



SAVE BEACHWOOD

NO TO REZONING IN THE WEST END

Save Beachwood

Public Consultation Meeting, August 19 2021

Alexander Schwertner, Wasaga Beach Ratepayer
Representing Brocks Beach Community Association

Overview

- ▶ Beachwood Development Inc. has applied to re-zone a 5.88 ha property in our neighbourhood to allow for high-density development, with a proposed construction of 215 housing units
- ▶ Neighbourhood residents and other residents of the Town strongly object to this material change that is outside of the Official Plan
- ▶ A neighbourhood association has been formed to oppose the application, and we will present our arguments today.
- ▶ Based on our arguments, we are asking the Planning Department to recommend that Council reject all three applications pertaining to this development, and for Council to follow that recommendation.
- ▶ We have created a website at <https://savebeachwood.ca> to summarize our arguments for reference.
- ▶ A petition has been launched and signed by over 1,700 supporters so far <https://www.change.org/SaveBrocksBeach>

Basis for Opposition

- ▶ Contrary to the Official Plan
- ▶ Destruction of protected Coastal Wetlands, contrary to 2011 Official Plan Amendment
- ▶ Re-zoning inconsistent with “A Place to Grow” Plan and Simcoe County Official Plan
- ▶ Substantial adverse change to the character of the neighbourhood
- ▶ Actual development density could far exceed proposed density
- ▶ Town needs to drive planning for significant changes to Official Plan

Contrary to Official Plan

- ▶ Official Plan has zoned the area as low-density residential (R1) for many years
- ▶ OP section 5.2.5.5 states specifically:
 - “Medium density residential development is specifically discouraged within the following areas: [...]*
 - vii) The outlying west area of Town, more specifically west of 71st Street.”*
- ▶ Residents and developers have built homes in the area relying upon the Official Plan
- ▶ Residents expect future development in the area consistent with their community
- ▶ There is no business or service infrastructure in proximity that could support or benefit from high-density residential developments in this area
- ▶ Higher density housing is more suitable and of greater benefit to the Town in other areas adjacent to existing commercial hubs

Destruction of Protected Wetlands

- ▶ More than 50% of the proposed site are protected Coastal Wetlands, designated Natural Heritage Category 1 & 2 Wetland
- ▶ Town has received comments from NVCA indicating that they can not support the proposal as construction would remove and irrevocably destroy wetlands
- ▶ Removal of these wetlands has immediate adverse impacts for our neighbourhood:
 - ▶ Increased risk of flooding of basements and streets as hydrological buffers are removed
 - ▶ Degraded water quality in Nottawasaga Bay as water is no longer filtered through wetlands
- ▶ The Town decided to protect these wetlands in an Official Plan Amendment adopted in 2011, and identified them as contributing to the natural heritage of our community
- ▶ Developer has already altered part of the wetland by clearing trees, pumping water and adding fill, and has been fined for these actions by NVCA in 2017

Inconsistent w/ Ontario & County Plans

- ▶ Ontario's "**A Place to Grow**" Plan requires the protection of designated Natural Heritage wetlands in section 4 "Protecting What is Valuable"
- ▶ The complete destruction of Natural Heritage wetlands that are present in the proposed site is inconsistent with the mandate of section 4 of the "A Place to Grow" Plan
- ▶ The 2019 Residential Land Budget, part of the **County of Simcoe's Official Plan**, requires the Town to add ~3,000 more residents between now and the year 2031
- ▶ Only 120 new residential units per year are required in all of Wasaga Beach to accommodate that growth, based on the Land Budget's occupancy rate of 2.5 per unit
- ▶ Units added with active or approved developments will already exceed the total required units in the next few years
- ▶ **The 215 units planned for Beachwood are not required** to meet the County of Simcoe's Official Plan mandate

Change to Neighbourhood Character

- ▶ Brocks Beach area is part of the traditional **waterfront/cottager neighbourhood** running the entire length of Shore Lane
- ▶ The character of Shore Lane is a unique and **important part of the Town's heritage**
- ▶ In accordance with the Official Plan, Brocks Beach has developed in the past 20 years into a neighbourhood of high-quality, well designed single-family homes
- ▶ Existing roads would require substantial upgrade and widening to support increased traffic, turning tranquil Shore Lane and Betty Blvd dead-ends into busy thoroughfares
- ▶ Residents will lose frequently used Shore Lane recreational trail to a paved road as extension of Betty Blvd
- ▶ **High density housing does not fit in any part of this traditional neighbourhood**

Built-out density could exceed proposal

- ▶ Re-zoning application is based on a plan that does not include building to maximum permitted density – potential bait-and-switch proposal for easier approval
- ▶ Re-zoned land could be flipped to another developer and/or plans changed to build out to maximum permitted density
- ▶ Conceptual designs of the proposed townhouses and condos include higher-end architectural features and materials, while final designs and construction could very likely be utilitarian with cheaper materials
- ▶ **Proposal should be reviewed based on maximum permitted density under R4-X, R3-X and R1-X**

Town needs to drive planning

- ▶ Town has no plan, by-law, concluded study or Council resolution in place that would encourage or even contemplate high-density residential development in the West End
- ▶ Proposal is driven by singular interest of a developer, and not a result of an urban planning initiative by the Town considering communal interests of the public
- ▶ Town has planned a study (West End Improvement Plan) that has not been started yet
- ▶ If approved, the development pre-empts the results of that study and sets a precedent that would render the study obsolete
- ▶ Proposal is a significant modification of our Official Plan, and such modification should be subject to the planning scrutiny and public consultation processes similar to those of the downtown development.
- ▶ **Developers should not dictate the Official Plan nor changes to it**

Summary

- ▶ We ask that the Town **reject** the application to re-zone the subject property
- ▶ We ask that the Town enforces the preservation of protected wetlands in the subject property, including NVCA mandated buffers of 30m around wetlands, even if developed based on existing R1 zoning
- ▶ We ask that the Town conclude the anticipated study for future development of the West End and, if necessary, adopts an amendment of the Official Plan with a clear planning framework for the West End, prior to approving any piecemeal applications for medium-density or high-density developments west of 71th Street

Thank you for your attention.