

Does the Zoning By-law protect non-built-up areas of the city?

(Think local parks, forest remnants, conservation forests, wetlands, rivers, creeks, valleylands, escarpments, etc.)

Short answer: No.

The Zoning by-law gives light-to-non-existing directional guidance to land use, at least when it comes to natural areas. Its connection with the reality on the ground is often tenuous. It typically allows for myriad possibilities. It is an instrument heavy on complexity and bureaucracy. And if a particular zoning specification does not suit a developer, why, go for an amendment -- all it takes is money. Or they can get a second opinion at the OMB.

(Background: Chapter 4 of David McNicoll's 2009 book, *journey of a citizen*.)

+ Very few definitions relate to natural areas --

"Park" "Landscaped area" "Landscaped buffer"

+ Categories:

L(eisure): L1 (Community Leisure Facility) and L2 (Major Leisure Facility) are mostly about buildings; L3 allows the Central Experimental Farm to be the C.E.F.

O1 (Open Space): Its general purpose (permit parks and open spaces) is ok, but of the 19 subzones only 3 do not involve buildings.

EP is the only zone specifically reserved for Environmental Protection. Even so, the zone could have a single dwelling which can be a home-based business; a utility installation is also allowed.

Browsing geoOttawa, what do we find?

+ the parks in my neighbourhood are zoned L1 or O1; not immediately obvious why one or the other. *Check yours!*

+ a stretch of Carling Avenue bordering the CEF (between Parkdale and Preston) is to become AM10 (Active Street Frontage; it was already AM or MC) -- never mind that there are research buildings on that portion of the Farm which in no way conform to AM10. Respect for the integrity of the Farm is nowhere in sight. With the recent giveaway of the 60-acre parcel to the west ("Field #1"), is the underlying idea to chop off the section between the Driveway and Carling altogether?

+ NCC lands are zoned EP, L1, or O1. L1 and O1 often have an "h" attached to them (Exceptions 310 or 316), which (as a result of negotiations back in 2003) "may only be removed upon completion of the secondary planning process" i.e., lifting the "h" must involve public consultation. *Check in your neighbourhood!*

(For historical background, read Amy Kempster's 2003 essay at

<http://greenspace-alliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/Kempster-NCC-OP-and-Zoning-2003.pdf>)

In conclusion:

Swift adjustment of the ZB following amendments to the OP is commendable. But this is a recent virtue, for example:

- Delineation of the Goulbourn Wetland Complex was last updated in 2005 and revised maps were provided to the City in 2008. Not until July 2014 did the City get around to making some marginal adjustments, bringing the zoning in line with the MNR-determined boundaries. Cavanagh is appealing to the OMB; hearing date is April 1-2. They say they weren't consulted.