

April 20th, 2022

To the members of West Lincoln Town Council and Planning Dept.

I am writing with respect to the **Proposed Official Plan Amendment 62- Smithville Master Community Plan**, specifically to the proposed **Natural Heritage System** areas as they appear on Schedule B-4. I support the protection and further development of natural ecosystems in around the town of Smithville.

Over the last 200 years, the forest cover of the Niagara region has decreased from 80% to approximately 15%. Rapid human development has resulted in forests and wetlands being replaced by roads, cities, industry, agriculture and lawns. Although prosperous growth is a reason to celebrate, the loss of healthy forests has resulted in a loss of the services they provide; flood control, soil retention, water purification, improved air quality, pollination, climate change mitigation, wildlife habitat, and places for outdoor recreation and activities. The services that nature provides in Southern Ontario alone are estimated to be worth 85 billion annually. The benefits of nature in close proximity to human development is a well-documented and accepted fact.¹

I am grateful to the Town Council for accepting a proposal to reforest 1.9 acres near Golden Acres Park. Recognizing the importance of forests for future generations, various community members will begin restoration work this spring. Although it takes well over 100 years for a forest to fully mature this is a step in the right direction.



In recent months several patches of mature forests in West Lincoln have been cleared. Some clearing ironically has taken place within sight of the new plantation area. Protecting existing ecosystems and the services they provide is far more efficient and effective than attempting to build new ones. I appreciate the efforts of Council and town staff members to protect and where possible regenerate natural areas that will be a benefit to everyone for generations to come.

Lastly I wish to refer council to the resource *Best Practices Guide to Natural Heritage Systems Planning* found in the link below. This guide contains principles and best practices used by cities around Ontario.

"The diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems, should be maintained, restored or, where possible, improved, recognizing linkages between and among natural heritage features and areas, surface water features and ground water features." p. 6

Sincerely,

Scott Antonides

1. *Best Practices Guide to Natural Heritage Systems Planning – 2014* <https://ontarionature.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/nhs-guide-web-1.pdf>

April 20th 2022

To the Councillors, Town of West Lincoln,

We are writing as a community with respect to the **Proposed Official Plan Amendment 62- Smithville Master Community Plan**, specifically to the proposed **Natural Heritage System** areas as they appear on Schedule B-4. We support the proposed plan.

We respect that urban boundary expansion presents many challenges for the planning department and our elected council members. We understand there must be a balance of naturalized areas, public parks and green spaces with areas for homes, businesses and industry as well as roads and services.

We are residents living on Harvest Gate and nearby streets. Within the remaining treed area behind Harvest Gate there is a pond near the north end that supports an abundance of wildlife. The pond is vibrant with peepers, ducks, and woodpeckers. It is a water source for a variety of birds and other tree and ground dwelling wildlife. The many woodland creatures in this area and beyond are an indication of the health of this environment and its importance as a natural habitat. The total number of trees and amount of natural vegetation is critical for a healthy habitat. Healthy, natural habitats are not created with sparse and isolated plantings. Areas of significant size with a wide variety of plants are essential.

We have been dismayed by the cutting of mature trees behind Harvest Gate and trust that there will be no further cutting in this area or in any other similar areas. We urge the council to stop deforestation or future encroachment into the natural areas designated in the plan.

We support the creation of new and the extension of existing walkways and trails that connect the areas of our town and give citizens access to services and facilities without the need to always drive.

Much research has been done on the proximity of natural environments and their effect on the health and well-being of individuals. The presence of these areas positively effects the physical and mental health of our residents as well as our property values and the enjoyment we take from living in Smithville.

We therefore state that we appreciate the work that has been done preserving Natural Heritage System areas in the draft proposal and we urge council members to support the proposal.

We, the undersigned support the above statements and wish to have them entered into record.

Address

Signature(s)

42 Harvest Gate

Sylvia Pryde

26 HARVEST GATE

[Signature]

TOWNSHIP OF WEST LINCOLN

RECEIVED

APR 20 2022

PER [Signature]
SMITHVILLE, ONTARIO

Address

Signature(s)

5 Alexander Ave

John Knight Mary Jo Knight

7 Alexander Ave

Jag Nicks

34 Harvest Gate

Eileen J. [Signature]

38 Harvest Gate

Dorrell Halden [Signature]

23 Golden Acres Drive

Scott Antonich

30 HARVEST GATE.

[Signature]

[Signature]

25 Harvest Gate

S. Long

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46 Harvest Gate

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10 Harvest Gate

Nancy Cantelero [Signature]

13 Harvest Gate

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22 Harvest Gate

[Signature]

14 Harvest Gate

[Signature] Fred Filler

7 Alexander Ave

Carm Coombes

Address

Signature(s)

9 Harvest Gate

Paula Harty

9 Harvest Gate

Sarah Hutley

13 Harvest Gate

Giuliana Murphy