

New Ancaster complex raises many traffic concerns

OPINION

Mar 07, 2017 by [Louise Lachowskyj](#) Hamilton Spectator

I, like a very select few, was invited to an information open house regarding the proposed development of a Continuum Retirement and Long Term Care facility at 558 Golf Links Rd.

I emphasize "few" because only a small number of residents in the community were invited. If you live more than 125 metres — that's the equivalent of 410 feet — from the proposed building, not the lot line, then you weren't notified or invited. All the residents who will be greatly impacted, especially within the border of Rousseau/Mohawk Road, Halson Street, Meadowlands and Garner Road are being conveniently left in the dark and not included in the process.

Yet these are the very residents who will be affected by the taxing increase in an already unsafe and faulty traffic flow. The city felt that a very small fraction of the neighbourhood was all that was required to be notified. How can this be in the best interest of this community? Information obtained at the meeting notes that the traffic study has already been conducted, in September 2016.

All that the city requested of Shannex was to conduct a study at the intersection of Golf Links Road and Southcote traffic lights. For one day, and only at this location, neglecting the side street of Onondaga or the school zone at the bottom of McNiven Road. This does not remotely give an accurate picture of the congestion and danger that already exists here on any given day when traffic is disrupted by events on the Alexander Linc or the 403. This is a frequent occurrence, and makes it difficult or impossible for local residents to pull out of

their own driveways or side streets.

What is witnessed over and over again are cars impatiently trying to find alternate routes through residential areas, speeding and making illegal turns to avoid these frequent delays.

There are talks of a roundabout instead of stop lights at Golf Links and Southcote, which is treacherous considering three of the four approaches are on an incline, impeding the visibility of the activity already on the circle. It will also remove any ability for pedestrian flow and, of course, the needed break in traffic from the lights to allow vehicles to have a chance of pulling out of their driveways and side streets.

Also brought to attention was the consideration of a long "On ramp" to the westbound 403 from Golf Links Road on the corner of the proposed property, again drawing more traffic to this area since the previous ramp on Mohawk Road was closed in the construction of the Linc connecting with the 403

The need for more residents and facilities for our quickly aging population is a fact, but we must proceed with caution and a full understanding of the realities of the impact that such a development will have on an already overtaxed infrastructure. There will be service vehicles, staff vehicles, resident vehicles and visitor vehicles (200 parking spots) added to the traffic flow.

This doesn't just affect local residents. What about the residents in the facility, the seniors trying to navigate this treacherous traffic area?

It is my opinion, shared by many of the small number of people invited to the meeting, that this is not a transparent process and raises questions, such as why would Shannex buy this property if zoning still needed to be changed for their purpose? Why risk this much money on a hope of zoning changes? Is this not putting the cart before the horse?

We ask our community-elected representatives to act in the best interest of their constituents — all of their constituents, and not just a select few.

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