

Good day,

My name is Janice Currie and I live on a farm property in the rural hamlet of Carluke, which is part of Ancaster. A fairly large gro-op facility is planned – and in progress – in this area, which is why I am here today.

I realize that the planning department recommendations and proposal – and the ultimate decision by Council – apply to all areas of Hamilton. I – of course – can only speak to my personal concerns and those shared with me by my friends and neighbours in my community. If you wonder why there aren't more farmers here – well, most of them hold full-time day jobs, in addition to working the land. So, I also speak for them today.

To start, I would like to make it clear that my concerns are not only of the 'not in my backyard' variety. There is an element of that, of course, because I cherish my home and community, but my primary issues have more to do with reduction of prime farmland for conventional crop use, and replacement of same with massive glass, steel and concrete commercial enterprises.

I would also like to give you some background on my journey concerning this matter. It hasn't been easy! I only became aware of the proposed marijuana operation through casual conversation at Church, and not through any formal notification process.

So, in February I attended an Agriculture and Rural Affairs committee meeting at the Ancaster Fairgrounds. I was joined by about 75 other homeowners. We were there in an effort to learn how the marijuana grow-op facilities being proposed were going to affect our community.

Unfortunately, we didn't get many answers. Instead, we were treated as a nuisance and rebuked frequently for asking questions specific to the marijuana facility being proposed in our community. We were also prompted to leave the meeting without the opportunity of hearing their motion which I believe is included in today's staff report.

The questions which were answered were often contradictory depending on which of the Marijuana Grow-op Organizations was speaking. Our questions included:

- odours,
- constant artificial lighting,
- security and fencing,
- irrigation water being trucked in, and how excess water might be drained,
- well water and septic usage,
- increased heavy traffic, and parking facilities,
- noise from generators, HVAC systems etc.

We were also interested in how these Marijuana Grow-op and Processing facilities might fit within the Hamilton Rural Plan, The Greenbelt, and the various Conservation Authority rules and regulations for land use.

Other issues raised concerned our potential decreased property values, and the very real possibility that young farmers would no longer be able to buy available farms as they would be out-bid by marijuana conglomerates.

Because of our dissatisfaction with the above, I organized a community meeting in April at the local Church.

Councillor Ferguson, and several senior planning and water staff attended and answered questions posed by the 50+ residents. I note that the planning department document presented today summarizes the issues raised at that meeting. I must, however, respectfully disagree with the conclusion that all of the issues have been – or will be –

addressed.

In March, I attended the planning department meeting where the Ag and Rural Affairs committee motion was deferred until today pending planning department additional research and recommendation.

One of the things that struck me at that meeting was planning department's assertion that when making recommendations they always consider sensitive integration; adjacent neighbourhood characteristics; and compatibility with the neighbouring properties.

Having heard that, I am stunned by the recommendations, and options, tabled today which would allow for enormous marijuana growing and processing facilities on prime farmland acreage. This is vastly incompatible with the neighbouring, and local, properties and is, quite frankly, offensive.

There is a proposal in the report which suggests that a 90,000 square meter GFA (gross floor area) be considered. The paper doesn't say where that number came from, but there is language to the effect that the Medical Marijuana Industry want, or need, or desire increased facility size allowance to allow them to meet their business plans etc etc etc. It's disappointing that the impacted communities are not afforded the same consideration.

But, let's put it into perspective – on a typical 100 acre farm lot, a 20% coverage allowance, or the proposed 90,000 square meter recommendation, would result in a cluster of buildings with a footprint the size of Limeridge Mall! Yes, you heard me correctly.

Does anyone actually think that 30 meter setbacks and some tree planting are going to disguise such a

You are also already trying to curb the influx of monster homes.

As such, you shouldn't assume that Limeridge-mall sized factories are appropriate for every rural area. Maybe for none of them!

I would urge you to consider carefully the long term consequences of the recommendation as presented. Prime farmland which is allowed to be covered by huge processing facilities is very unlikely to ever revert to conventional farm use. It's gone forever!

I would also respectfully request that unanswered questions regarding community impacts be carefully considered, evaluated and clearly communicated before any decision on facility size and footprint be finalized.

Thank you for your time.