

Anthony Usher Planning Consultant

146 Laird Drive, Suite 105, Toronto, Ontario M4G 3V7

(416) 425-5964

auplan@bellnet.ca

Presentation to Georgina Council - Statutory Public Meeting - Metrus Phase 9

March 11, 2015

Tony Usher

Thank you, Mayor Quirk and Council. I am Tony Usher, the planning consultant for the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance.

I appeared at the first public meeting, to advise Council that the Alliance and I have one major concern about the Metrus Phase 9 applications - they are premature and not in the public interest at this time. My submissions from September and last week are both in your agenda, at page 215, so I'll summarize very briefly.

First, staff and I still differ about the density of the proposed subdivision. In my opinion an OP amendment is still required. Assuming you accept staff's recommendation to further review the applications, that gives me an opportunity to sort this out directly with staff, rather than take up your time on this point.

However, the OPA requirement is more of a technical issue. The heart of the Alliance's and my concerns relates to Metrus's Maple Lake Estates.

As I'm sure the new Council is aware, confidential negotiations about a Maple Lake development approvals exchange remain a live matter, though they've been on hold for some months.

I have submitted to the Town that there are only two plausible candidate sites for Metrus to receive equivalent development approvals in Georgina. The better of these two sites, in my opinion, is on the Metrus-affiliate lands in South Keswick. The other site is owned by Maple Lake, also a Metrus affiliate, between Deer Park Drive and Boyer's Sideroad, in the Greenbelt Protected Countryside.

The applications before you occupy 36% of Metrus's remaining undeveloped land for low-density residential in South Keswick. The applications do not take any account of a development approvals exchange. Approving Phase 9 now would in my view make it significantly harder to accomplish that. As well, the Maple Lake development exchange issue is part of the OP review process itself - which is still under way.

Whichever the new site, new approvals will be needed - including Provincial and Regional approvals for the Deer Park-Boyer's site. In the meantime, the development originally intended to occupy the Maple Lake site remains part of the Town's growth obligations, which are central to the ongoing OP review.

For all these reasons, I believe it would be premature for the Town to further foreclose options to relocate the Maple Lake population to South Keswick. There are no significant

environmental and natural heritage constraints in South Keswick. It's a recognized settlement area, and only your local planning approval would be required.

Now, at page 151 of your agenda, David Bronskill, solicitor for Metrus and affiliated companies, says "as a practical matter . . . there is no opportunity to 'exchange' development approvals between these two projects". I'd like to respond to his reasons.

No question, the Phase 9 lands are owned not by Metrus Development Inc., but by five separate companies.

However, Council should know that:

- The five companies have identical boards.
- The five companies have the same president - who is also the president of Metrus.
- That same individual may also be president of Maple Lake, which has not updated its corporate filings to reflect the death of its former president.
- Two other common directors of the five companies also sit on the Maple Lake board.

Please take a look at the Draft Plan before you. The five companies are listed - as "c/o Metrus Development Inc." The person authorizing KLM to submit the draft plan is Fraser Nelson, who signs as "Authorized Signing Officer".

Mr. Nelson, who just retired after a distinguished career with Metrus, is not, and was not before he retired, a director or officer of any of the five companies, nor of Metrus. However, he is a director and the authorized signing officer of Maple Lake.

Then, on pages 98 and 99 of the agenda, you'll see that staff look at permitted densities in terms of the entire block owned by Metrus affiliates - not separately by company.

Finally, on pages 101 and 102, you'll see that staff are concerned that Oxford and Metrus are proposing a few lots that straddle existing ownership boundaries. Staff have never expressed concern about the far greater number of lots Metrus is proposing, that straddle existing ownership boundaries between the five companies.

I ask you to judge Mr. Bronskill's letter in the context of these facts. The facts are that as a "practical matter", for planning purposes Metrus and its affiliates operate, and are treated, as a single entity.

Therefore, I ask you not to approve these applications, until all issues of prematurity have been dealt with satisfactorily, and until the pros and cons of both relocation candidate sites have been fully considered by staff, the public, and Council.

Mayor Quirk and Council, thank you very much for your time and consideration.