

REMARKS – BARRY WYNER – MARCH 4TH, 2021 – CONTINUATION OF
DELEGATION FROM ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED DATE OF MARCH 2, 2021

Madam Mayor, members of council, city staff, the Millcroft community at large, and Millcroft Greens representatives.

I am here as a resident, but also a supporter of MAD.

Thank you for allowing me to speak today and hopefully my comments and the comments of all others before and after me will be seriously considered in your deliberations.

With due respect to all the participants, I will be honest; my cynicism leads me to worry that we are just going through the motions. No doubt Millcroft Greens has spent large sums of money thus far and always wonder when a developer has spent this type of money, do they already know that ultimately, they will be permitted to go ahead with the proposal or with some minor modifications? I hope that is not the case and trust all the decision makers in this process will prove me wrong.

Bottom line: do not allow this development to proceed. Stop this proposal in its tracks.

My written submission of January 20th is already in your documents and I was going to read that in its entirety. However, given that many of my issues have already been presented by the delegations before me, (which to me is a significant point for all of you to consider); I decided instead to take a different tact.

It was perhaps fortunate that I was not able to delegate at my initial date on Tuesday March 2nd to present these comments now.

During your deliberations, I want all of you to ask the question “how does Millcroft Greens’ proposal fit into” the spirit in the City’s own documents.

In this regard, I refer you to the City of Burlington Strategic Plan:

1.2 e) "Older neighbourhoods are important to the character and heritage of Burlington and intensification will be carefully managed to respect these neighbourhoods."

Millcroft Greens’ website has numerous FAQ’s, the first one being:

1. Why Is Millcroft Greens Developing the Golf Course?

“We are developing the golf course because it presents an excellent **infill** opportunity to introduce a few parcels of residential development, while continuing to maintain and operate an 18-hole golf course. We believe that we are better suited to deliver a seamless addition of housing to the Millcroft Community than anyone within the development industry.”

Although infill within existing neighbourhoods is oftentimes unavoidable, Millcroft residents have spoken loud and clear that this proposed development is not a responsible move towards intensification.

Infill refers to the development of vacant parcels within previously built areas. These areas **are** already served by public infrastructure, such as transportation, water, wastewater, and other utilities. Redevelopment describes converting an existing built property into another use.

In my respectful submission, this proposal is nothing close to being an “infill opportunity”. This is a redevelopment that will, if approved, ultimately result in the closure of the entire golf course, no matter what the developer states in their proposal. These are hollow words.

In the original documents, I provided a Toronto Star article as anecdotal evidence of what happens to golf courses, despite the promises of the developer. In the Glenway Golf Course example, the back 9 was never developed as promised and in fact, a housing development is being built on the former back 9 as we speak. This will ultimately happen here; mark my words.

Getting back to the question I am asking you to consider in your deliberations regarding the proposal, at sections of the Strategic Plan:

3.2.g The city recognizes that climate change is a significant issue and is working with the community and all levels of government towards the goal of the Burlington community being *net carbon-neutral.

3.2.h The city will become a leader in storm water management and low impact development.

4.1 • Good Governance

An Engaging City involves residents to enhance sound decisions.

4.1.a The city is known for its sound decision-making processes through initiatives such as creating a Charter of Good Governance that reinforces Burlington’s responsibilities, accountabilities and objectives.

Refer to the glossary of terms and ask, how “how does Millcroft Greens’ proposal fit into” the spirit of these words and definitions:

Community Engagement Charter: The Community Engagement Charter is an agreement between and among Burlington City Council and the community concerning citizen engagement with city government. It establishes the commitments, responsibilities and fundamental concepts of this relationship.

Complete Streets: Policy and design approach where streets are planned and designed to allow for safe, convenient and comfortable travel and access for everyone using any form of transportation.

Good Governance: Governance is the process of decision-making. Good governance is a concept that centres on the responsibility of governments to meet the needs of the people.

“how does Millcroft Greens’ proposal fit into” the spirit of the strategic plan and how does the City plan to address the impacts of the loss of open space on the character of the community if the proposed redevelopment is approved.

Mr. Glenn Wellings- Planning Consultant for Millcroft Greens – in his answer to a question about what has been implemented in the developer’s submission that incorporates the concerns of Millcroft residents, all he said was that nothing has been done because all the comments were just objections. I do not know where Mr. Wellings lives, but it is clear to me, it is not in Millcroft. If he did, I wonder how he would feel and would he be in support of the proposed development? I think not.

