

Council needs to ?walk the walk? on environmental protection

It's extremely encouraging to hear that Aurora Council recently moved to send ?a pointed message? to the new Provincial government, undertaking continued action to maintain and grow the current Greenbelt, within which the Oak Ridges Moraine is included.

This is excellent news and we hope that Council will do its part to ensure that the Oak Ridges Moraine remains protected for this and future generations to enjoy.

In this respect, let's turn our attention to the Henderson Drive Minor Variance applications which propose the destruction of over 49,000 sq. ft. of Significant Woodland on pristine Oak Ridges Moraine land in our very own back yard.

If Council is to have any credibility among the peers to which it apparently aligns itself, it should now be standing shoulder to shoulder with the over 4,000 signatories of the Change.org petition demanding that this land be preserved.

Yes, Mayor Dawe, we're aware that the land is private but this does not mean that four environmental by-laws that currently protect the forests, valley land and vulnerable wildlife should be disregarded because someone chose to make a risky investment many years ago. There are now other options to consider, including stewardship and tax breaks, so that everyone wins.

Let's explore these instead of destroying a beautifully pristine environmental area so that two estate homes can be built simply to service the needs of two affluent families. Surely, as a community, we're better than that.

So far, the sound of crickets can be heard amidst the Council chambers, with the notable exception of Councillor Wendy Gaertner. Meanwhile, the emotionally-non-invested developers wait, salivating in the wings, anticipating the grand felling of thousands of trees so that the big machines can move in and release the confetti of dollar bills before moving on to the next unguarded piece of green space.

Councillors, we commend you for shouting from the rooftops your loyalty to the Moraine, but now let's see you walk the walk.

Stand with those who elected you and do the right thing ? save the Moraine land that's within your power to save, and please do so now before it's too late.

Wendy Kenyon

Save the Henderson Drive Forest Group