

Dear Mayor Guthrie and City Councillors,

I am writing to you regarding the following agenda item:

*3.1 IDE-2020-12 Decision Report - 300 Water Street - Proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment OP1707 and ZC1712 - Ward 5*

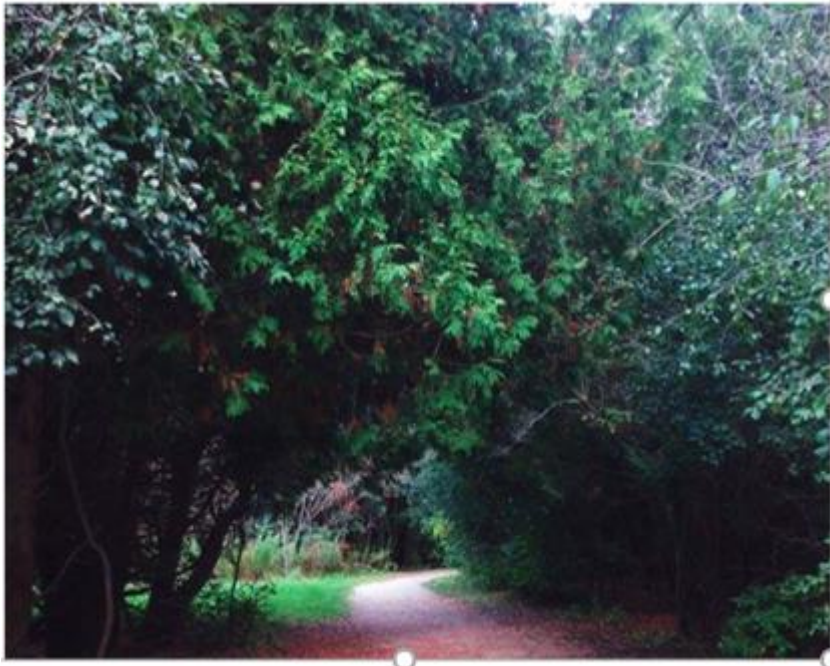
I live about a block from this property, and it has been an important component of our neighbourhood. As you know, the vacant house on this property was demolished a few years ago due to concerns about vandalism and fires. However, the large stand of cedar trees on the property has been protected.



Figure 4 – Composite photograph of subject property seen from Water Street east of Denver Street dated March 2016. (Photo: City Planning staff)

Acceptance of the staff recommendation on this item, which would permit the construction of six townhouses and one single home on this property, will mean the destruction of the grove of 182 large cedar trees. While some of these trees are not in good condition, many of them are in good to excellent condition, and the fact remains that the trees are close to 100 years old and provide an important environmental asset to the neighbourhood.

You all know that our neighbourhood lost hundreds of mature trees in 2015 due to the Hydro One clearcutting. This loss has been devastating to residents of the neighbourhood environmentally and aesthetically, and has had a serious effect on wildlife as well.



***What our neighbourhood used to look like***



***What happened to our neighbourhood***

In 2017, hundreds more mature trees were cut down to prepare for the renovations to the Muslim Centre on Water Street, directly across from the Hydro clearcut area.

