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Dear Councillor West,

We received your letter inviting residents to an information meeting regarding the latest development proposal that would include connecting Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive. We are aware that there is long history of council meetings regarding connecting Beech Avenue to Wicker Drive and that on several occasions the community has outlined the concerns it has with this extension. It is our understanding that the last council meeting regarding this extension was several years ago. As such, we are writing to express all the concerns we have with this extension.

My family and I have recently moved into a larger home at 74 Wicker Drive in order to support our growing family and remain in the Jefferson neighbourhood we have called home for decades now. Having lived in the Jefferson area, we have been aware of the Beech Avenue / Wicker Drive extension plans for a very long time. It was not, however, until we moved into our new home that we realized just how negative an impact such an extension would have on the neighbourhood, wildlife, children, community and its safety. We would like to share what we have learned and come to enjoy so much as part of our neighbourhood in the hopes that council will reconsider the Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive extension.

Sense of Community

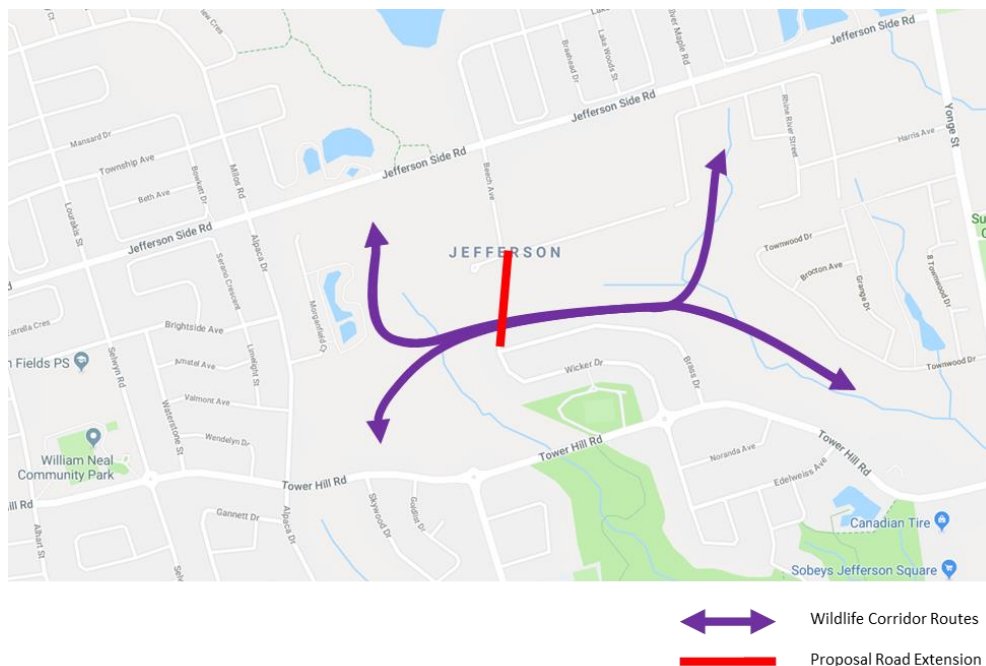
The report produced from the Harris Beech Infill Study cites a guiding principle to “enhance ‘place-making’ - to recognize and enhance the unique aspects of the area and create a sense of community”.

My family and I were delighted when we found out that end of Wicker Drive has become a gathering place for the residents of Brass Drive and Wicker Drive. It is very difficult these days to find neighbours congregating and interacting with one another on their streets. This space is a unique aspect of the area and provides residents with a location to meet for a wide variety of interactions from informal meetings when picking up mail to planned neighborhood activities and celebrations. The humble area at the end of Wicker Drive does not look like much, but it means a great deal to the sense of community it has helped establish. Eliminating this area directly contradicts the guiding principle of the Infill Study.

Environment and Wildlife

To understand the environmental impact the Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive extension would have on the area it is best to consider how the extension severs the existing nature and wildlife conservation

land within the area. The illustration below shows how the extension threatens to sever the last continuous section of corridor for this land.



The proposed road extension will significantly alter the flow of wildlife within this area and sever it into two smaller sections. The extension would separate the land into a wooded area to the West and a grassland to the East. Currently wildlife flow through this area and depend on the remaining corridor for access to water to the West and grazing/mating grounds to the East. A road connecting Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive would fracture this ecosystem and alter the balance the land provides for the many deer, rabbits, foxes, variety of wetland birds and other such wildlife heard and seen regularly.

There is also the real threat of pollution to this environment with a continuous roadway through this area. We have witnessed numerous examples of the contamination and pollution of such lands as the Jefferson forest area has been developed over the last two decades. Roadways that abut conservation land create the threat of pollution not only from automobiles and road maintenance but also from debris and trash that unfortunately litter the conservation areas once roads are in place (Tower Hill Road being a perfect example).

Child Fitness and Development

The area at the end of Wicker Drive is even more important to the children on the street. Children use this area to meet after school and on weekends to play and be kids. Having this area for our community children is a blessing. They feel safe without fear of the traffic flowing through their streets. The fact that Brass Drive and Wicker Drive form a crescent reduces the traffic throughout these streets and extends that feeling of safety our children and parents share currently to all of Brass Drive and Wicker Drive. An extension of Wicker Drive to allow through traffic within the neighbourhood will remove a

vital play space for dozens of children and destroy any feeling of safety for both children and parents. It will eliminate the active times these children get directly outside their homes. We, as parents and as a city, are trying to ensure an active lifestyle for our children. Allowing the extension of Wicker Drive is directly counter to this notion and every effort made to promote an active lifestyle for our children.

Neighbourhood Safety

We know that council members are aware of both the traffic congestion problems and the frequent high speed and reckless driving that happens far too often along Tower Hill Road. It is our hope that the recent speed notification signs placed along Tower Hill will have some effect in reducing the dangers along this stretch of road. The city must do more to address the traffic issues of Tower Hill Road and eliminate the hazards associated with crossing it for our all residents (especially the young and elderly). Extending Wicker Drive only exacerbates these traffic problems as it encourages more use of Tower Hill Road with yet another throughway connected to it. This will only increase the risk to resident's safety and is in direct conflict with the Harris-Beech Infill's Study's design guideline to "minimize the potential for vehicular/pedestrian conflict".

The unique turns and narrow lanes on both Brass Drive and Wicker Drive create driving conditions that are more hazardous and congested than other roads. Curbside parking quickly reduces these roads to essentially one lane (especially in winter conditions). Seeing around the curves of the streets when snow banks and parked cars line the street make navigation of these streets more challenging than other roads. The overly high road crown on Brass Drive and particularly on Wicker Drive facilitates ice formation on these roads and makes these roads more difficult to navigate for motorists. Connecting Wicker Drive to Beech Avenue will introduce more traffic through less than ideal driving environments and add to the problems we face today.

Those who wish to develop the Beech Avenue area are agreeable to change plans to remove the Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive extension. The community that currently lives within the Brass Drive and Wicker Drive area are opposed to the extension. The basis for the Beech Avenue and Wicker Drive extension is a nearly twenty-year-old plan that has no guarantee to better the lives of any current or future resident. The plan does guarantee to negatively affect the wildlife of the area, destructively alter the quality of life for current residents, eliminates children's ability to enjoy themselves while being active, and threatens the feeling of safety we enjoy as a community. We ask that council reject this proposal and a small modification made that is agreeable to all parties to remove the extension in question and allow the community, its wildlife and its people to remain unaltered.

Thank you for your time. We welcome any questions you may have.

Michael & Kristina Rabbior (and family)