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Sent: Wednesday, June 10, 2020 9:56 AM

To: Councillor Faubert <dfaibert@southhuron.ca>; Kathy Baiger <kbaiger@yahoo.ca>

Subject: Opposition to Tridon Subdivision

June 10 2020

Letter to Municipality of South Huron and South Huron Council

Re: Tridon group proposal for major subdivision, currently dubbed the Oakwood Meadows Subdivision, on the east side of Highway 21 currently home to nine holes of Oakwood golf course.

A Letter of Concern regarding the Official Plan Amendment (Secondary Plan) Application Oakwood Golf Course Land.

Introduction:

My name is Kathy Baiger. This letter is my personal view. People tell me that I am wasting my time writing this letter, but I feel compelled to write. I would be thankful to you for your feedback.

I live in the Grand Cove Adult Community in Grand Bend. My home backs directly onto the fairway of Oakwood Golf Course east side of Highway 21. I moved to Grand Cove to escape city noise, traffic and construction. I found my perfect home in a quiet, peaceful retirement community. My happiness and peace is about to come crashing down all because of the Tridon subdivision. I think of Joni Mitchell's song: Don't it always seem to go

That you don't know what you've got til its gone
They paved paradise
And put up a parking lot

I am not against a subdivision, BUT I am against a subdivision on the Oakwood property.

Don de Jong, of developers Tridon Group, told council there is a need for such a development in this area. Perhaps there is, but there certainly must be a better suited property. Why destroy a beautiful conservation area/park that is home to a variety of migrating birds and wildlife, mature trees, and ponds bordered by woodland already zoned Natural Environment Zone 2, (NE2)? A subdivision closer to schools, hospital, sports arenas, and year round employment opportunities might be a preferred option.

My concern is about how the negative impact of a 300 home multi-development subdivision will affect not only the natural environment, but also, the well being of the senior neighbours who live right there.

In Subdivision Approval Procedures (County of Huron) under Matters to be Considered by the Approval Authority 5.c. under Section 51 (24) of the Planning Act:

- Approval authority shall have regard, among other matters, to the health, safety, convenience, accessibility for persons with disabilities and welfare of the present and future inhabitants of the municipality

(b) Whether the proposed subdivision is premature or in the public interested

(d) The suitability of the land for the purposes for which it is to be subdivided

(h) Conservation of natural resources and flood control

Climate Change Adaption Plan:

The Municipality of South Huron has received funding from the Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) to prepare an adaptation strategy for our region that protects our assets and ensures long-term service continuity. The Municipality of South Huron has officially launched their Climate Change Adaptation Plan project. The goal of this two-year project is to increase the Municipality's capacity to identify and respond to climate change impacts.

"Identifying risks and working to protect or extend the life of our core infrastructure is just smart business planning," said **Mayor George Finch**. **"South Huron Council has made adapting our municipality to the impacts of a changing climate a priority."**

This is currently in the action planning phase and will identify practical actions for the municipality to implement. Perhaps this strategy should be implemented before the subdivision is approved.

Zoning:

According to Municipality of South Huron Zoning By-law Section 17, the parcel of golf course proposed to be developed on the east side of Highway 21 is zoned RECREATIONAL COMMERCIAL RC3. The woods surrounding and also part of the course is zoned NATURAL ENVIRONMENT ZONE 2 (NE2).

I feel that there should be a Request for a Proposal with our Municipality for a Natural Environment Investigations Study to support maintaining the current zoning of RC3 Recreational commercial and prohibit the zone change to Residential R1, R2, and R3. The surrounding woods, including a parcel that is on the golf course land, is zoned Natural Environment Zone 2 (NE2).

Par 3 Golf Course:

Tridon states that the west side of highway 21 will be transformed into an Executive (Par 3) nine hole course. If you have golfed Oakwood then you know this side of the course has steep hills and is physically challenging. Some seniors have a difficult time walking this side and I have found the cart paths challenging. The best choice for a Par 3 course would be on the east side of Highway 21, on the flat fairways, in my opinion as a golfer.

The Plan of Subdivision Process in Huron County states:

Before Applying/Pre-consultation required studies must be completed prior to making formal application. Planning applications for official plan amendments are vetted through the municipality of South Huron Council however, receive FINAL approval from Huron County Council. Right to Appeal: Any person or public body may, not later than 20 days after the notice of decision is given, appeal the decision of the Approval Authority to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal.

