

February 25, 2021

City of Burlington

Community Planning, Regulation & Mobility Committee,

As a delegate for Millcroft Against Development (MAD), as well as a 24 year resident of the Millcroft community, I have serious concerns regarding the proposed development of portions of the Millcroft Golf Course (MGC) by Millcroft Greens (a partnership between ARGO Developers and Ed Liptay). There have been suggestions that Ed Liptay is unhappy with the return on investment of the golf course in its existing form and the partial re-development will assist in that respect. Mr. Liptay's motives are quite clear from his past actions, a prime example being his purchase of Richview Golf Course in Oakville with which he profited substantially by replacing it with homes. Another example was intercepted by the City of Oakville when he tried to do the same to Deerfield Golf; a venture which was unsuccessful for him.

Enter Millcroft! I would suggest his purchase of MGC was for the sole purpose of developing the land. The profitability of MGC in its current form could be accomplished through more effective management and a greater focus on several ancillary revenue sources. The years 2019 and 2020 are not representative financial measures due to weather (2019) and Covid19 (2020). In the interest of full disclosure, Mr. Liptay should be willing to share the financial results from 2015 to 2018 in adequate detail to ascertain the true reasons for deterioration of the MGC profitability (if there was any). This would reveal whether the deterioration was business levels or management disinterest, or whether the deterioration existed at all.

Quotes from the September 21, 2020 Community meeting in which the representative of Millcroft Greens stated "The plan to keep the golf course is an objective of both parties." (ARGO and Liptay) (p22/145 lines 10 & 11); followed by the statement that "...it is a key principle...it will **remain** an 18 hole golf course." (p22/145 lines 13 & 14) (emphasis added).

Based on the "commitment" of Millcroft Greens in the above quotes, and in the interest of full disclosure, they should be compelled to produce a comprehensive business plan with detailed assumptions supporting that a par 62 alternative 18 hole course is **truly** viable in the long term ("**remain**" from above). This should then be independently evaluated for reasonableness of assumptions.

I would suggest that moving to this format will have a devastating impact on the financial results of MGC as well as serious safety implications to all residents abutting the new golf course. A few points on these topics follow:

- Intermediate and above golfers will mostly have little interest in a par 62 executive course of less than 4000 yards driving customer numbers of fairly skilled golfers down;
- Green fees for this style course would likely be half of MGC rates currently and there is no way rounds can be doubled to make up the lost revenue. Oak Gables near Ancaster has 3 nine hole courses any two of which are over 4000 yards and their maximum 18 hole green fee is \$36;
- The shorter format would attract beginners and novice golfers with more limited golf skills and less awareness of community golf etiquette (including when to yell "FORE").

Based on the loss of customers with skill and the significant drop in green fee revenue, I would suggest that the replacement 18 hole course would **NOT** be viable in the short term, let alone the long term, and we would see the next development application for the remaining open space within 3 to 5 years. I would further suggest that Millcroft Greens is fully cognizant of these facts and chose to exclude any information on viability of the par 62 course in their submission. I would suggest their intent long term is full redevelopment.

In addition to the development concerns, there will be an intervening period of significant danger to all residents abutting the golf course. The video on golf ball spray on Millcroft Green's website is, in my opinion, significantly flawed. With very unskilled beginner golfers ultimately becoming the majority customers of the Par 62 course, there will be significantly more tendency for spray to worsen, not improve as claimed by Millcroft Greens in their video. I would suggest the yellow spray they present will actually be a much deeper shade of red than the existing course. The worsening of the spray will likely result in more injuries to residents enjoying their back yards as well as increased property damage.

Based on the above, Millcroft Greens should be required to produce or fund the following:

1. An independent evaluation of the 2015 to 2018 financial results of MGC to ascertain the true deterioration in profitability (if any);
2. An independent evaluation of the Par 62 golf course viability based on their detailed business plan submission (yet to be submitted); and
3. A comprehensive safety assessment by an independent party in the golf industry evaluating the golf ball spray risk to the Millcroft residents resulting from a substantial reduction in golfer skill levels typically attending a par 62 3900 yard course.

It is the City's responsibility to ensure any development within its boundaries does not endanger the safety of its residents. That alone should support the need for the above evaluations/studies. Although funded by Millcroft Greens, selection of evaluators should be the responsibility of the City.

Sincerely,

David Wagstaff, CPA, CA ACC