
Subject: FW: Planning and Growth Management Committee - April 29 2021

From: Michelle [REDACTED]

Sent: April 26, 2021 4:15 PM

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To the Region of Peel Representatives and the Planning and Growth Management Committee

I request this submission be included in the discussions regarding planning and growth management for the future of the Peel Region.

I am simply a resident of Caledon, I am not a biologist or a city planner, nor a wildlife expert or climate specialist...not even a farmer but I do live in a rural setting by choice, despite what some may consider shortfalls of doing so. I engage my community as best I can to hear their concerns on the region within which we live, and these comments are the thoughts of many.

When I review the plans for urban sprawl into Caledon, I worry. It doesn't matter if we are talking about the 2041 plan, or the 2051 plan, or whatever plan terminology you want to throw out there - I will still likely be here so it is an issue for my lifetime, not just the future.

As a Region Planner and/or a Committee Member for the growth plans what would you do if there was no more land available? Did your analysis start with that premise? If you had, then you would realize the existing urban areas have much to offer in terms of planning, creating garden communities, gentle density and simply developing a sense of belonging amongst residents. These thoughts on restructure would fulfill the needs of growth, and more. Instead, it seems the perspective is "let's just build a gazillion family homes everywhere, regardless of prime food source land, wildlife corridors, wetlands, greenspace for mental sanity and climate change concerns, because this is easy. There appears to be no consideration on the land use or devastation or truly creating the incredible communities that can exist within a fairly high density.

Did our Town and Regional Planners take the easy and simple route... identify open agricultural land, swaths of wildlife/wetland/green corridor and say - heh - let's just build here and that way I can get home on time for dinner and yet do as I am told by Premier Ford or the Growth Committee?

REFERRAL TO _____
RECOMMENDED _____
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The ebb and flow of a person's life cycle includes periods of time when as a youngster may live in a fairly urban world, (you are lucky if you can grow up rural), often biking to school or to neighborhood friends. Then as those mid twenty years arrive, one may shuffle to the high rise, high hip areas of fun and attraction. As families begin their creation those suburban homes are sought for the importance of school, proximity to work and the soccer team after school. As midlife arrives, so many want the countryside for peace, tranquility and perhaps achieving dreams left behind. This is alongside the farmer who needs land too to survive; the wildlife that need freedom to maneuver without dodging vehicles all day. Life eventually, often forces a return to an urban world as we age to be close to original communities of youth, or where services and care are more readily available. This can actually help in planning when these are centralized back in a community where one may have grown up. All are part of a life cycle and we need all of them, to thrive. Expanding into unfettered sprawl does not create a life cycle of communities. A land boundary will force planners to rethink and be inspired on what can successfully be achieved. It is amazing what one can accomplish in terms of affordable and sustainable societies when restrictions are imposed to enhance that creative mind.

What I see in the various reports (at least so far) is solely for the benefit of developers and speculators who want that quick buck on the backside of everything else. It is favoritism at its peak. I ask - where is the balancing act to provide an equal priority for those who may not be able to speak, may not have the wherewithal to speak, may not know about your plans or how to respond, or the fear of reprisal which is so often seen in these political structures. Who in the group of decision makers is acting on behalf of the other side to protect our greenspace, our food source, our agriculture, our watersheds, greenhouse gas emissions and so many other elements of these aspects? I see nothing concrete in the reports to take these into account in deciding how to deal with the future. Instead I still see only the easy route of sprawl.

We also, in case anyone has not noticed, are dealing with a pandemic! Family dynamics are changing. Immigration to the region may change. Priorities of families have likely changed forever. Budgets to deal with infrastructure are not as available and people's tolerance for insensitivities to greenspace has forever taken on a new pathway. As a rural resident, we see the importance of this environment every moment, and during this pandemic it has become ever so much in the forefront of daily life. New community planning is failing miserably in understanding the need for greenspace of their own and the contribution of the rural landscape which is not a renewable resource.

At this time, I ask the committee in its meeting on April 29 2021 to consider delaying any decision and pause the planning until such time as we can overcome critical issues of today and we can regroup to make better decisions overall using experts from a multitude of realms. We have too many life-threatening events happening at this time and this can lead to rash, irresponsible choices which once taken cannot likely be revoked. You are playing with futures, of all types, yet reports and analysis to-date seem to only consider one.

I will keep reading to learn more, so you may also be hearing from me and those I represent in the community, again.

Kindest Regards
Michelle Meandro