

January 14th, 2022

To: The Council of the Township of North Huron  
Attention: Carson Lamb, Clerk [clamb@northhuron.ca](mailto:clamb@northhuron.ca)

From: Karen Dekker, Michael Woodman, Jack Gillespie, Nancy Gillespie, Jackie Cribb

RE: PROPOSED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT AND ZONING BY-LAWS AMENDMENT  
AFFECTING LOTS 367-370 (166 John Street West) FOMRER TRAILER PARK STIE WING-  
HAM

Attached please find our letter addressed to the Editor of The Toronto Star.

Our letter is in response to a recent article that was published in The Toronto Star that we felt was an inaccurate representation of the concerns of local residents in regard to the above mentioned proposal.

Please be advised that it will not be sent until later this afternoon, in order to give others a chance to read it. While the letter will remain the same, in order to get it to you in a timely fashion we have sent it as is but we do expect that there will be other names added. We would be happy to provide an updated version to you as soon as we have it.

Sincerely,

Jackie Cribb  
119 John Street West  
Wingham, Ontario  
N0G 2W0

519-357-9295  
[jccribb615@gmail.com](mailto:jccribb615@gmail.com)

January 13th, 2022

From: karen Dekker, Michael Woodman, Jack Gillespie, Nancy Gillespie, Jackie Cribb

To: Anne Marie Owens, Editor,  
The Toronto Star

Dear Ms. Owens,

We are writing to you in regard to an article posted in your paper on December 29, 2021. This article was written by Cory Bilyea of the Wingham Advance Times and titled Wingham Trailer Park - rezoning sees opposition.

Those of us in attendance at that meeting, feel obliged to say that this article did not properly convey the major issues of the residents. Accurate media coverage is extremely important in keeping people informed and it is incumbent upon reporters to write not only the truth but to not obscure the truth by omitting important facts.

The residents attending the meeting in opposition of the proposed changes to the Official Plan and zoning by-laws have already faced great difficulty in obtaining and verifying information without the assistance of the municipality. We would welcome news coverage that would help us share information not only about the proposal but deadlines for registering any objections. However, Ms. Bilyea, neglected to mention what we feel are critically important issues and has instead cherry picked some of our statements to use in her article. By doing so she has given people the impression that the concerns are from only a few irrational people rather than a group of residents with some very valid concerns.

### **Loss of Valued Parkland**

The major concern, which has not been mentioned is that this development is not just going up in peoples backyards, the plan is to build it on park land. The proposed changes to Residential High Density are to allow a building higher than anything else in North Huron, to be built in a 2.85 acre piece of the existing park. The River Flats Park which runs alongside the Maitland River provides walking trails which are enjoyed by many people from all over town. The parcel in question is at one end of the park with part of the trail running through it. Next to it is the children's playground and splash pad and across the road are a daycare, a community living centre and residences. There are also residences backing on to this site. Formerly this space was a trailer park which was run by the legion and housed at the time of its closure 29 trailers. These residents were seasonal, not working and their cars were on their individual lots along with their trailers.

### **Traffic, Environmental and Safety Concerns**

Council also wishes to reduce the setback from the river and the number of parking spaces required to 1.23 spaces per unit. The proposed structure, would have 73 units, housing up to as many as 146 residents. The anticipated large increase in traffic, presents safety concerns for the children's playground, splash pad, the daycare and the community living building across from the playground. In addition, the reduced number of parking spaces will lead to inevitable overflow onto local streets in what is currently an older and quieter part of town. The building is being designed to house those 55+ and we were told that this age group would not drive. Not

only does this age group still drive, they still usually are working and in a rural community without transit they will all need cars, even to do their shopping. Without adequate parking the overflow will most definitely end up on the surrounding streets, yet we have been told that there will be no difference in the impact to traffic compared to the 29 trailers previously in the park and therefore no traffic study is necessary.

### **Lack of Transparency**

Despite the information on the Township of North Huron's website, that they value transparency, this proposal is being pushed through quickly and without the proper notifications. We were told that only 30 households need to be notified about these changes, despite the fact that this is a public park. We have been told that only those within 120 metres needed to be told and that they were not to "over inform" residents. As a result the only way any of us knew what was about to happen was by word of mouth and it was left to local residents to try and share the information they learned with as many people as possible. The meeting that we were told wouldn't happen before January was suddenly moved to December 20th. Five days before Christmas and during COVID. As a result our door to door canvassing and word of mouth attempts to give notice to everyone fell seriously short and there are still many who will be affected that do not know what changes are proposed and will not be able to register their concerns by the deadline in order for Council to consider them.

### **Misinformation**

We have made it very clear to Council, the press and the builders that none of us are opposed to development to solve a housing crisis, we are only opposed to the development of this land. If indeed there is a housing issue that needs addressing then a more suitable location should be found. The River Flats Park is a beautiful park and walking trail that is appreciated and well used by everyone in Wingham. As are the children's playground and splash pad. Of course those of us living next to or in close proximity to this building are going to have the additional problems related to the high volumes of traffic and overflow of parking onto our previously quiet neighbourhood streets but there are many people, both young and old alike, that are very grateful for and make use of this wonderful asset to the town. Additionally, we are not just a handful of crazy locals who just don't want something in our back yards. A great deal of work has gone into research to try and ascertain the facts and ask the right questions. If full coverage of the residents concerns were given, it would show that they were both detailed and intelligent concerns that were presented.

If all that is necessary for those seeking personal gain or profit, is to quietly and quickly change the rules, then how can we rest assured that the scarring of valued parkland and green space with inappropriate structures will not continue to happen.

In this day and age, awareness of the critical need to protect our environment should be at its height. We believe this to be a very bad decision that will have a lasting negative impact on our community. We will continue to reach out to as many as we can prior to the next meeting on January 17th and hope sincerely that Council will not proceed with these changes.