



Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital

Alliance des espaces verts dans la capitale nationale

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Submission to Planning and Environment Committee, June 13, 2006

SUBJECT: Subdivision - PART OF 4784 and 4798 BANK STREET, 4738 and 4742 BANK STREET AND OTHER LANDS IN LOTS 17, 18, 19 and 20, CONCESSION 4, RIDEAU FRONT (File No. D07-16-03-0018)

The Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital has opposed this development for a long time because it is contrary to the principles of good planning, respect for the environment and community values. Despite all the opposition to this development by responsible citizens, The City of Ottawa persists in destroying one of the most significant wetlands within the city boundary, simply because of a mistake made by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) in 1994 when it incorrectly determined the boundaries of the Leitrim Wetland.

This subdivision will directly cause the destruction of significant natural areas within the urban boundary, despite city policy as stated in the new Greenspace Master Plan to preserve such land. Of special concern is Urban Natural Area # 106 which overlays some of the land in this proposal. The following illustration shows the boundaries of UNA#106 and the boundaries of this subdivision.



Illustration 1: Boundaries of UNA 106

As can be seen in above aerial photo from the UNAEES report, this area has substantial woodland that drains into Findlay Creek.

Loss of this woodland will substantially impinge on Findlay Creek's viability as a cool water stream and should require a proper assessment under the Fisheries Act, since the previous 2002 assessment has been proven substantially incorrect in its assumptions and conclusions.

The purported UNA report on this land was not available in December when we asked City staff for a copy (and we still have not received one). Any report on this land that only used winter observations would certainly miss the substantial natural values of the area and should be rejected as inadequate.

As can be seen on map above compared with the plan of subdivision map, almost half of natural area 106 is in the proposed plan of subdivision. The remarks below are contradicted by the maps above.

(from report by staff):

Comments dated December 19, 2005

(query from Albert Dugal)

"I should have indicated, for your convenience, the site numbers for the woodland areas in Phase 2. According to the UNAE colour map the site number for the woodland in the western block of Phase 2 is 106. Only the lower (southern) half of site 106 is in phase 2. This woodland area was not evaluated in 2003. The woodland area in the southern block of Phase 2 is site number 108. It was also not evaluated in 2003 and requires an ecological condition check. As mentioned in my e-mail of 17 December, 2005, I have provided the City with descriptions and plant lists of these

woodland areas."

Staff Response

There is no portion of UNA site #106 within the subject lands. As part of the Leitrim Community Design Plan process, a portion of originally proposed UNA site #106 was removed as this portion of the UNA site was assessed as having development status.

That this site has development status can not be true, as this what this meeting today is all about. The fact that a developer wishes to develop land does not change its ecological significance and development status depends on the ecology, not the reverse. If the the UNAE study is to have any meaning, it needs to be based on ecological values, not developer's plans. This area will be harmed by this development and the conditions of zoning do nothing to prevent this. We cannot change the boundaries at the whim of a developer, only by detailed ground study that has not been completed.

Zoning

This land also requires re-zoning not just a plan of Subdivision. The map below, from the City's eMap web site, shows that the zoning in the draft zoning bylaw published at the end of may is not yet residential, but future development (DR) and that substantial parts of the land proposed for subdivision is floodplain (light blue) and hazard lands, which would require substantial engineering. As well as a plan of subdivision, a zoning bylaw amendment should also be presented, so that council can see all the parts together, not piecemeal as presented. This land is not suitable for development and this plan of subdivision should be rejected.

