

Flewellyn Special Policy Area and Quarry and Remaining General Environmental Issues hearing

Opening Statement by the Friends of the Greenspace Alliance

The Flewellyn Special Policy Area includes provincially significant wetlands in the Goulbourn Wetland Complex. The Friends of the Greenspace Alliance believe they should be so designated in the Official Plan. Section 3.2.5 of Amendment 76 should be deleted and accompanying clerical corrections made to the Official Plan Amendment to accommodate this change. We therefore support Mr. McRae's appeal.

We appealed Section 3.2.5 because we believe that the City should not lack the courage to defend policy made at the provincial level and should act in accordance with the requirements of the *Planning Act* and the 2005 Provincial Policy Statement.

We note that the Provincial Policy Statement re Natural Heritage (including significant wetlands) specifically allows existing agricultural activities to continue (ref. Section 2.1.7). As well, one would expect landowners wishing to use their land for other rural purposes to take note of unusual changes in water levels and to have taken the legal steps available at that time, not become concerned only when their property became identified as part of a Provincially Significant Wetland. We also note that beavers require water for their activities, and their presence indicates that the areas are naturally wet.

We are no experts in wetland identification but note that these wetlands were identified by the Ministry of Natural Resources as is required and we see the call for a cumulative effects study followed by a re-evaluation as merely yet another delaying tactic, leaving time for an attempt to change the facts on the ground by more site alteration by landowners. Unfortunately for the proponents, a recent drainage proposal under the *Drainage Act* proved too rich for them. Also, the thickness of the peat layer (up to 2 meters) means these areas have been wetland for a very, very long time.

We note that included in this hearing are other environmental items and although we did not appeal them we feel it would have been a courtesy for the Friends of the Greenspace Alliance to have been included in the consultations re these matters. We were in support of the city's original wording and are not very happy with some of the agreed upon changes.

We feel this is due to a problem with OMB procedures. The Official Plan is supposed to be the product of the citizens; however those citizens are not always represented when a change is agreed upon outside a hearing and that citizen group has not appealed the item since it agreed with the City. While, through presentation at the Agricultural and Rural Affairs Committee an opportunity was provided for the rural community to comment on these changes, they were not brought to Planning Committee, therefore citizens in the urban area were not directly consulted. We thus request the Member's permission to indicate our specific disagreements with some of these changes at the appropriate time.

June 14, 2011