

CITIZENS CONCERNED ABOUT GOLF COURSE DEVELOPMENT

REBUTTAL TO PROPOSAL TO AMEND THE SOUTH HURON OFFICIAL PLAN PORT BLAKE SETTLEMENT AREA

Tridon Development Group has submitted to the Municipality of South Huron an Application for an Official Plan Amendment to allow a subdivision of up to 395 homes to be constructed on the east side of Hwy 21 on the lands currently occupied by Oakwood Golf Course and driving range, directly north of the Grand Cove “adult community” which, while in the Municipality of South Huron, borders the town of Grand Bend in the Municipality of Lambton Shores.

The Municipality of South Huron identifies the area between Hwy 83 south to and including Grand Cove as the PORT BLAKE PLANNING AREA.

TRAFFIC

This is our first topic because it is easy, short, and visible every day.

At a power-point Zoom “meeting” on June 25, 2020, Tridon’s spokesperson, Caroline Baker, gave this information about traffic:

Paradigm Transportation Solutions prepared a traffic impact study for Tridon. It provides analysis of existing traffic conditions including traffic forecasts to 2038, both with development and without the development, and recommendations for improvements to address potential impacts from the development. The study area was from Main Street to Dashwood Road. The report concluded this corridor will continue to operate under similar levels of service with the development in 2028, 2033, and 2038 with the following improvements:

- *recommends Hwy 21 southbound left-turn lane(s) with 15 metre storage at both new entrances*
- *recommends extending the 50 km/hr speed limit to the site*

Elsewhere in the presentation (not under the Paradigm umbrella) a slide states “Regarding traffic impact on Hwy 21 and delays getting from Grand Bend to Grand Cove, Lambton Shores completed an environmental Assessment in 2018 to widen the bridge (Hwy 21 and Main) and add another northbound lane.”

Comments

1. There is no problem getting from Grand Bend to Grand Cove. The suggestion is silly since we’re talking maybe 10 car lengths. Anyone who knows the area realizes the magnitude of the traffic congestion: namely, getting from the Pinery area to Port Blake, sometimes even St Joseph, can take over an hour.

2. Regardless of studies and good intentions, the bridge has NOT been widened and another lane has NOT been added.
3. Does one municipality have any power to control infrastructure decisions of another municipality?
4. The study states similar levels of service with the development in 2028, 2033, and 2038. What about the similarity between now (2020) and 2024 (Tridon's projected completion date)? Why is this most crucial time reference omitted?
5. Two entrance roads to the south of the proposed development are the accesses to Grand Cove on the east and to Oakwood Park (at Indian Road) on the west. Getting out and about to attend appointments and run errands while negotiating that nexus plus the streams of tourist vehicles and transport trucks, is already time-consuming and dangerous. We often turn right to turn left. So **of course** the proximity of an additional 600 plus vehicles will negatively impact the daily lives of people who already live here. **That's just common sense, no study needed.**

Question

Will the Municipality of South Huron together with the MTO conduct their own traffic impact study on behalf of the residents and tax payers of the Port Blake Planning Area?

From the Grand Bend & Area Chamber of Commerce website, Lambton Shores Tourism Report, presented January 2013; an excerpt from StatsCan based on regions provides the following information on attendance figures:

- 600,000 people visit Pinery Provincial Park each year
- 60,000 patrons attend Grand Bend Motorplex events
- 60,000 attend Huron Country Playhouse
- 23,000 attend Canada Day in Grand Bend
- 11,642 people are helped by our Welcome Centre (Grand Bend Tourism)
- 10,451 visit Lambton Heritage Museum

Missing from this list are the unaccounted who drive here **every day**, weather permitting, for a day at the beach. **That's a lot of traffic!**

From website of Times-Advocate Advance - June 10, 2020

- "South Huron will apply for a grant from the Federation of Canadian Municipalities' (FCM) Municipal Asset Management Fund to help pay for a transportation master plan for the municipality.
- "Council authorized staff at the June 1 meeting to apply for the FCM grant, which is part of an eight year, \$110-million program funded by Infrastructure Canada to help support municipalities with infrastructure investment decisions.

