



Michalski Nielsen

ASSOCIATES LIMITED

July 30, 2020

Mr. Bob Forrest
Huronie Barrie Land Inc.
44 Upjohn Road, Suite 211
Toronto, ON, M3B 2W1

Re: 521 Huronia Road; Our File 2515

Dear Mr. Forrest:

During the Virtual Neighbourhood Meeting of July 13, 2020, a number of concerns were raised on impacts the proposed residential development would have on wildlife and wildlife habitat. Prior to undertaking the **Scoped Environmental Impact Study (SEIS)**, its terms of reference was determined and approved by staff of the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA). David Cunningham (Terrestrial Ecologist who has been assisting me on the assignment) and I felt this was an initial critical step in moving forward, as your property has an array of natural heritage features that would need to be identified and carefully evaluated. These included:

- the Lover's Creek Provincially Significant Wetland;
- a tributary to Lover's Creek in the southern part of the property;
- Ontario Regulation 179/06: Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority Regulation of Development, Interference with Wetlands and Alterations to Shorelines and Watercourses which governs the entire property; and
- potential Significant Woodlands, Significant Wildlife Habitat and Significant Habitat of Endangered Species.

Before responding to the neighbourhood concerns, it is important to appreciate the policy context/framework within which our environmental impact analyses was undertaken. In this regard, Schedule A – Land Use in the **City OP** designates the northern part of the property as General Industrial,

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with the balance Environmental Protection Area. Schedule H which is also important, constitutes a Natural Heritage Resource Overlay to Schedule A. On it, the subject property is characterized as Level 1, and Level 1 with Existing Development Subject to 3.5.2.4 d). The developable lands constitute the wooded part of the Environmental Protection Area in Schedule A – Land Use, and not part of the Lover’s Creek Provincially Significant Wetland.

Initially, the boundary of that part of the Lover’s Creek Provincially Significant Wetland that is within your property was verified in the field by staff of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR), resulting in a small area of developable land in the northeastern quadrant of the property, with a proposed access road off of Huronia Road. It is consistent with the General Industrial designation shown in Schedule A of the **City OP**. Subsequently, and in keeping with the approved terms of reference, extensive, three-season field surveys of the property’s natural features were undertaken. These included: evening amphibian breeding surveys (i.e., both woodland and wetland); dawn breeding birds; incidental observations of mammals and reptiles; and plants and individual plant communities. Our field work identified or observed:

- two dominant upland woodland plant communities in the northern part of the property. Neither are considered rare or otherwise ecologically significant on either a national or provincial basis. Similarly, none of the individual plant species on the tablelands are Endangered or Threatened, as per Ontario’s *Endangered Species Act, 2007*;
- 45 bird and 12 mammal species; and
- seven herpetofauna species.

The Western Chorus Frog and Wood Thrush are the only species observed that are Threatened federally. Western Chorus Frog is Not At Risk in Ontario, while Wood Thrush is listed as a Special Concern species in Ontario. Two other species are Special Concern both federally and provincially, the Eastern Wood-pewee and Snapping Turtle. Otherwise, all of the birds, mammals and amphibians are ubiquitous to the geographical area. Life cycle habitats will continue post-development for the Wood Thrush and Eastern Wood-pewee, both of which were heard calling from the adjacent woodlands. Similarly, life cycle habitat for the Western Chorus Frog and Snapping Turtle are abundant in the Lover’s Creek Provincially Significant Wetland, and their breeding habitats will be protected by a 5.0 metre buffer and fencing, both short-term (i.e., during construction) and in the long- term after construction.

A total of 15 recommendations are included in the **SEIS**, all of which relate either directly or indirectly to post-development protection of wildlife and/or wildlife habitat. The area of land to be developed is 1.3 hectares. It is a very small slice of marginal to poor quality wildlife habitat situated along the northern edge of the property adjacent to the backyards of as-built residential lots on Loon Avenue, as it has been substantially altered by informal trails east to west and north to south coupled with openings in the forest cover. The balance of the Environmental Protection Area in this area is approximately 223 hectares (552 acres), comprised of similar connected wetland and woodland habitats to the west, south and north (part of the Lover’s Creek valley system. For comparison, only 1.3 acres of similar woodland will need to be removed to accommodate the proposed residential development, which lies within part of the General Industrial designation. The developable area does not contain any interior forest breeding habitat (i.e.,

landscapes greater than at least 100 metres from the outer edge of the feature), entirely because of its fringe location. Accordingly, it is our professional opinion that impacts of the proposed development will be minimal to non-detectable. More specifically, those plant and animal species that currently reside on the subject property and beyond will continue in future. Just as historical wildlife populations have adapted to surrounding urban development (i.e., residential uses to the north and south, and Huronia Avenue and westwards), wildlife species will continue to reside and undergo typical life cycles in the abundant and diverse supply of remaining wildlife habitats that abut the subject property.

In support of our contention that the proposed development will have minimal to non-detectable impacts on existing wildlife and wildlife habitat, we undertook pre-development and post-development wildlife surveys some years ago for the Manhattan East and West townhouse projects, which are adjacent to the Bear Creek Swamp Provincially Significant Wetland in the City of Barrie. A total of 90 wildlife species were observed in 2012 (i.e., post-development), being comprised of three amphibians, 65 birds, 17 mammals and five reptiles. In 2001 – 2004 (i.e., pre-development), a total of 77 wildlife species were observed, comprised of seven amphibians, three reptiles, 52 birds and 15 mammals. While every effort was made to ensure methodological consistency between the surveys, the small differences in observed number and types of species are attributed to different observers, weather and time of year, as well as natural fluctuations in local wildlife populations. The main point here is that construction and occupation of Manhattan East and Manhattan West had minimal if any impacts on resident wildlife populations. We are convinced the same will occur once the proposed development on the northern part of 521 Huronia Road is fully constructed and occupied.

Should you have any questions, or further clarification is needed with respect to the above, do not hesitate to call or email.



Michael Michalski
Senior Advisor and Limnologist



David Cunningham
Cunningham Environmental Associates

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