

Home's demolition part of intensification plan

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"I'm sad about it (over the loss of the home and trees). Our family enjoyed the home and property for many years, but it's just not place for our family at this time," said Lawlor, who said she is unaware of the specific plans for the property.

"I believe in the main, intensification is a good thing; urban sprawl is not sustainable. It's right for this particular property, which is surrounded by townhouses, is near the GO station and is on a major road."

Lawlor said as she no longer has anything to do with the property, she is able as a councillor to vote on future planning decisions on the property.

A longtime resident, who lives in the Stewart McLaren townhomes next door, questioned why there were no signs informing local residents of what would happen.

Dave Kentner, councillor for the ward, said at this stage the Town or property owner was not required to inform the residents. However, a notice will go up on the property once an application for development is filed with the Town.

Adam Farr, manager of development review, said the Planning Department has not received a development application at this time. Rinomato had not returned *The IFP*'s call before press time about his development plan.

Kentner said, "nothing untoward has happened."

This is a result of an element of growth (intensification/infill growth) mandated by the Province, he said. The property has been rezoned for high density housing since approval of the Town's intensification plan in May 2010.

"There's always a tinge of sadness when the trees and big beautiful home comes down," he said.

In January 2010, before Lawlor was a councillor, the Town held two well-publicized public meetings on the Intensification Strategy, which included a Myles Lawlor request to change the density designation from medium to high at 127 Mountainview Rd. N. The meetings were attended by 20 and 10 people respectively, and according

to Town meeting notes, none expressed concern over the future plans.

According to the minutes of the Heritage committee meeting, Joseph Barber (not one of the Town's famed Barber brothers) built the home, and left it to his wife. Their daughter lived there until the 1940s. It was a boarding house when the Lawlors purchased it in 1987.

Chair of Heritage Halton Hills Councillor Moya Johnson, said, "every heritage building is a loss. It would be great to save every one in a perfect world, but it's not a perfect world."

Johnson said committee members had discussed whether the home could be incorporated into the new development (it could not), whether it could be moved off site (too fragile, logistically challenging and cost prohibitive) or the value of declaring it a heritage home and thus preventing demolition

(too costly for the Town at an Ontario Municipal Board hearing).

The committee, said Johnson, considered the practicalities: there were similar homes in the Town, the property had already been designed for high density housing and had been identified as a site for intensification in the Town's Intensification Strategy as mandated by the Province's Places to Growth legislation.

Johnson, though, is disappointed the trees—many over 100 years old and healthy—have been cut, noting that Rinomato had indicated some would be saved.

That however was only a verbal commitment without enforcement teeth, said Johnson, adding at the site plan stage, she will request planners put in a requirement for new trees to be planted.

A neighbour, who walks by the property daily, told *The IFP*, "I'm no tree hugger, but to see all those mature trees gone, it's sad."

Ironically, Kentner said, TEAC (Town Environmental Advisory Committee) of which he is a member, voted at its meeting last week to send a draft tree preservation bylaw to staff departments for comment. It will eventually come to council for approval.



This is what remained of the property at 127 Mountainview Rd. N. Friday. Photo by Ted Brown

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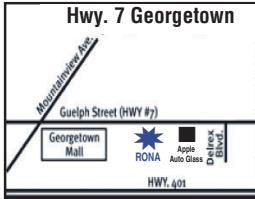
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