

December 6, 2022 - Delegation for Bill 109 “More Homes for Everyone Act, 2022

Mayor, Councillors, City Staff and fellow members of the Community.

As a member of the community and president of Millcroft Greenspace Alliance, I appreciate the opportunity to engage in the process of decision making. Millcroft Greenspace Alliance, a not-for-profit organization that advocates for livable, sustainable communities and responsible development. I would like to extend a special thank you to the planning staff for answering questions and concerns in advance, to assist in shaping our thoughts on Bill 109 and how it will impact not only development in our community but also our property taxes. It appears that as taxpayers we will pay a premium for this new legislation.

Bill 109 in combination with Bill 23 will have a significant impact. The further condensed time frames to consider development applications are bound to have dramatic risks financially and environmentally. Development is becoming a more complex issue; one only has to review the list of reports and consider the agencies that are involved to understand this. Each time we demolish or build, there are environmental impacts from trees cut, drainage patterns affected, wind, urban heat bubbles etc at the site, not to mention the environmental impacts of green house gases of equipment employed and steel, glass and concrete produced.

A recent poll conducted by Pollara Insights and released by the Insurance Bureau of Canada on November 15, 2022 reveals that 85% of Canadians want action on climate adaptation. The main insights include that more must be done to adapt, setting targets for adaptation will ensure communities are better prepared for climate change and that Canadians support government investments in community infrastructure (including natural assets) to protect against flooding. Recent studies and analyses indicate that attention to green house gas emissions alone will not be sufficient to reduce the impacts of climate change. Unfortunately, the planning process is being affected by a Provincial government that chooses to ignore topics relating to climate. Yet, it is reassuring to know that the Federal Minister of the Environment and Climate Change is now weighing in on the Province’s reckless actions. (Globe and Mail). He has given notice that disaster relief is not guaranteed. Perhaps the Federal government can become a more important ally to the City.

While we note the City’s attention to floodplains in the report, we believe that floodplain determination and grading issues are part of the adaptation concerns and that the time for consideration is pre-application and not post application. We are talking about lives and livelihoods when it comes to flooding. Insurance coverage and mortgage ability of homes are at stake.

A thoughtful approach to not only the homes built but the services needed by the new or expanded community require substantial planning considerations. These decisions will impact the City for decades or centuries. This requires appropriate processing times especially in our world of limited resources such as staffing. After reviewing the report for today’s meeting, we appreciate the approach of the planning staff to find innovative ways to continue the required processes while adapting to the new Provincial Legislation. Continuing community engagement was highlighted – thank you.

For community members who have time to be engaged, we have a few requests/questions:

- 1) Time frames for notification and information availability could be improved to allow the community to contribute thoughtful and researched information at the pre-application meeting.

Are there thoughts on increasing or establishing appropriate time frames given the new process?

- 2) Ensure the reports are available on the City's website and the website is functional. The revised website comes with implementation challenges. Also, the quality of the information available is important. An example is the 336 Appleby Line application where the measurements on the drawings are not legible, particularly when expanded. These details can be important. Will all reports be published prior to the pre-application meeting? Will formal delegations become part of the pre-application process? How will the information from the meeting be shared? (Video?)
- 3) How will information shared at the pre-application meeting be processed through to the OLT hearings if an appeal is launched? It's our understanding that participation at the Statutory meeting was a requirement but that participation may now be shifted to the pre-application?
- 4) Will the City begin to publish an information site for each year detailing OLT appeals by developer with the issue(s) highlighted. Subsequent to the hearings, could we have access to the City's position, the Tribunal's decision and the cost to the City of legal representation and outside experts for example. As taxpayers inevitably bear the burden of these costs, it is important for us to understand where the responsibility and accountability for the decisions rests.

Burlington is an enviable City to live in. With the substantial change that is coming forward, it will be important for our Community that residents (taxpayers), developers and the City work collaboratively to continue the legacy. We are well aware that many in the development community show care and concern for the City's Official Plan and by-laws to preserve this legacy. Developers who disregard the City's Official Plan, By-Laws and flood-plain mapping at the taxpayers and resident's peril and expense for their own incremental profit should be visible to the public. Buyer Beware.