golf course at its centre immediately felt like home. We held annual golf tournaments at Millcroft with our neighbours on Muirfield for many years.

Our children spent their teen years growing up in Millcroft, playing golf and taking lessons and both bought their first homes here. Why? Because they wanted to their own families to enjoy growing up here as well. We have a real sense of community.

We look out our back doors now and enjoy that open space, watching the golfers and the wildlife. With this proposed infill development, we are extremely concerned about the loss of this green space, the affects on wildlife, the depreciated home values, and the increased traffic during and after construction. The proposed truncated redesign of the golf course will result in a less desirable course translating into fewer golfers. Realistically it will only be a matter of time before the entire open space and golf course is proposed for development should this initial phase be allowed to proceed. It becomes a ripple effect setting a dangerous precedent.

Millcroft is a wonderful community with the open space at its heart. Burlington's Official Plan Section 6.3.1 Major Parks and Open Space Designation - under Objectives it states:

To recognize parks and open space lands as valuable resources to the community that play an important role in defining the character and lifestyle of the City's residents.

A home is the largest investment that most people make in their lifetime. Before you purchase, you do your homework. You drive the neighbourhood, look at the schools, the parks and open space. If you are wise, as most homeowners are, you look at the community as a whole, and you check the zoning on any open spaces adjacent to the property you are considering. Frequently you pay a significant premium to be next to that open space. I'm quite sure that Argo also did their homework and were well aware of the open space zoning prior to purchasing the Millcroft property.

In addition to the City's Official Plan, zoning bylaws protect the community and its residents from conflicting and possibly dangerous land uses. Years of research, expertise and forethought result in the final design.

Why do we have an Official Plan and zoning bylaws if they are not going to be adhered to and if developers can propose changes strictly with profits in mind?

In Millcroft many residents have created the backyard oasis they dreamed of and Argo is proposing to shatter that dream. They plan to destroy the green space by removing over 400 trees, building large homes on small lots with narrow private roads. In some cases existing homeowners will have a street in front and behind their properties under Argo's plan. How can that be considered compatible with the existing neighbourhood? North Burlington already has diversity in the higher density housing available in the communities of The Orchard and Alton Village. Millcroft is unique and it represents an alternate option to homeowners.

Burlington has been voted the best city to live in in Canada and with good reason. The Millcroft community beautifully represents this honour.

I am asking the city to reject Argo's proposal and to protect this green space that defines our first class community.

Thank you.