- “If South Huron is successful in its funding application, it could receive \$100,000 (or 80%) of the projected \$125,000 cost of the study, which South Huron approved in its 2020 budget.”

Comment:

It would make more sense for South Huron to complete a Transportation Master Plan before considering any major, large scale development.

PLANNING

Beginning on page 130 of South Huron Official Plan (2014):

7.10.2. Goals

The following goals are adopted for the Port Blake Planning Area:

1. Protect and enhance the Port Blake Park to ensure public access to the South Huron shoreline is maintained;
2. Continue to protect, enhance and restore the quality of the lakeshore and **existing natural environment** within the Port Blake Planning Area;
3. Development shall respect the existing character of the area and limit environmental stress;
4. Permit highway **commercial** uses to locate on existing lots fronting on to Highway 21, by amendment to this Plan; and
5. Recognize existing Residential uses in the area, **but limit new Residential uses in the Port Blake Planning Area until such time as sewers are extended to service the area and a secondary plan is undertaken for this area.**

7.10.4.1.

The Residential policies of the Port Blake Planning Area recognize the existing developments of Grand Cove Estates and Oakwood Links Condominium by designating them “residential”. New residential developments **shall NOT be permitted in the Port Blake Planning Area until such time as full municipal services are extended throughout the Port Blake Planning Area and a secondary plan has been adopted for this area.**

Comments

In response to an email, Planner Craig Metzger informed a member of our citizens’ group that full municipal services are **NOT** currently available throughout the Port Blake planning area **but would be available for the Tridon Property.** How does that happen? This is blatant cart-before-the-horse planning. Is the municipality subsidizing Tridon? Have taxpayers been consulted? When the Tri-municipal sewer trunkline project was abandoned by Bluewater (2003ish), the residents of Oakwood Park vehemently opposed the cost of this infrastructure and insisted their septic systems had been doing the job for maybe 100 years and they were not going to assume the sewer surcharge. A resident on the north end of that subdivision stated they would have had to put another pumping station near her property, but the terrain was problematic. Nothing has changed.

The OP further states “the future extension of the trunk sanitary sewer northerly from Indian Road on the Bluewater hwy is **NOT** anticipated within the 20 year time horizon of this Official Plan.

Therefore....Port Blake Planning Area including the designated service area for the Oakwood sanitary planning station, is" **NOT** anticipated."

Comment

That would be 2034! (20 years from 2014 when Official Plan was conceived).

Planner Metzger also stated that a Secondary Plan has **NOT** been adopted for the PB Planning area and added, "The official Plan amendment proposed by Tridon is to function as a Secondary Plan for their property."

Comments

This contradicts the language and the logic of the 5 goals cited above. To illustrate, imagine Martha and George deciding that they really have to make a new budget. Before they do so, Martha comes home with a brand new Hummer that matches her hair. George is distressed; they haven't made a budget yet. Martha shrugs and says, "Well we'll just make the car part of our budget."

That's not budgeting and it's not planning, either.

According to the OP, this is what planning is supposed to look like:

Section 7.10 Port Blake Planning Area (OP) states "The purpose of the PB secondary plan will be to clarify information needs, define assessment approaches and criteria, **consult with residents**, and outline area boundaries based on a **comprehensive review**. The boundaries of the PB Settlement Area will include Grand Cove Estates. "

Comments

There has been NO comprehensive review, NO consultation with residents, and NO secondary plan. (Tridon's Zoom meeting was a self-serving power-point presentation. Residents were muted. It was not a consultative civic forum.)

A point above states a planning goal is to respect the existing character of the area and limit environmental stress. The OP stipulates: "The Oakwood Inn and Resort, including its golf course, provides **significant** recreational opportunities for the residents of Port Blake and many tourists visiting South Huron shoreline. **These lands are designated recreation and further development of these lands will be subject to the recreational policies of this Plan.**"

Question

Does the Tridon site, by displacing a recreational zone with a residential subdivision, fit into the recreational policies of the Plan?

