

Review of EIS by Biologic, dated October 4, 2017 received at EEPAC's November 16, 2017 meeting

Reviewed by S. Levin and S. Madhavji

The key concern for the working group is the overland flows from Patch 10066 (deemed not to be significant and outside the study area) to Patch 10069 (to be retained). From the earlier EIS by the same consultant for the same developer for 1959 Wharncliffe Road South, and the UTRCA Regulation Limit mapping it appears there is a connection from Patch 10066 to 10069, through the lands to the west of the the pond on the Church property through Patch 10070 and to Dingman Creek.

In reviewing the EIS for 1959 Wharncliffe Road South, EEPAC noted:

The hydrological characterisation in the report is quite good though we believed the “flow path” (figure 6) was incorrect because runoff from the church parking lot appears to be routed west to the SWP from where water drains SW and then south through the forest (where this water almost certainly drains into the creek west of the subject lands. However, it may also recharge the shallow perched aquifers that are almost certainly the source of water for the dug pond. This sustained relatively clean supply (recharge is in the forest not agricultural land) accounts for the relatively pristine quality of the pond. The pond and its source deserve protection as it is one of the rare (MAM is less than 6% of regional vegetation communities, source Bergsma and DeYoung 2006) upland wetlands with good quality perennial flow. It has a buffered supply from the church, woodland acreage as protection, and some provision for protection in the proposed plan of subdivision. (Dr. Smart at Western has studied these rare systems and they have extremely high ecological significance because of their drought resistance and high water quality.)

The working group for the W3 Farms EIS is also concerned that once Patch 10066 is removed then the changes to the surface water regime will dry up the marsh in Patch 10069. It is certainly not clear from the EIS how flows can be redirected across a road.

It is important to ensure that works on site, works that create the lots and the road do not negatively impact the water balance. In our recommendations we have included a holding provision for a water balance analysis. It must demonstrate that works on site and the creation of the road and lots will not change the local surficial flows such that the meadow marsh in Patch 10069 is negatively affected and b) that the surface flows to the south will not negatively affect other natural heritage features

The working group is also concerned about access to Patch 10069 prior to development of the lands to the south. Although there will be fencing of backyards in the W3 Farms development, the southern part of the Patch will remain accessible. The working group recommends the City gain ownership of this woodland earlier rather than later so that a trail system can be created

prior to the people creating their own, harming the wet features and the endangered butternut tree which is to be retained and requires protection.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A holding provision be applied to require a water balance analysis be completed that ensures that the post development conditions will maintain the pre development conditions.
2. Monitoring of the woodlot be required prior to its transfer to municipal ownership. Monitoring reports are required to be undertaken by a qualified ecologist with the monitoring plan to be approved by a City Ecologist and included in the development agreement. Reports must comment on the meadow marsh within Patch 10069. Baseline data points must be determined through consultation with a City Ecologist or a wetland specialist with either the UTRCA, Western, or MNRF.
3. A water balance report be required for the area to the south (Church property and ideally Patch 10070) to determine the optimal plan at detail design for maintaining the marsh feature in 10069 and the water dependent features to the south towards 1959 Wharncliffe Road.
4. Patch 10066 be designated and zoned open space due to its importance to the rest of the natural heritage system in the area.
5. The working group recommends the City gain ownership of Patch 10069 earlier rather than later so that a trail system can be created prior to the people creating their own, harming the wet features and the endangered butternut tree which is to be retained and requires protection.