

## Greenspace not a poker chip

There's so much wrong with this proposal for River Road that it's easy to get sidetracked. But let's focus on the most basic thing that's wrong here the thing from which the other minor wrongs flow. It lies in this, greenspace is not a poker chip that you trade for something else, it's not something you owe for something else, something used to pay for something else, it's greenspace, not a commodity and it stays put. It's precious, in limited supply and if you've got it, you're allowed to keep it.

So River Road is apparently, a 134 acre greenspace that used to be a golf course and now we are faced with the problem of what to do with it and the basic proposal here is that River Road will be transformed into a park with a bunch of pathways. Fair enough. But not all, 20 acres will be reserved for development. Why? Because if and when, that 20 acres gets sold, the proceeds will go to fix something up at Fanshawe and Thames Valley. A year or so ago it was parking lots and AC units that were going to get fixed, who knows what it will be when these chips are called in So there it is, greenspace is turned into pavement and the money from the greenspace goes to fix pavement somewhere else.

But here's the thing, River Road, and I guess the people in Ward 1 who have River Road don't owe money from the River Road greenspace to Fanshawe or Thames Valley or anywhere else. The greenspace is there's and they get to keep it, all of it.

My goodness, if there's somebody who deserves some pay back here, it's the people of Ward 1. Their golf course was destroyed, essentially by terrible planning, even worse than this, but we're not going to start pointing fingers at who might owe them. Instead let's talk about what to do with River Road, that's well, fair. How about this. We put a call out for some proposals that aren't crazy and the folks from Ward 1, get some special veto on picks.

You have my consent to post my letter to the public record

Angus Johnson