Page 201 of the SH Official Plan, Section 12.3.4.7 Archaeological Review, states, "Development applications will be reviewed to determine the potential presence of archaeological resources, as identified on the Ministry of Tourism and Culture archaeological potential checklist. Where moderate to high archaeological potential is identified, an archaeological assessment is required."

Question

Oakwood Golf Course began construction in 1923 (source: Lambton Heritage Museum). **Has an archaeological Review been undertaken?**

Related to this, in as much as it relates to respecting the history of the land, and honouring the role of stewardship, is consideration of First Nations. Letter from **Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs to Stantec Consulting, received Sept. 8 2015:**

Notice of Municipal class EA Study Commencement for the South Huron Water and Wastewater Master Plan: "We acknowledge that you have identified the following Aboriginal communities/organizations." The Ministry letter then lists 8 communities.

"With respect to your project (Water & Wastewater Management Plan) and based on the brief materials you have provided we can advise that the project appears to be located in an area where First Nations may have existing or asserted rights or claims in Ontario's land claims process or litigation, that could be impacted by your project. The Ministry letter lists the contact info for 3 Chiefs, and adds, "For your information, MAA notes that the following First Nations may be interested in your project given the proximity of their community or because of your project's environmental impacts: Munsee – Delaware Nation," then the Chief's name and phone number.

Comment

Further information about the duty to consult is available on the Ministry's website.

The South Huron Strategic Plan 2015-2019, which was developed after "broad public engagement", states the following: "Competitive Advantages include Port Blake Conservation Area and access to Lake Huron, and Exeter as a centre for commercial and service amenities. The Competitive Disadvantages include **No Economic Development Strategy** ... dated or unsafe recreation facilities ... **a disconnect between Municipal Administration and the community.**"

Comment

IF THE TRIDON DEVELOPMENT IS BUILT :

1. While the residential community to the south does not support it, and the community as a whole, plus tourists, will miss the golf course, it could be a boon to Grand Bend businesses.
2. Grand Bend, **not Exeter**, will become the "centre for commercial and service amenities." This is also obvious to the developer who cites Grand Bend Main Beach and Grand Bend Services as his first 2 selling points. Shopping and social lives will happen here. This is evidence of the lack of a municipal economic development strategy as cited above.
3. Tridon's third selling point is Port Blake, but we all know that the new Tridon residents are **NOT** going to pack up the car (especially given the traffic realities on hwy 21) and drive to Port Blake and pay to enter, when they can walk to the free public beach here in Grand Bend. If a goal of the yet-to-be-conceived Port Blake Secondary Plan would be to enhance the site and render it more-user-friendly, this Tridon subdivision settlement will not help.

4. It's understandable that Tridon would be marketing Grand Bend, but why would the Municipality of South Huron ignore their own strategic plan to allow this? Up to 400 new property tax accounts are the only answer we can think of. One can only hope that any business boon to Grand Bend will subsidize the commensurate increase in costs for policing, beach patrol, by-law enforcement, infrastructure maintenance and renewal, etc. incurred by people who live here but pay no property taxes to Lambton Shores.
5. A careful reading of the Port Blake portion of the Official Plan and a comparison to the relevant details in the larger document show both explicit and implicit text that indicates the Municipality **NEVER** entertained the possibility of a major residential development this far south. Instead, there are frequent references to a single or couple or small group of homes/cottages on the watershed/west side of hwy 21. On the east side, the Official Plan envisions new commercial enterprises.

From SH Official Plan 2.6 BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR SETTLEMENT AREAS "Exeter, as the major urban settlement in South Huron, provides a range of services that extend well beyond the boundaries of South Huron. South Huron's smaller villages and hamlets, are important focal points, providing local services and a place to gather for the surrounding rural community."