Major Concerns:

There are 2 important concerns that I feel compelled to bring to attention:

- 1. Negative Environmental Impact, Wildlife Impact and Climate Impact**
- 2. Negative Impact on the well being of myself and neighboring seniors**

Environmental Concerns - A 4 Season Loss of Habitat Impact:

- Migration and patterns of birds and wildlife
- Eco systems: 2 ponds
- Carbon Footprint (each tree consumes 21.8 kilograms of carbon each year. It takes up to 7 trees to reduce our own carbon footprint to zero)
- Loss of mature trees
- Noise pollution (during construction and post construction)
- Light (dark sky) pollution

Impact on Senior Citizens who live beside or near the development:

- Disruption in quality of life

- Loss of peace and quiet
- Mental health: anxiety ,confusion, worry , sadness
- Noise pollution (construction and post construction)
- Light pollution (streetlights will block dark sky)
- Air pollution. Problems for seniors with breathing problems
- Worry over devaluation of properties with premium lots that face onto the course .The monetary value of a premium greenbelt view of nature will be obliterated
- Lack of privacy
- Loss of benefits of nearby recreation and exercise suitable for seniors (golf : flat fairways)
- Social and psychological impacts
- Loss of security, increase in crime rate
- Increase in anxiety from traffic volume and congestion

Communicating with Myself and Other Local Seniors, during Covid 19 precautions:

Virtual Meetings. Any Options? Some seniors, like me, are not savvy with computers and virtual meetings. Is there another way to communicate with me? I am not Tec savvy. I am sure that other seniors like me feel the same. I have a dated computer that I gently use and I am not familiar with Skype or virtual meetings.

- What do you suggest?
- Can I communicate my concerns about the zone changing by phone during a virtual meeting?
- Can I have my email read by one of the councillors?

I tried to log into the Council Virtual Meeting on June 1. I hit the red live button and my computer locked. Sadly, I missed that meeting but I was able to watch the prior virtual meeting.

Ideas to Re-Purpose:

This green belt is an established, “park like” area with environmental integrity. Maintaining the current zoning insures a natural environment, caters to the local demographics, and creates opportunities:

Employment opportunities – Hire Local

A public 9 hole golf course, or Nature Park.

A place for family experiences, young or old, tourist or local. A good alternative to the beach for family recreation and a pleasant afternoon prior to a play. (For example a “Play and Play” package.)

Hire local: Managed by local students, seniors, landscapers and community volunteers

Name it "Tridon Citizens Park" for example, and use it to attract people to the area. (Similar to RIM Park in Waterloo a few years ago).

Covid 19 De-Stress Park: Fitness paths, bike paths, Senior's paths. A place for passive recreation. Involve our local Horticultural Society, Environmental, Fitness, and Walking Groups to name a few community interest groups.

Questions:

Of the 14 stages of the subdivision application, at what stage is Tridon?

Who determines what studies should be undertaken?

What is the plan for the sewage trunk line?

How will children get to school walking or riding bicycles?

Why spend money to build walking trails when fairways to walk already exist?

Will the public, members of council, local MPP and interest groups be invited to walk and experience the property so they can witness firsthand what will be destroyed before any decision is made?

Will a drone video be made available to the public so they can realize what will be lost - from tree tops to house roofs?

What is the Port Blake project?

Will a fence be constructed to separate my property from the subdivision property? Where will it go? How high?

What is the status of the trunk sewer installation on Highway 21 that south Huron council is proposing to install so that the subdivision can go ahead.

What is the benefit of this subdivision to me, my senior neighbors, and the environment?

What is the Tree Policy passed by council in 2019?

What type of house/townhouse will back onto Sandpiper Square in Grand Cove?

Have official plan and zoning bylaw amendment applications been received and approved by council?

Will studies be done by the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks, the Ministry of Transportation?

Will a study be done by the Provincial Ministry for Seniors and Accessibility? (Helping seniors and people with disabilities stay independent, active, and socially connected. Also helping seniors stay safe and making Ontario more accessible for everyone and promoting the benefits of age-diverse, accessible workplaces and communities where everyone is able to participate.)

Will there be Social and Psychological impact studies on nearby senior citizens? How are the results of studies communicated to the public?

Is this basically a "done deal"?

Conclusion:

Oakwood Golf Course is not a suitable location for a 300 home multi-housing subdivision.

This is a time to preserve green space and trees, not destroy them. This is a time to be conscious of climate change, not ignore it. This is a time to stop environmental disruption, to preserve wild life and birds, to appreciate the eco-sensitive lands we live on. This is not a time to purge our delicate green areas in order to fulfill the financial gains of a developer.

Grand Bend is appreciated for its friendly and intimate community; for its natural environment. Cottagers and visitors come here to escape the city and enjoy our peace and quiet.

Large developments of this kind should be built closer to towns that can provide employment all year round, schools and hospital. Tridon should build on lands that are not environmentally sensitive. Although the plan will encompass a walking trail and green space, this will not for a moment alleviate the negative impact on the environment and wildlife.

I planned for my future by investing in a home that should increase in value due to its proximity to open green space, natural environment, a beautiful view and privacy. The ramification of this development will definitely reduce the value of my home, and therefore the value of my retirement investment for my future. This is heart wrenching to me. I came here to live the rest of my life peacefully. I definitely did not want to go through this challenge.

“Rather than say I did nothing, I did something. I did what I could. ”

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Baiger, 72 Sandpiper Sq. Grand Cove kbaiger@yahoo.ca

<https://www.lakeshoreadvance.com/news/local-news/subdivision-planned-for-east-side-of-highway-21-north-of-grand-bend>

The Lorax is a children’s book written by Dr. Seuss and first published in 1971. It chronicles the plight of the environment and the Lorax is the titular character, who “speaks for the trees” and confronts the Once-ler, who causes environmental destruction.

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