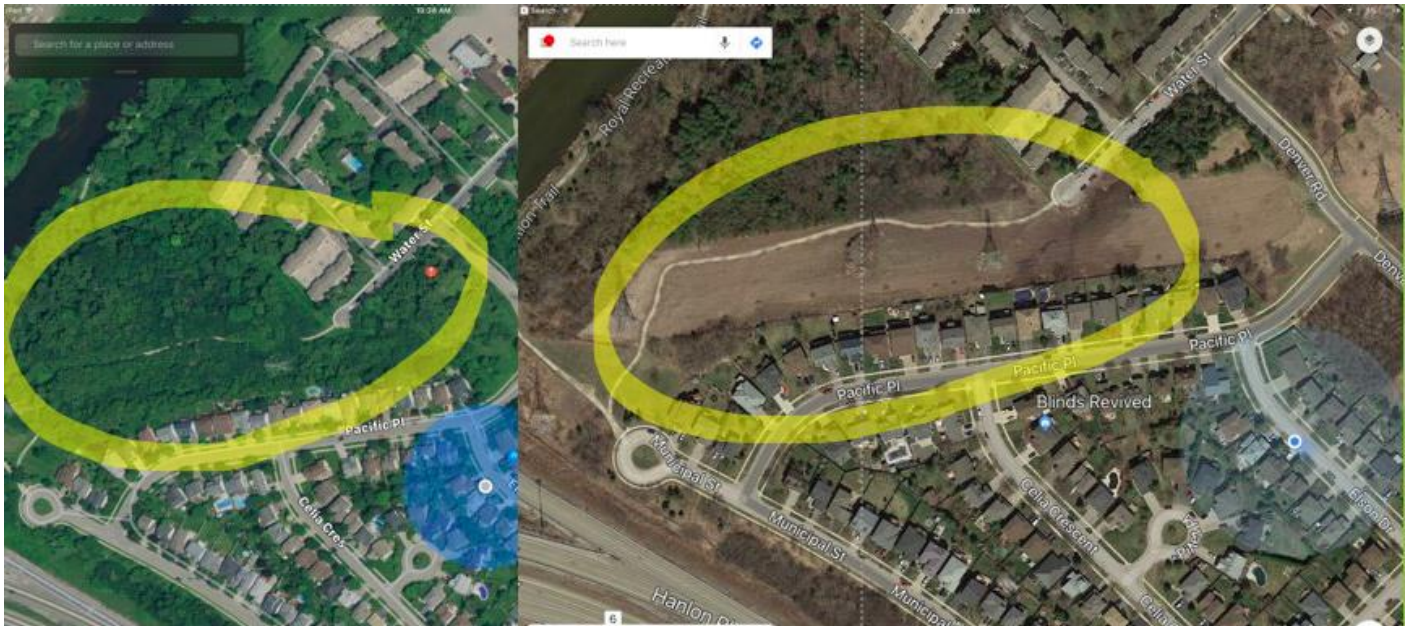
From this...



To this...



The two images below illustrate some of the loss of green space in our neighbourhood, brought about by the Hydro clearcut in 2015 and the Muslim Centre clearcut in 2017:



Allowing almost 200 more mature trees to be decimated will only further devastate this neighbourhood and its residents, and is another environmental assault on an area that was formerly known and cherished for its green space.

An additional serious concern relates to traffic and parking. Parking and driving on Water Street and Denver Road have been challenging for many years. Since the establishment of the Muslim Centre, hundreds of cars arrive and leave many times each week. Last year a driveway into the Muslim Centre was built onto Denver Road, greatly increasing the traffic in that area. Below is a photograph of a typical scene adjacent to the Muslim

Centre when an event is going on there (which happens frequently). These cars are all parked on Denver Road, in the vicinity of the property where 7 more houses are being proposed! This is also an area in which many children walk to school and wait for school buses. There are risks associated with allowing still more residents and cars into the area.



I am asking you to vote against the staff recommendation on this issue. The prospect of the removal of these century old trees and the subsequent build of seven homes on this small property is devastating and would further ravage the neighbourhood. When the property was sold, the new owners knew that the condition of sale was that the trees must be left and that any

new structure must reflect the footprint of the former structure. Those conditions should not be changed now.

In the photographs I have attached, you can see what an asset these trees are to a neighbourhood that has already faced a great deal of destruction.

Thoughts to consider:

- This property is on land zoned as Open Space and Urban Reserve
- Until the Hydro clearcut, this land identified as part of the City of Guelph's Natural Heritage System
- This small neighbourhood has already lost over 2,000 trees, and will face the loss of many more mature cedar trees should this development take place. This contravenes the City of Guelph's own Urban Forest Management Plan:
  - ***“Guelph is working to maximize the health and size of its urban forest, and is committed to having the highest tree canopy among comparable municipalities. To succeed, the City, residents, businesses and community groups must work together to help manage Guelph's urban forest.”***

- The property is home to many species of wildlife, who have already lost much of their habitat
- The property is comprised of a wetland, is less than 250 metres from the Speed River, and groundwater from this site flows northward toward the river
- When this property was sold by auction several years ago, a stipulation of the sale was that **any building on the site would not exceed the size of the original farmhouse—** and this proposal suggests that seven homes be built there!

Please do the right thing for Guelph and for the environment on Monday February 10. Thank you sincerely for your consideration.

Best regards

Lorna Rourke