

**From:** Bob and Carol Whitelaw

**Sent:** February 22, 2024 10:33 AM

**To:** [clerk@hamilton.ca](mailto:clerk@hamilton.ca); Ward 12 Office <[ward12@hamilton.ca](mailto:ward12@hamilton.ca)>

**Cc:** Bob and Carol Whitelaw, Jan Whitelaw

**Subject:** Comments on Planning Committee Meeting of February 23, 2024 - Agenda Item 10.1 - Zoning by-law Amendment Application and Draft Plan of Subdivision for Property at 26 Southcote Road

February 21, 2024

Dear Planning Committee Members and Staff:

**Re: Agenda Item 10.1 Planning Committee Meeting of February 23, 2024 - Comments regarding Zoning By-law Amendment Application ZAC-18-056 and draft Plan of Subdivision for property at 26 Southcote Road by A.J. Clarke and Associates (C/o Ryan Ferrari) on behalf of Active Custom Home Design Construction Ltd. (c/o Gary Sangha), Owner and related Staff Report PED24027 and its Appendices**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide further feedback on the above noted proposal to committee members and staff. We are residents on [REDACTED] situated to the south of the proposed development and have lived in our residence for some 58 years. We have participated in consultations on this project since its inception, including written comments and attendance at the open house at the Ancaster library.

Our primary concerns with the proposal relate to (storm)water and traffic management. We have also registered our concerns about wildlife habitat/corridors and incompatibility with the character of the neighbourhood, so we seek assurances that the proposed townhomes remain only two stories in height. We also register our concern that this approval being sought will precede, based on staff recommendation, before completion of additional significant studies and/or plans relating to hydrogeology and storm water management, as but two examples.

With respect to storm/water management, the field behind our home where the project is proposed often sits with high water levels. Historically, springs were bog like and winter freezes left a skating pond used by the neighbourhood children, including our own. Heavy snowpack results in spring flooding and heavy rains result in seasonal flooding; these events do not represent storms of greater impact which promise to be more frequent with climate change. Historic issues exist with storm/water management on and from Old Oakes Place. With the facility construction at the corner of Golf Links Road and Southcote Road, we do not yet know how its storm water management systems will affect the field where the project is proposed.

It is difficult for us to feel confident in the proposed water and storm water management plan involving the 6-metre storm drainage easement along the south property limit from Southcote Road to Elm Hill Boulevard, self-contained onsite stormwater filtration systems on Lots 1-4, on-site stormwater management facility on block 5, and grading, among other features. This is because this proposed zoning by-law amendment approval occurs *prior* to some of the more detailed studies/plans for

hydrogeology and storm water management being completed and signed off in the future by the Senior Director, Growth Management Division, as dictated in conditions under Appendix I (see #12, 21).

We ask whether we will be expected to sign the written permission from us as owners to allow an encroachment for grading purposes (see Appendix I #11) prior to sign off by the Senior Director, Growth Management of the required studies/plans from Appendix I or how his/her approval will be communicated to us such that we know that the city has approved the proposed works and deems them feasible prior to our signing. We also ask what the remedies for existing homeowners might be if the proposed storm/water works adversely affect water levels and drainage on our properties or necessitate continual sump pump running and associated costs.

With respect to traffic, we have noted possible challenges with the proposed ingress/egress to the project. Traffic on Southcote Road has increased dramatically over the years. Existing residents of our subdivision can find it challenging to turn left onto Southcote Road from Dorval Drive at various times of the day, especially during rush hour commute times. This will be exacerbated by new residents of and visitors to the new facility offering various care levels at the corner of Golf Links Road and Southcote Road which is currently under construction. Adding the volume of cars for the new 26 Southcote Road project will further complicate traffic management and we see that a traffic brief on associated trip generation is not required until prior to registration of the plan of subdivision (see Appendix I #22). We do not believe that the widening of the road at the 26 Southcote project entrance in and of itself will be sufficient to address these concerns. Exit from Elm Hill Boulevard, especially when turning left, onto Golf Links Road also remains challenging at current traffic volumes and given the hill to the left of that intersection.

