

Residents call for protection of Kingscross estates from intensification

Residents of Kingscross Estates gathered Sunday evening to object and protest the potential opening of a road linking Manitou Drive and two proposed new subdivisions to be built on farmlands and woodlands to the west and southwest of the iconic, established neighbourhood.

The residents are opposed to the idea, which council will be reviewing at the May 13 meeting. Residents argue this proposal will negatively impact their wells, the environment and lead to increased traffic in the area.

Council recently sent notices to interested parties to invite the public to speak to the two developments at the meeting of council May 13 at 6 p.m. at the municipal centre.

Council will be preparing for the appeals to the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal (LPAT) made by both the developers regarding the developments, called Mansions of King, for 313 homes, and for Bushland Heights for more than 80 homes. The appeals are currently to be heard in late August through September and early November.

According to residents, the current plans for Mansions of King and Bushland Heights propose in and outs to the subdivisions via King Road (to the west of the King Cemetery), via Jane Street north of King Road and finally, via a currently tree lined easement that exists between two family homes on Manitou Drive (which is a cul-de-sac).

The proposed developments provide plans to build homes on land which is part of one of the most significant headwaters in Ontario. The properties are characterized by rolling and folding landscapes which slope toward the steep East Humber river valley and the terminal section of the largest provincially Significant Wetland in southern Ontario ? the breeding grounds for many species of frogs and turtles. These lands provide an important wildlife corridor for deer, wild turkeys and coyotes. There are many natural heritage features including woodlands and vernal pools which provide habitat for many species. It is proposed that one of these pools can be relocated to make way for new homes and the other will be built over.

This land provides significant groundwater recharge. But the development plans include extensive cut and fill operations and dewatering the site. Most of the adjacent property owners are on private wells and wish to remain on their well water.

The Mansions of King development proposal consists of more than 60 single family homes to be located to the south of Kingscross Drive, Champlain Crescent and to the west of Manitou Drive and 250 units in a condominium style block. This alone represents a potential for at least 400 more vehicles to use Manitou Drive.

Residents believe the traffic burden through Kingscross will increase dramatically in the future because of the number of vehicles from the proposed developments, together with those from the 80-plus homes already built to the north of Kingscross, near Villanova School, and the 1,000 homes to be built to the east of Keele Street and the south of the 15th Sideroad.

Kingscross Ratepayers Association is planning to make a presentation to the council May 13 to articulate the concerns of residents and to make further comments.

King residents who care about the future of established neighbourhoods and the pressure on them from intense developments are encouraged to attend the council meeting May 13 at 6 p.m.