"Evolving demographic trends and availability of servicing influences where future development will be directed within South Huron. These factors will continue to see **Exeter as the primary focus of urban development**. A portion of development would also be directed to the fully serviced villages of Crediton, Centralia, and Huron Park. New development in the Port Blake Planning area **may proceed ONLY upon the adoption of a secondary plan** for the Port Blake Planning area. Development within South Huron's hamlets and villages without sewer and water services will primarily be infill development." The first 3 "basic principles" for the urban settlement section are:

1. "Recognize Exeter as the major urban centre in South Huron.
2. Promote the development of settlements based on their level of servicing.
3. Build vibrant neighbourhoods within complete communities which provide a healthy lifestyle for the residents of South Huron."

Comment

The Tridon proposal contravenes all 3 of the municipality's "basic principles" as cited above and is relying on Lambton Shores (Grand Bend) to be the focal point, provide local services and a place to gather.

FLOODPLAIN / SEWER

The Official Plan states: "The cumulative impacts of increased residential density or intensity of use must not exceed sustainable levels of sewage treatment capacity . . . and must be compatible with the natural and cultural character of lakeshore communities."

Comment

Oakwood Golf Course was born in 1922-23, Grand Cove Estates circa 1973. The natural character is greenery, woods, annual back and forth migration of geese, species of ducks, song birds, black birds, raptors, vultures, a couple of swans, deer, coyotes, opossums, raccoons, reptiles, Monarch butterflies and at least one wily fox. The cultural character is a slow-paced, retirement-oriented, charity-giving, sunset-loving citizenry for whom golf is a perfect recreation. Many stroke survivors have used the driving range for therapy. Tridon's inclusion of "walking paths" through a concrete development is not comparable – and would not likely be made available to current residents.

The Plan states, "Many lands within the Port Blake Planning area are subject to development constraints because of the significant area contained within the floodplain."

Comments

That's us! Grand Cove is on the floodplain. (Most of the homes are built on cinder blocks and have only crawl-space.) The golf course, on both sides of the highway, is on a floodplain (see attached photos). Research shows that one tree, depending on its age and size, consumes 50 to 300 gallons of water a day (!) and gives back oxygen and water vapour. We'd need really good reasons to disturb this natural balance which has evolved over a century.

We also wonder about surface water absorption of turf/grassy terrain areas vs concrete roads, sidewalks, driveways, house fittings, patios, etc.

Question

How much would losing this water-absorbing terrain increase the surface water? It is safe to assume that if you replace 2/3 or even ½ of the absorbing terrain with non-absorbing material (concrete, asphalt); you will at least double the amount of surface water. What are the projections of the post-development stormwater flows? Can this much surface water actually be controlled?

Below is an excerpt from the website of the Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority. In the Planning and Permits section, the site gives "examples of how environmental protection works to protect life and property. The first example is about one house. The second is about one cottage. Here is #3:

"Example #3

A developer proposes to construct five residential building lots adjacent to a river. The Conservation Authority recommends that a stormwater management plan be completed to ensure that adjacent properties are not damaged due to increased runoff following construction. It is also determined that three of the lots are located within the floodplain. The buildings proposed for these lots are moved outside of the floodplain."

Question

This example applies to only 5(!) residences. What happens when hundreds are the issue? How are *they* "moved" off this 130-acre property?

Residents in Grand Cove Estates have been speaking to their house insurance agents. The news is not good. Even with a new stormwater system, considering what indemnity experts know about floodplain run-offs, accounting for the fact that this community is on a lower elevation than the

adjacent golf course and also for the fact that insurers already consider the Grand Cove location to be “high risk,” our premiums will definitely increase. One quote was at least \$250/year.

When Planner Metzger responded to a member of our group who sent photos of a post-rainfall flooding at the highway, he stated “the flooding shown is in line with comments expressed by the ABCA in a meeting with the developer that any development of the property will need to respect the flooding hazard on the property...normal stormwater practices are for the stormwater in the development to not negatively impact neighbouring or downstream communities, post-development stormwater flows not to exceed the pre-development flows and quality control measures to be introduced.”

