
From: Spring Farm Ratepayers Association <springfarmra@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 1:58 PM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
Subject: Bill 66 - Just Say No

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Today the SpringFarm Ratepayers sent out this email to our local representatives regarding Bill 66 and our environmentally protected lands.



Subject: Bill 66 - Just Say No

Dear MPP Martow, Mayor Bevilacqua, Mr. Todd Coles and Members of York Region and City of Vaughan Council,

The SpringFarm Ratepayers is concerned about the provincial government's proposed new Bill – Bill 66 and want to ensure that you understand our objections. If Bill 66 is confirmed, the Ontario provincial government will be putting the province's greenbelt and City of Vaughan and Region of York at risk. It seems that the provincial government has forgotten or is perhaps ignoring the reasons why greenbelts were established; so allow us remind you why the greenbelt is so important.

Greenbelts were established in early 2005 by the provincial government. Agricultural protection is the primary element of the Greenbelt Legislation and the major focus is the protection of prime agricultural land, which is fast disappearing. There are many of other key elements which include the protection of rural areas, heritage sites and sensitive ecological and hydrological sites.

Greenbelts are a major step in protecting environmentally sensitive land, the habitat of many indigenous species and they curtail the sprawl of urban development into ecologically and hydrologically sensitive areas. Current legislation prevents municipalities from re-zoning areas identified as prime agricultural land.

The greenbelt encompasses more than one million acres in Ontario and we are privileged to have one of the largest and most successful greenbelts in the world. Two greenbelt areas are especially important to southern Ontario and York Region – the Niagara Escarpment and the Oak Ridges Moraine.

The Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve is one of 15 UNESCO World Biosphere Reserves in Canada (1990). The area is protected because of its many unique species and prime recreational land. In addition to being prime farm land, tourism associated with the escarpment, contributes \$100 million to the local and regional economy.

The Oak Ridges Moraine is one of the most significant landforms in southern Ontario and covers about 1,900 kilometers of land, much in our City and the Region of York. This area is home to much of the fertile farmland that feed our communities. It is an ecologically important geological landform in the Mixwood Plains, a hydrological system of streams, wetlands, kettle lakes and ponds and their catchment areas, seepage areas, springs and other recharge areas. The moraine gets its name from the rolling hills and valleys that extend more than 160 km from the Niagara Escarpment east to Rice Lake. The moraine is currently one of the most contested sites in Ontario because it stands in the way of major urban development.

The passage of Bill 66 will make greenbelt areas for development and more likely over development. The land in question is ecologically sensitive and allowing development jeopardizes not only the environment but also agriculture – our ability to produce the produce we need.

It is critical to remember that once the greenbelt is gone, it is gone forever.

The SpringFarm Ratepayers Association in Vaughan (Thornhill), representing more than 9,600 household, is opposed to the proposed legislation and have made our community aware of the downfalls. We are getting strong support from our community and the vast majority of your electorate is not in favour of the proposed Bill 66.

When this matter comes before Council in January, we urge our elected representatives to listen to the community and block Bill 66.

Regards,

Pamela Taraday-Levy

On behalf of the SpringFarm Ratepayers Association



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