

February 12, 2007

To: Members of Planning and Environment Committee

Cc: Other Members of Council

Monique Beauregard, Committee Coordinator

Re: Agenda 4, February 13, 2007. Item 9

Zoning - Part of 4798 Bank Street (File No. D02-2-6-0144)

Dear Members of Committee and Council:

The Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital has on numerous occasions objected to development proposals around and in the Leitrim Wetland and the current proposal is no exception.

The subject lands are part of the Plan of Subdivision that was by delegation to staff approved in July 2006. An OMB appeal of this approval is still pending.

Part of the subject lands consists of **Area #108** in the *Urban Natural Areas Environmental Evaluation* study (approved by Council in 2005 and 2006). When the Plan of Subdivision was being considered by this Committee, the chair of the Ottawa Forests and Greenspace Advisory Committee demonstrated that the evaluation report for this area (based on field work in 2005) was woefully inadequate, which would explain why its significance was rated "low." In 2001, Albert Dugal had provided the Ministry of Natural Resources and the City, free of charge, a plant list of 161 species, of which 21 are Uncommon. The UNAEE report lists only 73 species and missed 20 of the 21 Uncommon species.

Seven species of trees are at least 100 years old, four others at least 150 years and several of the cedars are up to 175 years old. Tree species include Butternut, listed as Endangered on Schedule 1 of the Federal Species At Risk Act and as Threatened on the Ontario list. The UNAEE report described this community as "young to intermediate fresh-moist white cedar-green ash mixed forest" and missed the presence of Butternut completely.

The staff report makes no mention of Area #108 at all, even in its weak "official" form. This is simply unacceptable.

The City has an obligation to protect threatened and uncommon species, not assist in their destruction.

In January 2006, before the Plan of Subdivision was even approved, the developer clearcut the southern portion of this important woodlot. What good then, the innocent would ask, is Condition 93 of the Plan of Subdivision, which states that "The owner shall protect all existing vegetation on site until such time that [sic] a 'Detailed Tree Planting and Conservation Plan' is approved by the City of Ottawa..."

Even the former City of Gloucester, in one of its original (revised) Conditions of Approval in 1996 stated that "The cedar woods along Findlay Creek, west of Highway 31 shall be considered for protection in the final plan..."

Must we now be grateful to the developer that one small square in the current rezoning proposal (an Area D in the eastern end) is to become Open Space? Or are the trees on this block to be destroyed as well, to make room for sports fields?

The western part of the subject lands is part of Leitrim Wetland as defined by the Ministry of Natural Resources in 1989 as well as by the developer's own consultant, Cumming Cockburn, in its 1990 report. A 1991 OMB decision and invention of the concept of a "core" wetland do not change that science-based fact. The definition of the wetland is at the heart of the dispute about development in this area and is sure to be a subject of testimony in another pending appeal of a rezoning, this one approved by Council in September 2006.

Policy 2 of section 2.4.2 of the Official plan states that: "The City will ensure that land is developed in a

manner that is environmentally-sensitive and incorporates **design with nature** principles through the requirements of the development review process..." There is a nice set of trees along the unopened Blais Road extension, another opportunity to respect this "design with nature" policy. There is no sign of that in this rezoning proposal, besides the utter destruction of most if not all of Area #108.

One objective of the Official Plan is to increase **tree cover** to 30%. Destroying a first-rate woodlot and other trees on these subject lands is not helping to achieve this goal. It is also contrary to section 2.4.1 of the Official Plan, "Air Quality and Climate Change."

In conclusion, this rezoning proposal should be rejected.

Respectfully submitted,

Erwin Dreessen

for the Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

George Wilson, Chair