Comments

1. This is simply impossible to achieve. Post-development stormwater flows **WILL** exceed pre-development flows because of the removal of trees and permeable turf/grass terrain. And who is talented enough to foretell what effects climate change might bring in terms of precipitation?
2. Do “*normal* stormwater practices” apply to a floodplain? Is it *normal* practice in the developments industry to build a 400-home subdivision on a forested floodplain?
3. “Respect” is a fuzzy building concept, as is being “well aware” in Planner Metzger’s words below.

He continues, “the developer is well aware of the stormwater challenges on the property and ABCA has a significant role to play in the developer’s approval both as a commenting agency as well as through their regulatory role related to flood prevention/management.”

Question

Has Tridon built a 400-home subdivision on a floodplain before? If so, how did it work out? And finally, Planner Metzger states, “There will be an engineering review by the Municipality of the stormwater management plan prepared by the developer’s engineer for the development **once it reaches the subdivision application stage.**”

Comment

The key word here is ONCE. NOT IF. This indicates to us that the Planner is anticipating approval will be given to the first stage, the Application to Amend the Official Plan. The intimation is also that once that initial approval is rendered, it’s downhill from there.

WE ARE REQUESTING THAT OUR MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES AND OUR ELECTED MUNICIPAL COUNCIL DENY TRIDON’S OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT APPLICATION TO CHANGE THE USE FROM RECREATIONAL TO RESIDENTIAL AND MAINTAIN THE PROPERTY AS RC3 AND THE WOODS DESIGNATION AS NE2.

CLIMATE CHANGE

FROM savingnature.com “Each year the average (north American) adult adds 16 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. The carbon emissions come mainly from food, transportation, and homes. Trees have been quietly offsetting these carbon emissions for centuries and converting carbon dioxide into the oxygen we need for life. It takes about 1,025 trees to offset an average (north American)

adult's emissions, with each tree absorbing 31 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. **..As we lose trees, the problems worsen."**

Comment

Take out a calculator and guess the number of trees now living on this Tridon property. Add maybe 600 new people to the mix, then re-do the math. Isn't this stunning?

From the website of the Canadian Federation of municipalities (fcm.ca) May 16, 2019:

"The Municipalities for Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) helps municipalities and partner organizations by providing funding, training and information sharing. It is designed to encourage Canadian municipalities to better prepare for and adapt to the new realities of climate change as well as reduce greenhouse gas emissions. MCIP is a five-year \$75-million program, delivered by the Federation of Canadian Municipalities and funded by the Government of Canada."

According to the Exeter Lakeshore Times Advance, the Municipality of South Huron has received funding from the Municipalities for a Climate Innovation Program (MCIP) to prepare an adaptation strategy for our region that protects our assets and ensures long-term service continuity. South Huron **Mayor George Finch** has said, "South Huron Council has made adapting our municipality to the impacts of a changing climate a priority."

We recommend that Staff and Council:

1. First, do no harm.
2. Wait until this MCIP is complete and has generated said adaptation strategy before considering the Tridon proposal,
3. Go back in this document to re-read the first paragraph under CLIMATE CHANGE, and consider the beauty of doing something important, and fulfilling an important mandate, simply by maintaining the status quo in this situation.

HOUSING NEEDS

The first we heard about this Tridon project was when the Times-Advance reported Don DeJong told Council in November, 2019, that there is a need for such a development in the area.

Question & Comments

On what research or study or report does he base this conclusion? "This area" means Grand Bend (despite political boundaries and according to Tridon's own marketing). Our group has heard nothing like that – and many of us have lived here for decades. Developments south (Wee Lake) east (Newport Landing) and even in the original village where new builds replaced seasonal cabins, at the top of Centre Street, were accepted as sensible, even desirable.

