

COMMUNITY: Environmentalists suspicious of stream merger plan

Rouge streams focus of meeting

The Town of Markham is thinking of combining two minor streams that feed a tributary of the Little Rouge River.

The intermittent streams run from the 407 right-of-way near Box Grove and converge east of the hamlet and just south of 14th Avenue. The unstable tributary below that point continues south of Steeles Avenue.

The streams are in areas defined as hazard lands in the town's Official Plan. Preliminary planning called for them to remain in their natural state with buffers.

But the town's team of consultants for the Box Grove Secondary Plan has suggested directing one stream into the other, arguing more water flow

makes a better fish habitat and more sustainable stream, Markham planning director Jim Baird said.

Town staff haven't yet taken a position. A 7 p.m. public meeting Thursday at the Box Grove Community Centre will gather comments on the streams.

Save the Rouge Valley Systems president Glenn De Baeremaeker said his guess is the proposal aims at creating more space for houses within the secondary plan.

"With Markham's track record, I'm automatically suspicious," he admitted this week.

Diverting one stream won't produce more water and the protected area would be diminished, he said.



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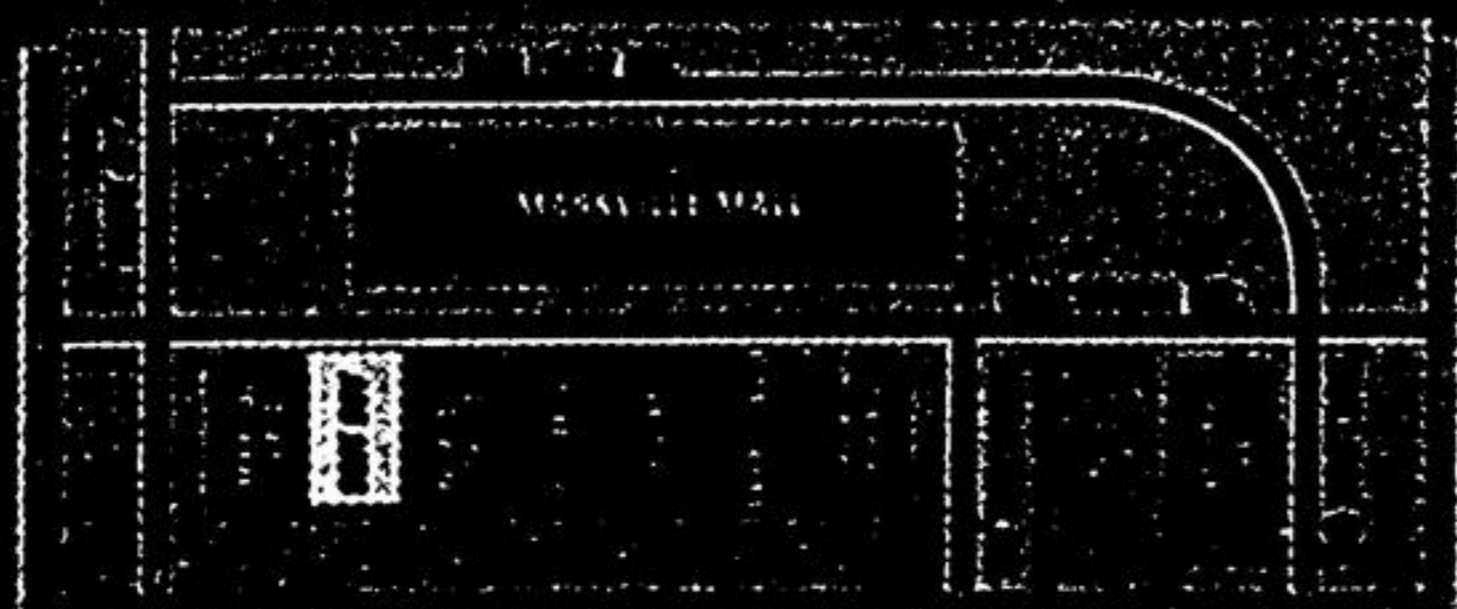
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