

Ref : ROPA38 LPS118-09
Delegation notes by Kurt Koster, BurlingtonGreen
December 16/09 Regional Council meeting

Chair Carr, Mayors, Councilors, Staff,

BurlingtonGreen has gone on record in the past in preferring to see higher densities in the urban areas for the oft-repeated reasons of having to live with the coming effects of Peak Easy Oil and Climate Change. We mourn the fact that the development plans in ROPA38 will result in almost 3,000 hectares of agricultural lands being suburbanized, far more than what is appropriate for sustainable development.

Most people generally welcome a strong system based NHS in this ROPA. The opposition is not so much about having it included, but how it is implemented. One of the suggestions is to show it in the farmland areas as an overlay map, not on MAP 1.

I hope you will consider some well-documented facts in your deliberations:

- Only MAP 1 has any legal status; overlay maps are there to provide additional information. In an OMB appeal only MAP1 has status.
- I have not heard any clear specific objections from those in the agricultural community to the policies affecting agriculture under the proposed ROPA 38. Repeated statements from staff and research by others show that there are essentially no changes from the current Official Plan.
- In the future, farmlands inside the NHS will be more difficult to be redesignated as urban. This may be the real objection to the NHS being shown on MAP 1
- Existing operations such as landscaping, if legal under the current Official Plan, will be grandfathered under ROPA38.
- Agri-tourism businesses will be encouraged under the NHS by allowing greater floor space from 250 to 500 sq m
- The NHS does essentially what the GreenBelt legislation does with fewer permitted uses such as cemeteries, golf courses and quarries. Farmers have learned to live the GreenBelt, why not with the NHS?

We have concerns about the changes made in the last week to have the inclusion of 114 acres of land designated as "Regional Natural Heritage System Overlay". It may weaken the NHS, and lead to future legal grief.

You have an opportunity to make history today. The Niagara Escarpment Plan was also attacked by many during its development and implementation. Thankfully its supporters prevailed. There would not be a United Nations Escarpment Biosphere today, had they failed. Let us learn a lesson from the past and let this become a watershed moment in urban planning, a true living up to the name of the Sustainable Halton Plan.

Thank you for this opportunity.