

February 9, 2012

Dear Mayor Grossi and Members of Council,

Re: Maple Lake Estates

I am writing to provide you with the North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance's (NGFA) submissions with respect to the proposed Maple Lake Estates development.

In 1984 Bertan Investments received approval from the Town of Georgina for its proposed Maple Leaf Estates mobile home park (old MLE). This proposed project has remained dormant for 28 years.

In 1999 Bertan Investments sold old MLE to Metrus Developments Inc.

Metrus Developments is now planning to seek approval from the Town of Georgina for an Official Plan Amendment to allow it to build Maple Lake Estates (new MLE), a higher-end, higher profit conventional subdivision, on the site for the proposed old MLE project. The possibility remains, though, that Metrus could also seek to proceed with old MLE under its 1984 approvals.

Both old and new MLE are contrary to the public interest for at least three important reasons.

First, they are located on the Paradise Beach-Island Grove Provincially-Significant Wetland. Specifically, approximately 80% of the MLE property is located on this wetland.

Second, they would drive a stake through the heart of the North Gwillimbury Forest (NGF). The NGF, which stretches from Orchard Beach to Hedge Road in Jackson's Point, is a precious natural resource for the Town of Georgina. It is one of the 10 largest forests in the Lake Simcoe watershed. Much of the NGF within the MLE property is designated Significant Woodland in the Town's Official Plan.

Third, MLE is inconsistent with four of the goals of the Government of Ontario's *Lake Simcoe Protection Plan*. Specifically, according to the *Lake Simcoe Protection Plan* we must: a) protect wetlands; b) maintain natural biodiversity; c) raise the proportion of the Lake Simcoe watershed that consists of wetlands, meadows and forests from 35% to a minimum of 40%; and d) increase the proportion of these natural areas that are in *large, high-quality* patches like the NGF.

Fortunately, by working together, the Town of Georgina and the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority (LSRCA) can stop both versions of MLE.

According to the Government of Ontario's *Provincial Policy Statement*, development and site alteration must **not** occur on provincially significant wetlands. As a consequence, the Town of Georgina has the legal authority to stop the proposed new MLE project.

In addition, to proceed with either old or new MLE, Metrus would need to obtain Section 28 permits pursuant to the *Conservation Authorities Act* from the LSRCA, because almost all of the MLE property is in or near wetland and is therefore within the LSRCA's regulated area. The LSRCA can deny Metrus these permits since MLE is located on a provincially significant wetland.

Therefore the NGFA requests the Town of Georgina to:

1. Deny Metrus Developments an Official Plan Amendment which would permit its proposed new MLE project to proceed; and
2. Request the LSRCA to deny Metrus Developments Section 28 permits for both old and new MLE.

Metrus should **not** be allowed to proceed with a 1,073 unit development in the Paradise Beach-Island Grove Provincially Significant Wetland. However, Metrus, the Town of Georgina, the Region of York and the Government of Ontario could work together to shift Metrus' old MLE "development rights" to another location, in return for Metrus donating its MLE property to the LSRCA. This would ensure that these ecologically important wetlands and forests will be protected for the people of Georgina and Ontario in perpetuity. I am enclosing, for your information, [a January 25, 2012 memo prepared by our planning consultant Tony Usher](#) which summarizes a discussion we had with Mark Christie of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing on January 5, on the mechanics of such a "development rights" swap.

We would be pleased to meet with you to discuss our submissions.

Yours sincerely,

Jack Gibbons

Chair, North Gwillimbury Forest Alliance