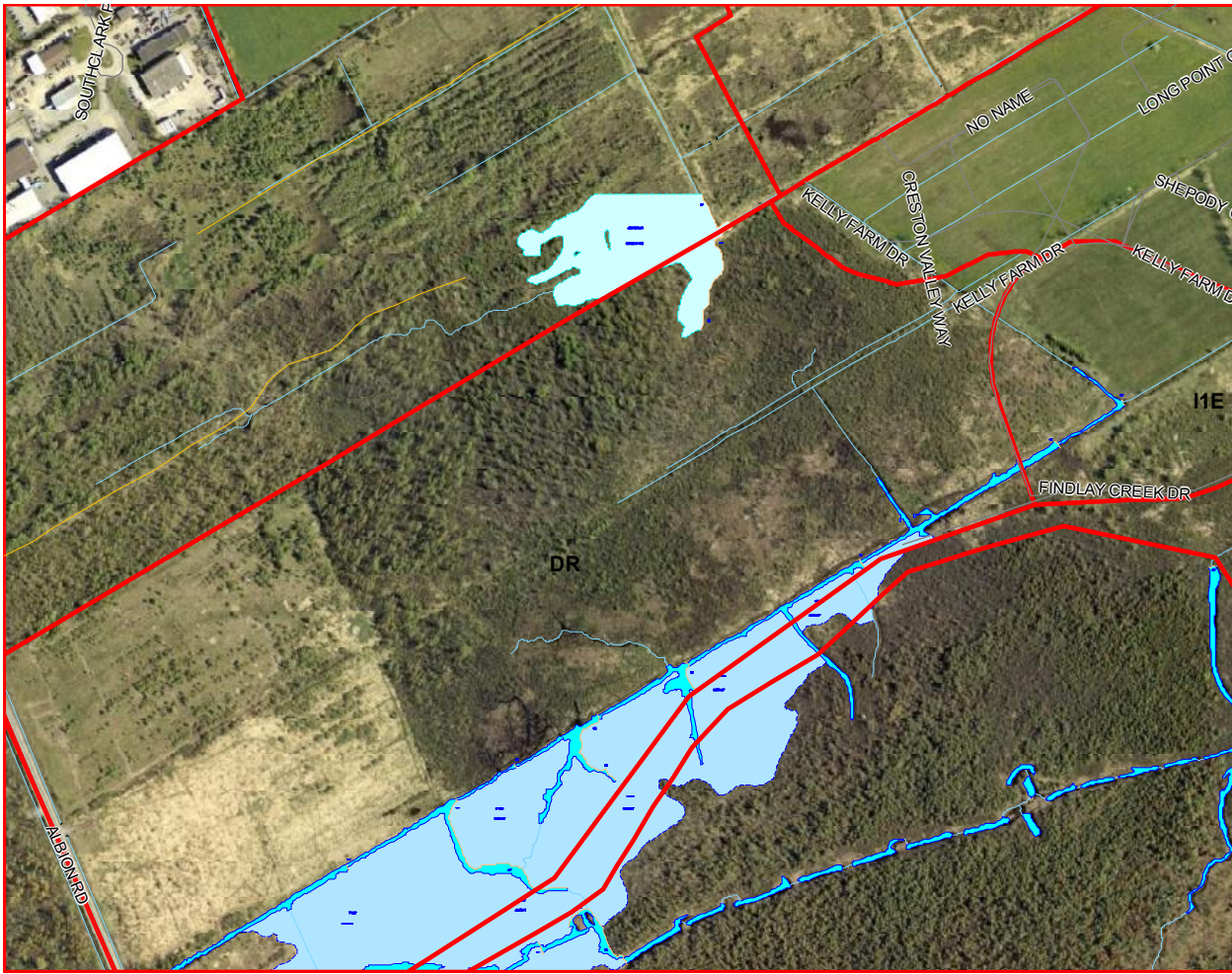


Illustration 2: Draft Zoning boundaries

Requested Actions:

There are three necessary actions that council must do to alleviate our concerns:

1. Deferral of parts 1 and 2 of the plan of subdivision, since part 1 is exactly the part of UNA 106 that needs to be evaluated properly.
2. Appointment of a panel of independent scientists to evaluate the proposed engineering works, since the proponents have been incorrect in their previous plans, such as for storm water ponds and berms used to prevent loss of wetland.
3. Land in compensation for parts of the provincially significant wetland already destroyed.

