

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Ancaster Residential Zoning and 'flooding'

From: Nancy Hurst

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Please add to Item 5.1 Planning committee report on the Aug 12 Council agenda

Dear Councillors and Mr. Mayor,

Concerning city wide zoning changes which, thanks to Cllr Ferguson's amendment, will exclude the ER zones of Ancaster, I write to you as a resident of the ER zone of "old Ancaster." First I want to clarify that ER old Ancaster zones in the case of this amendment does not confine itself to the Ancaster village core, but rather to any house built circa 1950, and there are 1800 or so of us here.

During the Aug 3 Planning meeting, Cllr Ferguson stated three times that these zoning changes would "Radically change the character of Ancaster" and affirmed that these sorts of zoning changes are exactly why he voted against a firm urban boundary. When he received pushback from other councillors that these zoning changes should be city wide with no exceptions for Ancaster, the councillor then began to talk about flooding.

Flooding due to home conversions is a red herring. The real threat of flooding downstream comes from paving farmland and wetlands by turning those vast natural sponges into impervious surfaces, so if Cllr Ferguson was truly concerned about flooding he would rethink his continued support for urban boundary expansion and for covering farmland and wetlands in the Whitebelt and the AEGD with urban sprawl and warehousing.

Cllr Ferguson [stated several times](#) during the meeting that old Ancaster "doesn't have storm sewers". I would like to clarify that while we do not have storm sewers that connect to the city's storm sewer system, we have something better and more effective, and that is infrastructure that never fails to direct storm water away from homes through our deep ditches and culverts. With this system, storm water washes off all sides of the roads into ditches which themselves are permeable and which drain stormwater to natural areas away from homes. I took a walk around my very small survey, Mohawk Meadows which is within an Ancaster ER zone and found eleven fully functional storm water grates neatly tucked into our ditches. I've included images with addresses and a map showing their locations in just the ER part of Mohawk Meadows survey alone which comprises about seven streets.

Just to confirm their efficacy, I've spoken to four homeowners who have one of these storm water drains in their ditches in the ER zone of old Ancaster at 173 Cayuga, 684 Hiawatha, 123 Oneida Blvd and 125 Oneida Blvd and the owners confirmed that those drains have never backed up, nor have their deep ditches ever flooded. Storm water for the neighbourhood is directed to 125 Oneida which has a large culvert that directs the water out behind 125 Oneida into the very green and lush area between them and the 403. (Image attached of the location of the large drain and where it discharges.) This neighbourhood drain is monitored by resident Diane Hitchcock and her husband who keep it clear of leaves and call the city if there is an issue. As for the ditch in front of my house, never have I seen more than a few inches of rain in the bottom even during the heaviest of deluges. Contrast that to parts of town serviced by combined regular storm sewers embedded in concrete whose streets are awash with stormwater during heavy rain.

Friends in my neighbourhood speak of drains large enough to walk through in areas of Ancaster near Spring Valley. She played inside them as a kid.

Senior Planner Ms. Fulford shared with me the map (attached) of the ER zone in Ancaster and confirmed that this amendment would affect 1800 homes outside of Ancaster's Secondary Plans (which are themselves

exempt from these zoning changes). This means 1800 homes will be denied the right to convert the inside of their house to a duplex or a fourplex depending on whether it's a regular sized home or one of Ancaster's 126 "monster homes". This constitutes a significant number of people who will not be able to:

- provide more much needed housing in Ancaster and Hamilton.
- age in place by converting their home and renting out or selling part of it.
- provide separate living accommodation to family members who want to live close to parents or kids and grandkids
- create smaller, more affordable housing types that are desperately needed for everyone including students, young families, middle income and older folks.

Please don't discount the repeated assurances by Chief Planner Steve Robichaud, who assured Cllr Ferguson that any changes to the inside of a home to accommodate multiple dwellings would not result in flooding downstream and that any exterior changes would be subject to existing rigorous stormwater management restrictions.

If Cllr Ferguson is seriously concerned about flooding then he could propose an amendment that would require permeable pavers to be used if extra parking spots are required. This would be a very simple solution to his concern and would mean 1800 Ancaster residents don't get left behind.

Please listen to your expert Planning Staff and to residents of Ancaster, and not to the outlying misunderstandings of the sole Cllr to vote against the creation of a Climate Change office for Hamilton. See images attached.

Kind regards
Nancy Hurst
ER zone, old Ancaster.



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