**"I think we should get rid of the east golf course and build 400 more houses on the highway"
Never have those words been uttered in "this area."**

From The Municipality of South Huron Water and Wastewater Master Plan 2018, prepared by Stantec Consulting Ltd., Section 3.3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS “Population data was taken from Statistics Canada Census Data (2011) and the Ministry of Finance, Ontario Growth Projections (2014):

“Results showed there continues to be a slight increase in the population in the town of Exeter, but a very small decline in the municipality as a whole. **It is projected that the Municipality will have a population decrease of 0.07% and Exeter will have a population increase of 0.5% over the twenty (20) year planning period.**” Table 3.1 in the Stantec document traces *South Huron 20-year Population Projection* and Table 3.2 is *Town of Exeter 20-year Population Projection*.

Comments

This “Master Plan 2018” clearly contradicts any self-serving “need” for additional housing in South Huron, and if Exeter needs 0.5% more housing by 2038 in order to maintain the 2018 status quo, why would you build them in Grand Bend (on Lambton Shores doorstep) within the next 5 years!?

In addition, the South Huron Official Plan states “...the establishment of a new lakeshore residential designation will **require a supportive comprehensive review at an appropriate scale.** The comprehensive review must:

- a. Justify the need for expansion, including demonstrating that sufficient opportunities are not available through intensification, redevelopment and designated growth area;
- b. Demonstrate the land is a logical extension of the settlement area and **physically suitable** for development, considering any **constraints, such as hazard lands and natural heritage** features;
- c. Demonstrate the transportation network can reasonably accommodate the additional volume of traffic and demand for services;
- d. Demonstrate that impacts of development on the natural environment will be minimized

Section 1.63 a: Before consideration is given to developing new infrastructure, the use of existing infrastructure should be optimized.

Comments

1. Given that Stantec estimates the cost of Phase 1 of the Trunk Gravity Sewer on Hwy 21 at \$2,640,000 (“Summary of Cost Options – Stephen Wastewater Capital Project Costing”) one wonders what sewer infrastructure repairs and updates cited in the document (hundreds of them) would NOT get done so that Tridon’s can.
2. Each of the cited points above speaks against the desirability and efficacy of the Tridon development. From the Times Advocate-Advance, June 24, 2020

“Council authorized staff to request County Housing staff to attend a South Huron Council meeting; and, that County Housing staff advise what funding would be available **to developers** to assist the Municipality of South Huron to provide a continuum of housing options in South Huron and how the County staff will support the same.”

Question/Comments

Why is South Huron asking Huron County to subsidize a developer with taxpayers' money?

As for the availability of County funds to support affordable housing initiatives, a new subdivision at the edge of the Municipality is not the best use of funds. Online research describes many ways to approach this challenge, and the importance of location as a factor in decision-making.

COST TO TAXPAYERS?

Question

And who would pay for this new infrastructure? Existing taxpayers who are already over-burdened with debt repayment charges for infrastructure upgrades?

Staff Memo to from Stantec to Dan Best, CAO, November 20, 2019 regarding Water-Sewer Reserve Reconciliation (available online):

The estimated balance as of December 31, 2020, for Water Capital Replacement Reserve is \$915,510. The estimated balance as of December 31, 2020 for Sewer Capital Replacement Reserve is - **\$1,623,919** (Yes, that is a minus sign).

At the end of 2019 the Estimated Sewer Capital Replacement Reserve is -**\$190, 506** (another minus).

Question

With projected costs in the 2020 Sewer Capital Replacement Reserve in the amount of **MINUS \$2,236,324**, how can the Municipality proceed with capital sewer projects, **especially for housing and citizens that don't even exist?**

In addition, the Municipality has transferred reserve funds from the Water Reserve to the Sewer Reserve Fund in the amount of \$190,506 in 2019 and is proposing to transfer an additional \$1,433,413 from Water to Sewer in 2020.

Question

WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

We are not a group of scientists. But we can read, and research, and think. We are bewildered because our documented research clearly opposes Tridon's proposal. We depend on the validity of our researched facts. We must also depend on the experts at ABCA and our elected municipal government to exercise due diligence and due process to ensure that all voices are being heard by municipal staff and advisors who may be reassured by the lure of big city Development. This possibility is disturbing to us.

