



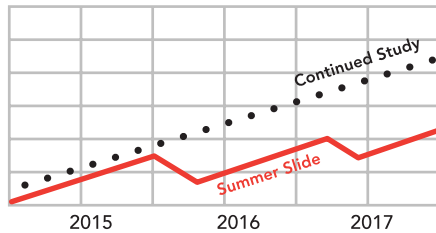
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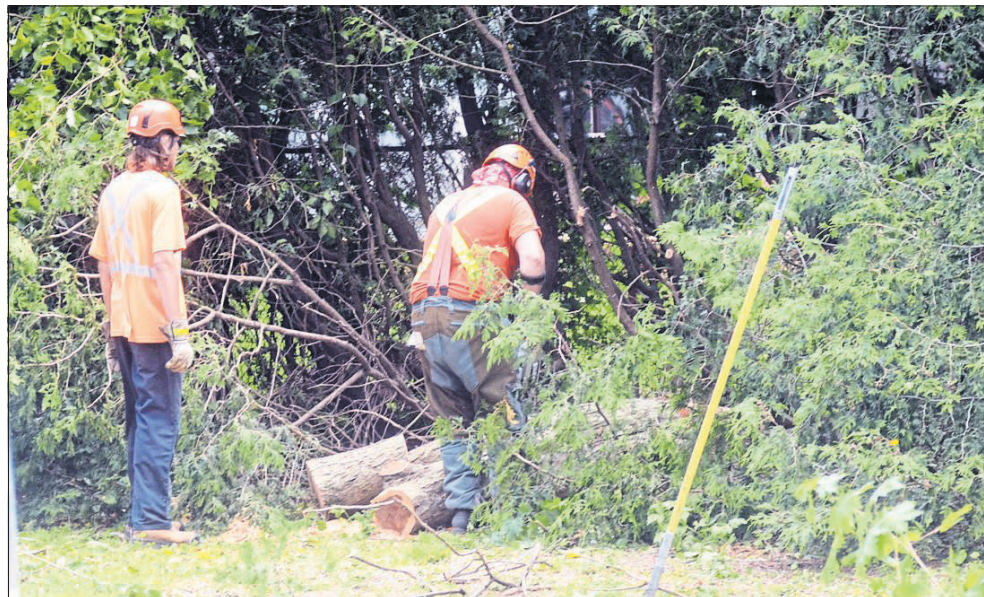
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NEWS



Eamonn Maher/Metroland

Employees of Quality Tree Service took down some trees from a vacant lot on Charles Street, located near Georgetown Hospital. Dozens of residents of the area known as Park District have indicated their opposition to the severance of the lot into two properties.

Petition circulated in objection to Charles Street lot severance plan

EAMONN MAHER
emaher@theifp.ca

A group of residents near Georgetown's downtown area have put together a petition in opposition to the proposed severance of a lot on Charles Street that would see two homes built on the property.

Many residents of what's known as the Park District near Georgetown Hospital were alerted to the roar of chainsaws clearing trees on the otherwise empty lot at 111 Charles St. on Friday, June 8.

And while the developer, identified as Fobert in an application to the town, is within their right to clear the lot since there is no municipal bylaw for the protection of trees in Halton Hills, neighbours have demonstrated their objection to the plan to sever the property into two by accumulating 164 signatures against it.

The issue is slated to be discussed at the town's committee of adjustment meeting on Wednesday, July 4 at 7 p.m. in the council chambers.

Ward 3 Coun. Moya Johnson said that town council has the option to appeal the ruling of the

committee of adjustment, which will only decide whether the lot can be severed.

"It's an unusually shaped lot and that's what the committee will have to decide, whether there's enough there to be divided into two lots," Johnson said.

Ian Droppo, whose house is located on the adjacent Churchill Crescent, helped organize the petition and is concerned that the proposed development does not fit into a mature neighbourhood such as the Park District, which has many homes built during the 1940s.

A research scientist with Environment Canada, Droppo also has reservations about the environmental impact the proposed building might have.

"There are five houses on Churchill that back onto that property and four of the five will have their house 1.2 metres away along their entire backyard," he said.

"They're calling that the side of the (proposed) house, but if you look at it, that bylaw was meant for building areas such as Georgetown South. I moved here from Glen Abbey in Oakville five years

ago for the mature lots because I didn't like my eavestrough touching my neighbour's eavestrough. The current bylaw hasn't taken into account the geometry of this mature neighbourhood."

Ironically, the town created its Mature Neighbourhoods Character Study in 2016 after a so-called two-storey "monster home" was built on Churchill Crescent - four feet away from the property line of a family's adjacent house.

The study was drafted to ensure that growth is managed at a balanced and sustainable rate without negatively affecting the surrounding area.

Johnson said she has been contacted by several residents in the area who were upset about the removal of several mature trees on the Charles Street lot, but at this point the developer is completely within its rights.

"It's been discussed before by council, but not recently," she added.

"The last time it was discussed, there wasn't the will of council. We'll probably be having a discussion to see if there's enough support to go ahead and look at it again, but I can't say when that will be."



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