

May 22, 2013

Dear Mayor Goldring, Members of Council, cc. Mr Stewart,

BurlingtonGreen appreciated the opportunity to share our input at last evening's Council meeting. As I stated in our written submission as well as at the podium, we wish we had learned of the issue earlier, allowing for more thoughtful input at Committee.

However, we would like to remind all of you that just like other citizens of Burlington, myself and other representatives of our Association do research, attend meetings and workshops, prepare comments and deliver them to you **on our own time on and on a volunteer basis**. We believe that being rebuked publicly for expressing our input (regardless of how late in the process) and in a mocking manner (e.g. remarking "we cannot save every tree" when we were requesting the saving of 60 mature trees) to be disappointing and unacceptable. Like all citizens who engage in the public dialogue on any issue, we deserve respect and we hope we can count on this going forward.

Approved Master Plans for any projects should never prevent opportunities to listen to and potentially benefit from new information or shared viewpoints that can improve the associated interests of the project. This holds true for the City View Park Master Plan where, for example you had the opportunity to consider the new information shared with you via the Conservation Halton Watershed report card presented just a few hours earlier at Committee and revisit how you may be able to realize a greater forest canopy cover at the proposed maintenance facility site location.



Subject area Photo

It is most unfortunate that the outcome of your decision making (with the exception of Councillor Meed-Ward), regarding report # CSI-16-13 will result in the loss of 60 beautiful, mature trees and their ecological benefits at City View Park. At the very least we hope staff can be directed ( or encouraged) to revisit the subject area tree removal plan and explore if **some** of the 60 mature trees can be salvaged and incorporated into the facility/storage compound area. With the Dundas Street location as a "gateway" to Burlington and CVP, we would expect you would want to include some large trees and naturalization appearance to the public versus a clear cut area with 11 small tree plantings.

For the record and our hope that you will consider the following points for future relevant site planning issues, we have provided some of our concerns and outstanding questions below that we wanted to fully articulate at the Council meeting. Please note that these comments are based on the staff report and webcast Committee meeting discussions.

- The report begins with a reference that the removal of the 60 trees “will resolve the **conflict** with the site plan of the proposed Maintenance Facility...and ensure that the maintenance building & fenced storage yard are located as per the approved Master Plan of City View Park. **We remain unclear on what specifically the conflict pertains to?**
- When asked by members of Committee if other open spaces without tree cover were available to locate the maintenance facility, thereby avoiding the removal of trees, the staff response was that the proposed location was convenient and identified as the site location in the Master Plan. **Thus without sufficient detail, we remain unclear if other site options were explored and if so where and what was the rationale making them unsuitable.**
- While we agree that “planting a large number of native species across large areas of CVP contributes to the ecological health ...” of the area, **we do not agree** that the removal of the non-native and invasive species in the subject area accomplishes this as stated in the report. The preservation of the non-native canopy of 60 trees **all** of which are in good to fair condition with the exception of 7 trees does more to support the ecological health of the area and the provision of wildlife habitat than their removal.



Photo: Example of typical tree replacement

- The report recommends a “compensation” for the tree removals with a total of 11 relatively small trees (6 – 200 cm native coniferous trees and 5 – 60 mm caliper native deciduous trees) to be planted in the subject area. **This is insufficient and does not support even a typical tree replacement standard ratio of 3:1 and given the maturity of some of the subject area trees like the Black Walnut at 60 cm dbh, research indicates that [“to replace the true, leaf area of one large mature tree, it may equal that of 40+ small trees.”](#) Philip van Wassenaeer, B.Sc., MFC (The Myth of tree replacement)**

- **The reference to the additional tree planting initiatives elsewhere in the park should not be applied as rationale to justify the removal of the 60 mature, healthy trees at the proposed development location.** The prior decision to develop the City View Park with the installation of large artificial turf playfields already warrants the need for large scale planting throughout the area in an effort to achieve more environmental integrity at the park in general. Research conducted by the Athena Institute suggests that [“The tree planting offset requirements to achieve a 10 year ‘carbon neutral’ synthetic turf installation is estimated to be 1861 trees PER FIELD CARPET”](#), thus if the City’s objective is truly to achieve a more positive outcome for the environment as stated under ‘Environmental Matters”, the recommendation should be to preserve the area’s tree canopy in addition to additional tree planting initiatives throughout the park and to find an alternative location for the maintenance facility. **We would appreciate direction to where we can find the rationale in the CVP Master Plan to support the recommendation for the maintenance building location. We have been unable to locate this information on-line.**
- While we recognize the statements in the “Environmental Matters” section of the report focus on the removal of the 60 trees, we hope a range of other pertinent environmental considerations and opportunities are explored for this development project. i.e. will the project paving for maintenance yard and connector roadway be constructed of **permeable material**? What about infiltration trenches? A Green roof? Will the intended use of the maintenance facility include storage of salts at all? Any runoff could be detrimental to the Jefferson Salamander species. ...etc.

To conclude, you can make a decision to take another look at the report recommendation in light of the points raised above as well as the identified issues outlined in Conservation Halton's Watershed Report Card and explore how you can achieve a stronger, positive outcome for the health of the environment while proceeding with the maintenance facility development elsewhere in the park. You can lead by example and demonstrate that environmental health trumps convenience when it comes to development & decision making. If the city can't achieve this, why should other property owners?



Photo: more of the trees to be cut down

Respectfully,

Amy

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