

October 25, 2023

The Town of the Blue Mountains
32 Mill Street, Box 310
Thornbury, ON
N0H 2P0

RE: Sudden unexpected Tree Clear Cutting in Blue Vista Block 119 for future Town park
Council Meeting October 3, 2023 Agenda Items G2.1 and G2.2

Dear Mayor Matrosovs and Members of Council

I would like to convey how shocking and disappointing it was to see the clear cutting of the forest located in Block 119 of the Blue Vista development on October 10 and 11, 2023.

We did not receive notification by the Town nor by the Developer either by notice or website indicating this area was to be clear cut. We did receive a notice in March for the clearing of land and when this was completed (March 13-31,2023) a silt fence was installed around the boundary of the project. The fencing excluded the forest which indicated to us that land was to remain forested.

We were surprised that this forested area (Town parkland/Open Space) was clear cut and that the Town has absolutely no plan as to what this park will look like. How can this be? Why would they destroy a natural forested habitat without a plan as to what will be done with the land? Why would they inadvertently create a wind and snow blowing corridor for the walking/biking trail from the Mountain House property leading to the village? Do they not know how many people use this trail and will now have this wind and snow discomfort whereas the forest provided protection? Why would you not leave a wee buffer of some sort to provide shade and to protect people using the trail from the elements? Why would you destroy 100 year old trees that could have been kept for shade and leave the land barren?

I took the time to complete the survey for the Official Plan as well as read the recently released results. A number one issue for people was to save the natural environment as much as possible and there was even a quote in the report to highlight such sentiment that essentially said "clear cutting and planting boulevard trees doesn't cut it in terms of maintaining the natural environment". This disconnect between development planning and what residents consider adds to their well-being and reason for choosing this area, cannot be more highlighted by the needless clear cutting of this forested land. The adjacent forest behind the homes on Stoneleigh and Springside Crescent was considered so important to residents as to cost a significant premium. In speaking with neighbours and those encountered using the trails, it is obvious the natural beauty and natural amenities (trails) is why they moved here.

I understand what has been done cannot be undone, however in the name of environmental stewardship and proper planning, please consider the following:

- ensure that excessive clear cutting does not happen again to any other development

- ensure that buffer areas be included and some mature trees remain where possible
- ensure proper consultation on what the Block 119 park in this area should look like
- do not wait 3-5 years before the Blue Vista property is developed to add some natural tree buffer for the property homeowners and the protection of those using the nature trail behind it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Irene Bond