Millcroft Greens FAQ

2. Why did Millcroft Greens say they were pursuing development due to safety concerns?

We understand that the concerns raised about safety may feel overblown to some, especially to those who may be trading the occasional broken window for the possibility of their lot no longer backing onto the golf course. However, this does not change the fact that there are ongoing issues with the design of the course. These issues continue to impact the operations of the course and while safety is not the primary reason that Millcroft Greens is pursuing development, we believe that the changes being proposed will significantly mitigate structural issues by shortening and redesigning the layout of the course. The outcome will be a course that is safer for everyone, welcoming for beginners and inviting for a family-friendly atmosphere.

If the current owner of the course felt there were safety issues over the years of ownership, mitigation of this could have been addressed during all these years. No question there are errant golf balls, but this is part of the risk of buying a home that backs onto a golf course.

Presently, the mature trees that already exist at the course, protect many of the homes that surround and/or back onto the course. These trees took some thirty years to grow to this mature state. Many of the homes that back onto the course are not in harm's way. For those that are, certainly the purchasers had their eyes wide open when they purchased their homes. Although I understand their concern, surely, they must have known the inherent risk of doing so. It is not like the golf course was not there at the time of purchase.

My wife (Janice) and I have been Millcroft residents since June 2006. We had a chance to purchase a home backing onto the course but chose not to do so for both financial and concern of errant balls.

I am an avid (albeit average) golfer. I play in the Wednesday Men's league. I can unequivocally tell you that I would not play at the proposed "executive style golf course" should this proposal be approved.

I have reached out to some of my fellow members at the Wednesday men's league and can advise, there is not one member who I spoke with that would be willing to play at such a course. They, like me, will locate and play at another "full length" golf course in the area should the redevelopment proceed.

Let us be honest, this is all about money (and I get it). This proposal is all about making a profit from a redevelopment of the entire course, not just what is currently being proposed in this first phase. I am convinced that this proposal, should it be approved is just the beginning of ultimately closing the entire course for residential redevelopment. I do not believe for one moment that the redesigned course will be financially viable in the long term.

In a normal (non Covid) economic climate, I put it to you that you cannot put any more golfers through an executive style golf course than the current course. Tee times must be spread out in both formats. I also put it to you that the green fees that can be charged to an executive golf course will be less than the green fees charged at a full course. On this hypothesis, the financial model results in a golf course that cannot sustain itself.

I also passionately believe that all residents of Millcroft paid a premium when we purchased our homes; not just those that paid an additional premium to back onto the golf course.

Certain communities have a reputation (for example, Rosedale and The Bridle Path in Toronto; Tyandaga, Roseland and Millcroft in Burlington). These neighbourhoods have an allure about them, and you pay for the privilege of buying a home in such communities.

At the outset, the entire Millcroft development was advertised and sold by Monarch Construction based on it being a golf community. Any change to the layout and length was not what the original (and subsequent) homeowners bought into. Those that back onto the course paid incredible premiums to do so. Subsequent purchasers have also paid a premium.

If this proposed development goes ahead the market value of all homes in the neighbourhood will suffer, not to mention the loss of enjoyment and prestige of backing onto the course. This proposed redevelopment will impact the entire Millcroft neighbourhood.

There is an added concern about road safety if this proposal is approved. The traffic on Millcroft Park Drive and Country Club Drive is horrendous at the best of times. With the new line painting recently added (for parking I think), traffic patterns have become worse. Trucks travelling along each of these roads now sway into oncoming traffic to avoid having their trucks hit by the tree branches that overhang onto the streets at the curb. Add vehicle parking on the street exasperates the problem.

How will golf carts, pedestrians, golfers (walking), bike riders, children walking to and from school share the roads and sidewalks with the proposed additional houses? Currently, as golfers, we cross increasingly busy streets 8 times in the 18 holes. Adding all the houses where the current hole numbers 6 and 7 exist will only add to the traffic in the area. I feel sorry for those homeowners living on Country Club, particularly at the corner of County Club and Millcroft Park Dr., if the proposed development is approved?

Further, per Millcroft Greens' plan, they are proposing private roads where the new homes are going. Golfers/golf carts will have to travel on these private roads to access the various holes. Who will be responsible to maintain these private roads and ensure that they are safe for golfers? Will golfers/golf carts be permitted on these private roads? Will golfers/golf carts be trespassing on these private roads?

Many of the owners of the homes in the neighbourhood have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars for backyard pools, outdoor kitchens, patios, and eating areas. This was to enjoy the outdoor living space; not enjoy neighbours' patios a few feet from the mandated "see through fence". This is an excellent neighbourhood where nature and beautiful homes blend. There is much wildlife that inhabit these areas. No doubt the proposed development will have an impact on these wildlife habitats as well.

As I have already mentioned, I do not believe for one moment that should the proposed development be approved that the reconfigured golf course will be financially feasible. If I am right, the course will ultimately be closed and then

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redeveloped with homes, in an area I might add; that was never designed for such intense development.

Respectfully submitted,

Barry Wyner