These facts are irrefutable:

1. *Anyone* would rather regard and experience 130 acres of rolling greens, woods and copses and stately willows, ponds with geese and swans, than a concrete subdivision.
2. *Anyone* would rather breathe the oxygen gifted to us by trees than the emissions from 600 plus vehicles.
3. *Anyone* would rather enjoy the sounds and scents of a rainfall than worry throughout that their house will sail away.

John Zeigler (USA) holds a doctorate in organic chemistry and is the author of The Construction Vibration Damage Guide for Homeowners which serves as a guide for identifying vibration damage from nearby construction, how to document it and properly file an insurance claim. Vibration damage can appear in the form of cracks in concrete patios, slab floors, door and window frames and in the corner of a room.

This is not hyperbole. Given that the 130 acre lot we're talking about is undisturbed, virginal one could say, and with an underground rich with tree roots, imagine the effects of uprooting, the effects of the equipment used to do so, and then the excavating to build underground infrastructure.

The Grand Cove homes are vulnerable prefabs. Zeigler goes on to explain the ramifications of "vibration-damage," how most insurers deny coverage by invoking "earth movement" exclusions originally intended for earthquake damages, predicts the need for legal counsel, the need for tracking and documenting damage, etc.

It's exhausting to read and scary to think about.

Supporting our worry about the environmental impact is the previous data under our CLIMATE CHANGE heading. There is the natural environmental impact, now and in the future, and the impact on us humans who are forced to live beside/in a construction zone. Caroline Baker, in her Tridon power-point-presentation June 25, 2020, contains a slide that estimates the project will take 5 to 10 years.

Comment

1. That's a long time to disturb the lives of a neighbouring municipality!
2. Noise pollution is also part of the environmental impact package.
3. Construction dust and particulate matter - see various reports and publications:
<https://www.nbmcw.com/report/construction-infra-industry/39852-construction-dust-causes-effects-and-remedies.html>; <https://www.epa.gov/pm-pollution/particulate-matter-pm-basics>; <https://nimonik.com/2018/04/particulate-matter-assessment-for-construction-activities/> The citizens in Grand Cove will be forced to breathe this polluted air for the duration of the construction process; in some cases the rest of their lives.

HUMAN IMPACT

First we'd like to say that the Oakwood Resort and Golf Club owners have always been much respected and valued in the community. We acknowledge their right to sell their property to whomever. They owe us nothing, not even a good view.

Our group is challenged by Covid restrictions, specifically the limited number of people that can gather as a group, and are further thwarted by our own regulations under Capreit Property Management guidelines prohibiting us from soliciting within the Cove. We do what we can.

Grand Cove Estates, bordering the Oakwood east 9 holes to the north and the town of Grand Bend, Municipality of Lambton Shores, to the south, was established circa 1973 as an “adult lifestyle community.” We have sold our family homes, educated our kids and sent them into the world, embraced retirement or semi-retirement, then set about finding what most of us consider our “forever” home. We’re still in town but we’re not dealing with neighbourhood kids, next-door partiers, teenage rock stars in garages, barking dogs – all that random stuff that subdivisions provide. The prefab homes here are single story, situated so that if you go south for the winter, neighbours can keep an eye on your place. Amenities, like community gardens, lawn sports, swimming pool, woodwork shop, meeting rooms, are appealing. We own our homes but not the land. We pay monthly rent/taxes to Capreit. Our taxes go to South Huron. We vote as South Huron Ward 1 citizens, who comprise 43% of the total voting population of South Huron.

It takes careful planning to make a home purchase-lifestyle decision like this. Health challenges had to be accommodated and/or anticipated. The dynamic between longevity and finances took much mulling. We knew about the possibility of RICE expansion to the south-east. Directly south are established commercial enterprises. West is the highway, and OF COURSE there would never be development on the golf course. “Because it’s a floodplain,” one of us was told. “And all the woods and trees.” Those of us who back directly onto the golf course, or even have a partial view, paid for that privilege in the purchase price.

We never bought into development.

