

DEPUTATION REQUEST

REGIONAL COUNCIL

OCTOBER 21, 2021

Subject: New East Gwillimbury & Whitebelt Motion

Spokesperson: Phil Pothen

Name of Group or person(s) being represented (if applicable):

Environmental Defence

Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:

The motions to fully include even more land in East Gwillimbury, Whitchurch-Stouffville, within the Settlement Area Boundary, and to include lands West of the Little Rouge as Community Area rather than Employment Area should be refused. As these items were not on the agenda for the September Special Meeting. Environmental Defence did not have the opportunity to depute either on the motions, or on the staff recommendations relating to these motions.

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

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environmental
defence

October 20, 2021

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York Regional Council,
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, ON L3Y 4W5

Attn: Regional Clerk

Re: Item F.1 Alternate 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment Scenarios in Response to Consultation

These are the comments of Environmental Defence in relation to the above-noted matter. Please note that they are separate from and address a different item than EDCs request for a verbal deputation on the same day. I am a land use planning and environmental lawyer, and I lead research and policy analysis regarding smart growth and land-use planning in Ontario for Environmental Defence a leading national environmental organization that works at the federal, provincial and municipal levels to safeguard our freshwater, create livable communities, tackle climate change and build a clean economy.

Environmental Defence is gravely concerned that the projected Community Land Need for York Region in the Alternate 2051 Forecast and Land Needs Assessment Scenarios in Response to Consultation is premised on a gross underestimation of the capacity of existing Built Up Area to accommodate new single and semi-detached houses

The source of this problem is an error in the Land Needs Assessment Analysis performed by [Watson & Associates Ltd.](#) . The report does not provide as clear a breakdown as it should of the projected numbers of units each housing type projected to be accommodated within the existing built up area, and the number which it allocates to designated greenfield area. However, it does state unambiguously, and incorrectly, that the number of single- and semi-detached (i.e., "low density") homes projected for the existing built up area ("BUA") is negligible.

Even though the More Homes More Choice Act, 2019 requires the legalization of laneway and garden suites, the analysis does not appear to discuss or factor in these units (which qualify as single- and semi-detached) at all. There is no discussion at all, in the Analysis, of measures to drive the breaking up of legacy lots in residential neighborhoods to add more single- or semi-detached houses. The premise of the report is that only remnant *vacant* lands within the built up area would be available for low-density housing, and as a consequence, in s. 4.6.1, it states expressly that

It is assumed that minimal additional low-density housing supply opportunities will be available within the BUA once the current supply has been exhausted. Accordingly, this shortfall will need to be accounted for in the DGA.

This assumption, which is the basic premise of the recommendation to extend the settlement area boundary, completely disregards the work that you have done on Yellow Belts, and it is on *this* point that you can fairly disagree, as you have said you think there is a very large capacity to add single- and semi-detached houses to existing neighborhoods in York Region.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Philip Pothen', written in a cursive style.

Philip Pothen, JD, M.L.A.,
Barrister & Solicitor, Ontario Environment Program Manager,
Environmental Defence