

OPINION



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Editorial

Feds, province need to step up on ash borer infestation

**ISSUE: Emerald ash borer issue
needs co-ordinated effort.**

The devastating and rapid movement of the emerald ash borer infestation is expected to cost Canadians a whopping \$2 billion in treatment and replanting, according to the Ontario Urban Forest Council.

That could add up to tens of millions right here in York Region if something isn't done this spring.

But despite the realization that this foreign invasive species is destroying an entire tree population, there is still no financial commitment or co-ordinated effort by the federal and provincial governments.

That is unacceptable and we need streamlined efforts to make treatment work. Otherwise, committed funds by your community will be wasted if your neighbours fail to take action: the emerald ash borer and its ferocious appetite knows no boundaries.

Every municipality in York Region is greatly affected by the scourge and while each community is attempting piecemeal efforts, the problem will continue to fester if plans are not streamlined.

That's the principle behind Aurora council's proposed plan discussed last month to examine neighbouring municipalities' strategies to combat the emerald ash borer before taking further action.

Aurora Councillor Chris Ballard is spot on in his call for a comprehensive, York Region-wide treatment program to combat the borer.

And his scheme certainly has the backing of the Ontario Urban Forest Council, which is sending a proclamation to each Ontario municipality this month urging a push for upper-tier government intervention.

And while it might not be feasible for York Region to pay the millions needed to combat the invasive insect, it could certainly act as a co-ordinating

► Find information from the region, go to www.york.ca under environmental services.

► For more information about the insect and movement of wood products, visit the Canadian Food Inspection Agency website at www.inspection.gc.ca/pests or call its toll-free number at 1-866-463-6017 or go to www.oufc.org

body and vocal proponent to Queen's Park and Ottawa as far as getting financial assistance and the best price on supplies to begin treatment.

Aurora, as one example, expects to spend \$1.3 million over 10 years for preventive treatment, a similar cost to each of the region's municipalities.

But not all communities are on board or have even considered a plan of action.

This despite the fact York Region confirmed last year the invasion is in all of York's nine municipalities.

A forestry program manager with the region estimates infestations will likely kill most of the region's ash trees within 10 years with the most affected areas being East Gwillimbury and Georgina, which has the highest percentage of ash trees in the region.

Treatments cost between \$200 and \$400 and trees have to be injected every two years for up to 10 years. And letting ash trees die rather than treating them, won't make the problem go away. Something has to be done and fast.

In hopes that the feds and province will take notice, the forest council is asking Ontario municipalities, including those in York Region, to endorse a proclamation calling for a federal and provincial role in urban forestry.

Let's hope all councils are on board and that upper-tier governments listen.

BOTTOM LINE: Ottawa, Queen's Park need to get involved.

LETTER OF THE WEEK

Cybersafety initiatives putting Stouffville on national map

As many of your readers know, March 14 was Stouffville's first official Cybersafety Day, endorsed by Mayor Wayne Emmerson and facilitated by our non-profit initiative to shield the community against the threats of cyberbullying, cyberfraud and privacy breaches.

The event was a resounding success and it received really good coverage across Canada, paving the way for the remainder of the KnowledgeFlow series of seminars, each one sharing critical information to help protect the most vulnerable in our community.

Anyway, I want to give a shout out to the Whitchurch Stouffville Public Library without whose support these events would not have had the same exposure or success.

The library staff was instrumental in scheduling, promoting and supporting our

first two seminars during the past three months and they will continue to do so for the next three:

I'm happy to announce the library will also host our next two seminars June 20 and July 11 respectively. The first is entitled fraud prevention and online safety for older adults.

The second will welcome kids, parents and teachers for a fascinating and immersive experience entitled 10 awesome ways to keep safe and have fun online.

This final seminar will cover new technologies, mobile phones and ways to communicate safely in and outside homes and schools.

Don't miss this opportunity to learn from experts how to hack-proof yourself and your family. Free attendance is available when registering by e-mail at Register@KnowledgeFlow.ca

CLAUDIU POPA
FOUNDER AND LEAD PRESENTER
KNOWLEDGEFLOW

Would you like to live next to PACE building?

*Re: Condo project will aid
decaying downtown, letter
to the editor by Wayne Kerr,
April 20.*

We appreciated the opportunity to speak at the recent public meeting regarding the proposal by PACE/Geranium to build an 82-unit condominium at the corner of Main and Lloyd streets.

We are the owners of the home immediately south of the property.

We were encouraged to hear Alan Drozd, manager of planning services, state a critical component when considering this proposal will be whether or not it meets the criterion of a key phrase in our town's secondary plan.

That is that the building must "provide an appropriate interface with any adjacent lands in a residential designation".

With that important principle in mind, let's envision our life if this building, as currently proposed, is built next to us.

Our bedroom and living room windows are on

the north side of our home. These rooms will be in close proximity to a busy travel aisle — the only vehicular access for the building. This travel aisle will be used by garbage trucks, delivery and moving vans, snow removal equipment, customers, employees and condo residents.

Also, the garbage room opens on to this travel aisle, in close proximity to our bedroom window. Is there anyone who envies us sleeping next to the garbage room for an 82-unit condominium?

The proposal has only seven outside parking spots. During the winter, many of the PACE Credit Union's current parking spaces become unusable due to snow piles.

So, we expect it will be necessary for the snow to be removed, rather than plowed.

Can you imagine the noise we will have to endure as front-end loaders and dump trucks move in and

out beside our bedroom window in the early morning hours during the winter to remove the snow to keep that driveway and the seven parking spots accessible?

This building does not belong at the corner of Main and Lloyd.

The developer does not have an appropriately sized lot. There are empty lots throughout Stouffville that would be more appropriate, such as the former Canadian Tire lot or former high school property.

Once this building is built, there's no going back. It provides a precedence to be referenced by other developers.

It diminishes our quality of life. It threatens the equity in our home.

And it certainly does not "provide an appropriate interface with any adjacent lands in a residential designation".

If, as Mr. Drozd stated, that criterion is critical, council should not approve this building.

HAVE YOUR SAY, STOUFFVILLE

Stouffville, send your letters to
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**GEORGE & LYNDA
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