Now we worry not only about the *existence* of this development but also – and maybe even more so – about the *construction* of it. There are 420 homes here, housing likely MORE THAN 600 people. It is demographically safe to suggest within 5-10 years some will die. Can you imagine spending the last years of your carefully-planned retirement coping with next-door construction? **That’s no way to treat old people!**

WE ASK OUR MUNICIPAL STAFF AND ELECTED OFFICIALS TO CARE ABOUT US.

TIMING

It’s called Covid 19. It prevents us from forming groups larger than 10. Mustering self-advocacy is pretty impossible with this constraint. We are barred from “normal” social intercourse, as in the supermarket or local restaurants, or pubs or waiting rooms: that’s where social and political discourse happens, even in the age of technology.

COVID SHOULD NOT TRUMP DEMOCRACY.

As taxpaying citizens we have a right to be TRULY heard. Council has no idea, despite many dire prognoses, what the social and economic pandemic fallout will be, for individuals, families, groups, even entire municipalities. Why would ANY municipal Council NOT wait until there is a return to some semblance of normalcy before committing to a new venture as big and impactful as the Tridon proposal.

On CBC Radio May 22, 2020 (documented on cbc.ca) "There's no way that the market economy is going to snap back from this catastrophe," (Jim Stanford, economist, Director of Future Work, Canada.) "The government has turned to unprecedented levels of spending in response to the epidemic, to try to keep workers, families, and businesses afloat."

Comments

The government referred to is the Federal Government. But who knows what new roles Municipal governments might assume in the wake of the pandemic? Maybe our South Huron taxpayers and Council might prefer to divert hypothetical funds precariously ear-marked for a trunk-line sewer extension at the southernmost extremity of the municipality (which the Official Plan **does not support**) to help local business initiatives or engage in other creative means to support citizens who **already** live here but have suffered on account of the pandemic. Google offers much about the post-Covid economy in articles about businesses going bankrupt, farms going under, home foreclosures, job losses, etc.

As an entity, the Municipality is in a slow recovery mode right now. Surely it behooves our government to wait and identify the fallout, assess the damage, and **then** make informed decisions about spending, decisions that help the existing citizenry rather than helping an out-of-town developer.

From the Municipal Finance Offices' Association of Ontario (last updated July 8, 2020)

"This report is the first of a series of papers that MFOA will release regarding the financial implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for municipalities and recommendations for support from other orders of government. **The impact of COVID-19 on municipalities is constantly evolving**, and as such, the current recommendations are based on information obtained by MFOA staff up to the end of April 2020. Future reports will reflect our latest understanding of impacts." A summary of recommendations is online at mfoa.on.ca)

Comments

Governments are waiting. People and families are waiting. "The whole damn world is waiting." Long-time residents who are part of your citizenry beseech you, Staff and Council of the Municipality, of South Huron, to wait too. Our preference would be a simple "NO" to Tridon, but barring that, please just wait.

Tridon's website is disturbing to us as we ask you to wait, because it seems to confirm what rumours tell us: that it is a 'done deal.' Go to tridongroup.com, click on CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS, then click on OAKWOOD MEADOWS GRAND BEND, and there in larger, bold print are the words COMING SOON!

FINAL STATEMENT

We will not render here a tedious synopsis of all the documented reasons we have offered to encourage the Municipality of South Huron to deny Tridon's application for an Amendment to the Official Plan as the first step towards the realization of a new subdivision on this golf course land. It's not a good idea for so many reasons, the most comprehensive and compelling of which is the **absolute** fact that it contravenes both the letter and the spirit of the Municipality's Official Plan, specifically the directives in the Port Blake Planning Area section of the OP, The Municipality of South Huron Strategic Plan, and Water and Wastewater Management Master Plan, among other relevant directives.

We wonder about the odd and perhaps dangerous precedent the Municipality will establish by ignoring their own laws, regulations, paid-for advice, and inherited mandate, simply to accommodate an out-of-town developer. It makes no sense to us.

Thank you for listening to our voice.

Respectfully submitted,

by a member of the Citizens Concerned about Golf Course Development