

## Public Hearing – 265 Mill St. S. Waterdown, Rezoning Application

August 3, 2022

Mr. Mayor, Members of the City Council, Members of the Planning Committee, Ladies and Gentlemen:

My name is Sidney Shaw and I live next to the subject property. I am here today to voice my opposition to the proposed zoning change for the subject property. But before I give you my reasons for the opposition, please allow me to state categorically that I have never received any notice, either by postal mail or electronic mail, regarding the zoning application and this hearing. I do, however, receive my property tax bill in a very timely manner twice a year, every year. I wish I have had more time to prepare for this hearing, but I only found out about it roughly a week ago when the hearing date was posted on the notice board at the subject property.

I am opposed to the zoning change for the following reasons:

1. This is a disaster waiting to happen. By disaster I mean both in terms of traffic accidents and traffic jam. The subject property is located at a major intersection and directly below a slope/hill. Even with the proposed releveilling of Mountain Brow Rd., visibility is still not going to be ideal, and as such you don't have much time to react to the vehicles coming down the hill, and I know this better than anyone else because I have had a few close calls cutting the grass along that stretch of shoulder. With the estimated 100-157 kids attending the proposed Montessori school the situation will only get worse. The traffic study commissioned by the applicant proposed that a diverter island be built, such that traffic flow would be "right in, right out", meaning you can only turn right into the property and turn right when you come out. This will in fact make the situation worse and here is why. (Scenario A) For cars coming from Mill St. and Waterdown Rd., they will have to turn east into Mountain Brow, and since they can't turn left into the property, they will continue to go up the hill and then make a U-turn using my driveway or that of my neighbors all the while avoiding traffic coming from the east. I am seeing this a few times a day already even without the proposed school. (Scenario B1) For cars coming out of the property, they have to turn right, and a large percentage of them will again turn right at the intersection into Mill St., and this is undoing what the Mountain Brow expansion project is supposed to do which is to divert traffic away from the Mill St. heritage district. (Scenario B2) For cars coming out of the property and going south onto Waterdown Rd., they will have to make a mad dash to the left turn lane while keeping an eye for cars barreling down the hill behind them. There is only about 40 meters from the end of the diverter island where traffic merges into the main road, to the intersection of Mountain Brow and Waterdown Rd., and that's all the distance they have for making the dash to the left turn lane. If there are cars already waiting to make left turn at the intersection, this distance is even shorter, and all the while they have to avoid getting hit by cars coming down the hill. Common sense tells me that there could be anywhere between 200 to 400 car-trips a day with all the students, staff, delivery and repair vehicles, etc. going in and out of this property. This property is just too close to the intersection and too close to the

hill to handle this kind of traffic volume. In addition, in an emergency, fire trucks and ambulances will have to drive over the diverter island in order to get into the property. I would like to see what the fire department has to say about this school proposal. A previous long term owner of the subject property showed me his plans – one was to subdivide it into six estate lot with the original building and 5 new houses, the other plan is for 20 townhouse units, both were shot down based on traffic, heritage, and conservation grounds, and all of a sudden these are no longer problems when it comes to building a school with a lot more traffic and modification to the existing building? I don't get it.

2. Everything about this proposal flies in the face of the beautiful planning done for Waterdown, specifically the Heritage District and the new subdivisions. We are spending millions of dollars to expand Mountain Brow in order to divert traffic away from Mill St. and the Heritage District, and at the same time creating extra traffic volume and sending them toward Mill St and the Heritage District! If we need daycare center/Montessori school they should be located where the young families are which is in the new subdivisions. The master plan for the new subdivisions calls for communities that are pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and everything is supposed to be within 400 meters, and yet we are arbitrarily locating daycare/Montessori school in a matured neighborhood which forces parents to drive farther than necessary in order to take their kids to school. Community facilities should be planned and built base on need and proximity, not on one private individual's investment desire.
3. Private school, educational facility, daycare, Montessori school – which is it? On the notice board at the subject property, it says the zoning application is for a private school, in the documents for this hearing it is educational facility/daycare, and unofficially we hear Montessori school, but these are two broad categories of facilities. Daycare/Montessori cater to small kids, whereas private school, based on the definition of the Ontario Ministry of Education and the Education Act, is “an institution at which instruction is provided at any time between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on any school day for five or more pupils who are of or over compulsory school age in any of the subjects of the elementary or secondary school courses of study.....”. I would interpret that a privately funded “educational facility” is also in this category. So if zoning allows a private school or educational facility to operate at the subject property then potentially it can be a secondary school in the future which is very different from a daycare and/or Montessori school. I would suggest that the applicant be more specific about what the intended use is before we discuss this any further.

In closing I would suggest to those who are voting on the application, that you vote against the proposed zoning change, because the intended use is ambiguous, the scale is too big for the neighborhood, the proposal goes against the master plan that the city planners have envisioned, and most of all the potential for traffic accident is too great. Let there be no doubt about the accident potential, even the city traffic department and the applicant's traffic consultant recognized this danger. If this proposal goes through, it is not a matter of IF but WHEN a traffic disaster will happen, and when, God forbid, that day comes you can tell your kids and constituents that you had voted against it.

Thank you!