

From: Sid McFarlane <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, February 23, 2024 9:33 AM
To: Town Clerk <townclerk@thebluemountains.ca>
Subject: Trees and Thornbury West Construction Project

To The Town of the Blue Mountains Mayor and Council:

Town council has made a decision to delay the road construction of the Thornbury West Construction Project.

The major concern was the removal of mature trees. There are many trees within the construction area that are at the end of life stage or dying or diseased or simply dangerous. There are also trees that have been recognized, by all involved parties, as being an overwhelming necessity to be removed because of the new infrastructure or at the request of the homeowner. All of these trees will eventually be removed.

Many homeowners were devastated by the Council decision to delay the project for yet another year and many are frankly very angry. This has been a build up of almost 10 years of frustration. Council should have been brought up to speed on this project when they became a member of council and completed their reading of staff reports. Previous councillors walk the streets with the residents to get a feel of how the project would evolve.

The Town appears to be on a very misguided mission to bend to the whim of every special interest group in the area. The reality is that some trees must be removed and a qualified arborist would totally agree. It is time for Council to show some good faith to the residents in the project area that have been treated poorly. This is the designated time of year for tree removal. A necessary step in the construction process is the removal of trees.

The Town should have embarked on this immediately to show the residents that the project is progressing and that the project will be proceeding within the time lines and will not be delayed by special interest groups or councillors changing their vote at an inopportune time. Town representatives and councillors have an ideal opportunity to engage with individual residents on their particular issue regarding trees. No one has approached residents regarding planting of trees on private property to compensate for removed trees.

It is also my understanding that the Town will not be hiring a qualified arborist to address the needs of the trees that the Town has designated as being "savable". These trees will not survive if they do not receive the proper care and pruning before, during and after road construction. Two trees bordering onto my property have received protection status according to the Town. That was well over 6 months ago and I have yet to see any indication of care directed towards these very needy trees.

It is time for Council to be proactive on this matter rather than being reactive and causing disruption of well planned infrastructure and adding to the frustration of affected residents. The Town has experienced two Directors of Operations personnel during the time line of this project and at least two Town Councils.

I am asking Council to initiate a motion to direct staff to begin the process of tree removal and dialogue with property owners as soon as possible. Mike Campbell has been providing good communication with the residents and has ample knowledge of the feelings of many of those affected. If Council proceeds at this time there is time for decisions, dialogue and being proactive.

I would be pleased to speak with council to discuss this matter at any time.

Regards,

Sid & Louise McFarlane

