

Daintry Klein

Mayor, City Councillors, City Staff, Fellow Millcroft Neighbours and citizens.

I am speaking today at this meeting because I am very concerned about Argo's planning applications that upset the drainage and stormwater management plan, not only for Millcroft but for South Burlington as well. I am a business person, not a stormwater engineer but I feel an obligation to become as informed as possible and to raise my concerns with the City. I understand that there is a lot of money at stake here for Argo, Mr. Liptay, their consultants who have been paid to write these reports and the City and its taxpayers, who will probably become financially responsible for the damage from this proposed development. We are asking the experts in this City to carefully consider the impact, not only of the currently proposed development, but the cumulative effects of the next phases that Millcroft Greens has in mind for Millcroft, the elimination of the golf course and its need to take water, as well as the development north of Highway 5, and intensification around us including Uptown.

The Globe and Mail on January 18th 2021 front page news was that the Canadian insurance industry paid out \$2.4 billion because of severe weather events last year continuing the trend of mounting losses. It states, "But continued development of urban areas also plays a significant role. We're developing over our wetlands in areas that are capable of naturally absorbing all of this moisture that's coming in rainfall. And now we're hardening our surfaces, it's harder for sewer systems to catch up."

I read with interest the recently released report "Climate Change and the preparedness of 16 Major Canadian Cities" prepared by the University of Waterloo – Intact Centre on Climate Adaptation. I am given to understand that this group was formed as a result of the 2014 flood here in Burlington. The report addresses the exact reason we are here today discussing stormwater concerns.

The Nature Conservancy of Canada refers to forests, wetlands and grasslands as the superheroes of flood control. According to this organization, urban planners are seeing the benefits of incorporating natural spaces into residential areas. The more plants and trees we have around us, the more water can be slowed down and absorbed.

We have experienced many heavy precipitation events in the past 30 years, but I don't recall situations that resulted in flooding and water saturating the golf course like we had in 2014 and 2020. It is documented that more severe storms are occurring with greater frequency now than when the Millcroft Golf Course and its stormwater management features were built in 1987. Perhaps additional development on the land between Millcroft and the escarpment namely, Argo's Alton Village, are increasing the runoff volume and flow rates that we experience here. Heads up south Burlington, now they are proposing to develop our green space and take Millpond off line so that the full force of water can surge down the narrower channel of Appleby Creek at a faster flow rate. And Mr. Liptay has applied for a Permit to Take Water for the golf course probably without disclosing that the existence of the golf course is up for discussion and the flood management plan will have been approved with potentially different information.

While I have lived here for thirty years, I only recently became aware of the stormwater features of the golf course. As a golfer, I thought that the undulating topography of the course was simply to increase the difficulty of play. The 1985 Proctor and Redfern Report provides background information and a different perspective on the design and structure of the golf course as a Stormwater system for the City of Burlington. The fairways are currently 2.5 meters below the rear yards of our homes to protect us from the runoff that occurs from the escarpment toward Lake Ontario. The absorption of the grasses

and the trees provide a holding tank to protect Millcroft and South Burlington from the full impact of stormwater. You may notice the course design has a figure of 8 pattern that has a correlation to the flow of water, naturally established by the local Appleby and Sheldon creeks and their watersheds. Imagine the amount of stormwater that is stored over the 18 fairways on this golf course. If you observe the course's topography you will notice the strategic locations of berms to deflect the water away from the homes and toward the middle of the fairways and ultimately to drainage swales. On a personal note, during our renovation in 2019 when the concrete floor was cut and excavated, the ground water was at the level of our basement floor. Our basement is a 1980s style 8 foot depth and the relief in our rear yard from the back of the house is about 4 feet. I can't imagine what will happen when the significant berm behind our home that stops the over ground flows during storms is flattened and paved.

This delegation doesn't provide adequate time to discuss the concerns that we have regarding the details of the reports that Argo and Millcroft Greens have provided with this application. We will look forward to a meeting with the stormwater and planning departments to discuss our concerns in the near future. Suffice it to say that the disclaimers and letters of reliance provided by Burnside and DS Consultants are concerning. Also, the Functional Servicing Report raises that Conservation Halton is looking for "demonstration that the proposed alteration of Mill Pond and the creek is not only to facilitate more developable land but that it also provides additional upstream/downstream benefits and that it is in the public interest." We haven't seen this information, and believe that it should have formed part of the application for this development. The City needs this information to properly evaluate this proposal and unfortunately, the Provincial planning requirements don't provide adequate time for this now. It should have been provided with the original application.

A few other observations I would like to make:

The proposed A and D areas of development are affected by floodplains and Area B was highlighted in the City's 2015 report as number 4 of 16 flood vulnerable areas in the City of Burlington.

Do we value front yards, back yards and a golf course where our children can play and our residents can relax and enjoy some open space and privacy. Or do we choose a City of intense development filled with fenced Storm water ponds that concentrate such items as chemicals and oils in pools that breed mosquitoes.

Last week I received a notification about snow removal - not clearing but removal program in Alton Village, an intense development built by Argo Corporation, owners of Millcroft Greens. The instructions from the City were to park your cars somewhere else, recreation centres etc so that they can remove the snow. I was unaware of this need as we have not experienced this here in Millcroft yet. A few days later, I notice piles of dirty snow in our Millcroft Park parking lot.

Technical fixes. If they work, why do we have all these insurance issues? There is a growing problem of development without realistic expectations of the full impact on our environment. I have witnessed a home with a deep basement on a hot day in July of a dry summer. I couldn't help but notice the sounds of the two sump pumps and the dehumidifiers working in the basement. You see, the basement is into the water table. The builder suggested that he identified the issue while digging the foundation and raised the issue. He normally builds houses not boats. You see, we are not eliminating the water we are just displacing it. How will the water from the disconnected downpipes from roofs of the proposed

development flow underground? We are altering the natural order of the ecosystem. And where are we displacing it to? The amount of water doesn't change, it is a question of what we do with it.

You may or may not have considered that it is becoming more difficult to get flood insurance and if you do have it, collecting on a claim is very difficult. Is this because we haven't accepted that we are overdeveloping and developing in higher risk ways? Will it be possible to get a mortgage on these new homes that are built on floodplains? While many people finish basements, they are often used to store important documents and precious memorabilia. I will be sure to keep my important files in a safe and dry place so that I can review these thoughts and the application in the future.

In closing, Millcroft Golf Course was originally designed as both open space and a stormwater management plan for Millcroft and South Burlington. This land has been designated as parks and open space in both the 2008 and 2020 Official Plans for valid reasons. In accordance with the expert advice from the Nature Conservancy, we are asking you to maintain your position. Please protect us, the taxpayers from the ongoing long-term real risk of flooding and financial liability from this proposed development and ensure that this application is declined on all levels. The community is engaged and we are here to support this decision.