

April 18, 2018

BY E-MAIL

London City Council
London City Hall
300 Dufferin Avenue
London, Ontario
N6B 1Z2

Dear Council Members:

Re: Conservation Master Plan – Medway Valley Heritage Forest ESA South

My wife and I own a home which is located at 1582 Gloucester Road. We purchased it in 2000, 18 years ago.

I attended the Planning and Environment Committee on Monday night. I wanted to voice our concerns against the Conservation Master Plan for the reasons that follow:

Lack of Notice: We were disappointed to learn that the plan has been underway for five years. As long-time users of the valley, we were not aware of the detailed work being undertaken by the City and the Dillon consulting firm. The lack of notice to our neighbourhood reflects badly on the process. There has been little or no community involvement from our neighbours.

Not a Park: The proposed Conservation Master Plan seeks to grant increased access to the public to this wilderness area. I think it is important to recognize that this area should not be considered as a park. It was intended to be a wilderness area within the City.

Protection: The designation of the Medway Valley Heritage Forest as an Environmentally Sensitive Area protects it – essentially from meddling from the surrounding human population. The forest, wildlife and fishery have no spokespersons on their behalf. The proposed Conservation Master Plan with its two bridges and myriad of pathways would adversely impact on the wilderness environment by introducing a much larger human population into the area. Hard surfaced trails will bring more people. From the perspective of the native animals, plants, and fishery, this means more unwelcome interactions with humans and their dogs, bicycles, noise and garbage.

Access for the Disabled: This is a noble cause and one that is difficult to oppose. However, there must be certain areas that are not readily accessible to the public, including the disabled, in order to protect the environment. The benefits that increased access will bring are outweighed by the damages done to the environment.

Bridges: There is no need for bridges in the valley. They are unsightly, expensive, hard to maintain and are not in keeping with a wilderness area.

Lack of Support: It was apparent from the meeting of the Planning and Environment Committee that there is very little support from the community. The proposed Conservation Master Plan was opposed by the neighbourhoods on both sides of the valley.

Collateral Issues: There will be safety issues with some of the proposed access points, including the idea that Gloucester Road will be a feeder pathway. Gloucester Road is narrow and has no sidewalks. A better idea would be to use the City's Elsie Perrin property for access.

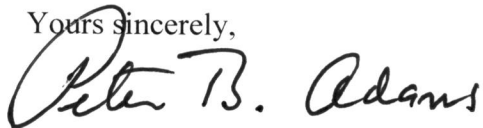
Access at Point A11 off Gloucester is far too steep for use by the disabled; indeed it was a toboggan hill years ago. It would need to be switch-backed and have extensive drainage and bracing.

The costs of construction and maintenance are not properly budgeted and are underestimated. To build two bridges down in the valley you would need a full heavy equipment access road. The costs of the two bridges with dump trucks, concrete mixers and full construction sites would be far more than \$2.1 million alone.

I would urge each of you to vote against the Conservation Master Plan. A vote against the Plan is not a vote against the disabled or the City staff, but is a vote for keeping a wilderness area within the City as wilderness for the next generation.

Please provide a copy of this correspondence in the formal package to Council at the upcoming meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Peter B. Adams

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