As a final point related to traffic management, we would like assurance that project construction workers will not be parked on Dorval Drive during the day. We have experienced this for months now with the residential care construction facility. With cars parked on the south side of the street, especially under snow conditions, there is limited space for people with cars on the north side of the street to back out of their driveways safely. It would be preferable if the Construction Management Plan (see Appendix I #20) includes a staged plan to park workers on the project site, rather than encumbering traffic movement on Dorval Drive and/or Elm Hill Boulevard.

We have strongly supported Council's decisions to hold the line on the urban boundary expansion and Greenbelt incursions. We fully understand that these positions combined with the *Provincial Places to Grow* policy mean that infill developments, such as that proposed for 26 Southcote Road, will become the norm. As such, we do not oppose development in the field behind our home per se. We are disappointed, however, that the developer's proposed design/configuration does not better reflect the character of this neighbourhood. We contrast the proposed townhouse blocks to the connected bungalow-style denser housing further along Golf Links Road across from the power mall development which would have better suited the bungalow nature of our existing subdivision. We would like assurances that, if approved, the project guarantees that the proposed townhouses will be two stories maximum aboveground as the developer has indicated. We see no record of maximum number of stories in the documentation shared with existing residents. We oppose three story townhomes.

We are further concerned about housing affordability and that this proposed infill development does not do anything to advance the goal of adding to affordable stock. Million-dollar townhomes, as the developer has tried to comfort us with, along with additional condo fees, do not constitute affordable

housing. We wonder why staff and the planning committee are not considering smaller 'wartime' style bungalows for this site.

Another issue that we have raised previously involves greenspace/habitat and wildlife transportation corridors. We note that a range of species including deer, fox, wild turkeys, smaller creatures like rabbits, and a range of migratory birds utilize the open space. With the development of Old Oakes Place and now the multi-level care facility, a significant amount of forest and open habitat has been removed with some movement and nesting areas displaced to the open field behind our home. We wonder what consideration has been given to maintaining some open space and corridor for species movement. We note and agree with the condition in Appendix I (#28) that there will be timing restrictions on removal of vegetation to protect restricted bird breeding periods. As well, we note appreciatively the condition (#10) relating to a pest management plan for rodents which will be displaced from the field by the grading and construction and would also like to be advised of a contact/number for whom to contact should we be increasingly disturbed by mouse and rat movements. Finally, as per condition (#29), we look forward to assurances regarding tree protection from a certified tree professional for the significant maples and their root systems in the backyard of our property that may be affected by grading.

As elderly residents adjacent to the proposed project, probably the most irritating aspect will be the construction phase with the noise (notably machine back-up beeping) and dirt. We note appreciatively the condition in Appendix I regarding a dust control and street cleaning plan (#9). Again, it is unfortunate that this plan, along with one for noise control measures (#31) is not required until after this zoning by-law approval is given. We also note that the dust control condition refers to external streets, which we interpret to include Dorval Drive, Elm Hill Boulevard, and Southcote Road, and to homes. We argue that the homes should not be restricted to only those constructed as part of the project but also to those immediately adjacent to the project on Dorval Drive and Elm Hill Boulevard. We look forward to seeing this plan and understanding our point of contact for window and related cleaning as at 88 years old respectively, we cannot be expected to clean our own windows regularly with the amount of dust and dirt that will be generated by this project.

We would also appreciate clarification regarding the hours of operation on the construction site. Given that the field situates behind numerous single-family dwellings, we hope that we can count on a start and end time appropriate for a residential setting so that we do not have machinery working prior to 8 am.

Thank you for your consideration and follow-up. We would appreciate receiving updates on the ongoing approval stages for this project and answers to our questions raised herein.

Yours sincerely,

Bob and Carole Whitelaw