

## Paparella, Stephanie

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**Subject:** FW: GIC Meeting Agenda item 10.9 - School Board Properties Sub-Committee Report

**From:** Linda McEneny

**Sent:** January 13, 2020 11:53 AM

**To:** DL - Council Only <[dlcouncilonly@hamilton.ca](mailto:dlcouncilonly@hamilton.ca)>

**Subject:** GIC Meeting Agenda item 10.9 - School Board Properties Sub-Committee Report

Dear Honorable Mayor and Members of Council,

I would like to bring to your attention, please, my thoughts on this piece of property in question on Frances Ave. that is available for sale at fair market value. It is my understanding that the City is not interested in purchasing this tract, as it is, apparently, of no value. I would beg to differ. This land contains an ESA and provides valuable urban tree canopy in an area in where our urban forestry is shrinking. In light of the extremely high amount of development that has occurred and is continually occurring in this area, I would think preserving this, essentially, last bit of natural green space is of great importance. We have also lost many mature trees in this area due to the ash borer. With the addition of the 54 story triple tower project looming just around the corner from this area, the concrete jungle threat is even more palpable!

According to a Hamilton Spectator article from September 2018 (see link below), the City of Hamilton is aiming for 35% urban forest coverage up from the current 18% (part of which is contributed by a strip of forested land of the Niagara Escarpment). I hope that you take the time to read this article as it highlights many interesting and important facts surrounding our urban tree canopy.

If Hamilton is committed to increasing our green space overall, wouldn't it make good sense to keep this natural green space, with all its wildlife (that already has had its habitat compromised), rather than having to fund new growth? It is a real risk, that if the City does not buy this land and retain it as natural space, it will then end up in the hands of developers. Regardless of the here say that developers would walk away from this, I don't believe this for a minute, considering the sale of the opposite tract off of Church Ave. An ESA is not a deal breaker. And it seems that development is occurring on every last little bit of bare land in our neighborhood.

I'm not going to reiterate all the meaningful facts, financial or otherwise, provided by the Lakewood Beach Community in an earlier communication. They already did a great presentation of all the reasons why this proposal to purchase this land is an obvious choice to make. I do wish to stress that land value must not be coveted just for its developer-generated dollars. What a wonderful opportunity for the City, with just this one-time purchase (and a commitment to keep as natural green space) to preserve this special place. What a gift for not just our neighborhood but for Hamilton as a whole in keeping with the commitment to increase urban forestry. Please be the instrument of this preservation and consider mindfully to purchase this land.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,  
Linda McEneny

<https://www.thespec.com/opinion-story/8922339-why-urban-trees-matter-to-hamilton/>