



Greenspace Alliance of Canada's Capital
Alliance pour les espaces verts dans la capitale du Canada

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For immediate release

**GREENSPACE ALLIANCE OBJECTS TO LAST-MINUTE DEAL
WITH COUNTRY LOT ESTATE DEVELOPER**

The Greenspace Alliance today served notice to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing that it objects to the last-minute deal that gave a major developer in Ottawa permission to apply for two large country lot subdivisions comprising an estimated 200 homes.

The Ministry is currently reviewing the Comprehensive Official Plan Amendment (OPA 150) that was approved by City Council last November. On its web site and by way of a posting to the Environmental Bill of Rights web site, the Ministry invites the public to provide it with any comments before February 9, 2014.

Council approved a prohibition of any future country lot subdivisions but, in a deal that surfaced at the last minute, made an exception for five parcels in southwest Ottawa. Councillors were informed that this would make a lawsuit from the developer go away. The lawsuit in Divisional Court questions the 5-year moratorium that was approved in 2009 and that was upheld by the Ontario Municipal Board.

The Alliance argues that the City should vigorously defend its right to have imposed a moratorium in 2009 and that, in any case, the moratorium will be over by June 2014 and there is now a prohibition in place. "The fact that it was upheld as good planning and that prohibition is now confirmed should trump any technical argument about the validity of the moratorium," says Erwin Dreessen, co-chair of the Alliance. The Alliance urges the Ministry to delete the deal.

The two estate developments that, despite the prohibition, would be allowed to go forward if an application is approved, are typical for country lot estates as the worst possible form of residential development from several points of view including and especially environmental. "Both are replete with woodland, wetlands and other natural heritage features that require protection," says Sol Shuster, a Director of the Alliance. "Blanding's Turtles have been sighted. There are snowmobile trails on part of the land. Rural sprawl should not be allowed to destroy these areas."

The Alliance also questions the way in which the City's recent analysis of natural linkages (eco-corridors) has been implemented in OPA 150. It argues for greater visibility and impact of the 1-km wide corridors that the analysis has identified as critical for connectivity of plants and animals.

The Greenspace Alliance was founded in 1997, works to preserve and enhance green spaces in the National Capital area, and engages with all levels of government. It believes that urban greenness is essential for a community's quality of life, contributing to personal, social, economic, cultural and spiritual well-being, and connecting us with the natural and cultural history of our region.

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For more information call Erwin Dreessen at 613.739.0727 or email at erwin_dreessen@ncf.ca

Background:

The Greenspace Alliance's letter, dated 26 January 2014 - attached and at
<http://www.greenspace-alliance.ca/files/letter%20to%20MMAH%20re%20OPA%2015%20-%20final.pdf>

The EBR Notice (EBR Registry number 012-0809):

<http://www.ebr.gov.on.ca/ERS-WEB-External/displaynoticecontent.do?noticeId=MTIxMzU0&statusId=MTgxNzA2&language=en>

Information about the five parcels that would be allowed despite the prohibition:

<http://www.greenspace-alliance.ca/node/622>

Information about the Thomas Cavanagh Construction Ltd. lawsuit:

<http://www.greenspace-alliance.ca/node/541>

Information about country lot subdivisions:

<http://www.greenspace-alliance.ca/node/159>

Information about the City's natural linkages analysis:

<http://www.greenspace-alliance.ca/panel>