

To the Council of Richmond Hill

Re : [SRPRS.20.082 – Request for Comments – Zoning By-law Amendment Application – BH Properties Limited – 57 Beaufort Hills Road - City File D02-20005](#)

I would like to submit my opposition to the mentioned plan of subdividing 57 Beaufort Hills Road property and allowing the destruction of large number of trees.

My name is Kornelia Stefanidis, but my friends call me Lia (and I believe in this neighborhood we are all friends, or at least most of us are). Friends look out for each other, care for each other and protect the small community where we live. While Richmond Hill cannot really be called a small community, I always felt proud to say I am an Oak Ridges resident before I claim to be part of Richmond Hill. This is extremely important to me and I believe to most of my neighbours as well.

I would like to tell you how and why I ended up living here because it is a major reason form my opposition against the proposed plans. It was January of 1995 and I lived at Young and Sheppard. Due to very sad circumstances that almost claimed the life of husband, then fiancé, and mine we started looking for a house. We were looking in Richmond Hill and Markham but one day we got lost in a snowstorm and ended up approaching Aurora on Young Street. Just before the road goes under the train bridge, there were some magnificent tall pine trees covered with snow and it took my breath away. It took some convincing my husband so he would consider moving “so far” from Toronto but we no longer looked anywhere else.

We ended up living just North of Bloomington and Bathurst in Aurora and my most favourite time of each day was the drive to work and back. I never took the 404 as I enjoyed seeing the fields and trees on my way. I remember seeing the cows and horses grazing and how it filled my heart with warmth. Then the cows and the horses started to disappear. Then the farm lands started to disappear.

The house I live in today was built on one of those farms.

From the time I was a little girl I dreamed of living on a large lot with a small and cozy house on it. Coming from crowded Europe I was shocked that a country so large ,builds such large homes on such small lots. As we needed a bigger house after our 3 children were born, I started looking. I knew we would not be going far. The area is breathtaking, the people are great. I loved driving through these neighborhoods. Parker Ave., Puccini Dr., Coons Rd, Blackforest Dr, Cynthia Cres, Beaufort Hill Drive and yes back then even King Road. They had those amazing wide estate lots some with smaller bungalow type houses while other had immaculately cared for estate homes. The charm, the appeal what I always wanted. The town feeling close to the big city and amenities. Perfect combination. I looked often but we were unable a property on any of these streets. When the opportunity arrived, we finally purchased our house on the next best thing Lupine Cres. Just like most of our neighbours we were drawn to the large lots and the beautiful mature trees in the back yard that is so hard to find in new neighborhoods.

Many of us paid a lot of extra just to have this privilege! It was an investment that meant so much to all of us. But soon after we moved in some of the existing trees in our backyard that were there for many years before started to die. We could not understand why until our back-door neighbour explained that

the builder changed the landscape so drastically that the water had no way of escaping. These trees were standing in almost knee-high water at times and slowly started to die. This problem still exists. The water issue was never solved by the builder or town no matter how much we have complained and requested help. The water washes out the footing for our fence, killing any trees planted in replacement of the old ones.

I have been an Oak Ridges residence since 2005. My kids grew up here. They shared schools with many of the council members' children. I have also watched the changes of the neighbourhood. First King Rd. where the builders bought up all the wide lots boarding up the houses for years. I have known a few of the owners there. The pressure on them, the constant harassment from builders never stopped. How long can you live like that and enjoy your life? Today, the greenery is gone. In place of a handful of bungalows we have boxy townhomes on top of each other. Hundreds of them probably.

Parker Ave., isn't doing much better. The corner of King Road and Parker Ave brought me to tears. We are turning our little community into sole-less human farms. I get that with more house the town can collect more taxes but where will the line be drawn?

I only found out 3 days ago about the proposed plan of subdividing 57 Beaufort Hill Rd. The plan of cutting down close to a 100 trees or more so the developer can build 2 homes in their places and have a lot of financial gain. I'm speechless to learn that the town has no objection. How does the affect people, the environment and the landscape of the town does not seem to matter to anyone. These trees are home for hundreds of birds, squirrels, raccoons, foxes, coyotes, and deer and rabbits. My kids and I had the opportunity to observe these wild animals in our backyard. To learn and enjoy their presence, but I guess having a few million dollars of profit in a developer's pocket who isn't here for the town is more important than protecting these animals and landscape that cannot put money in people's pockets.

And it won't stop there. I have to speak up because what happens on this land will be a turning point for what happens to all the other streets that we love so much. They will be subdivided one after the other to make certain individual richer and to ruin the experience for all of us forever.

I'm sorry if this letter is a bit lengthy but it is very personal to me.

Here is what I believe will happen.

With cutting down the trees, we

- Adding to the air pollution – these trees provide enough air for 2 people for a full year.
- We are creating water drainage issues similar to what is happening in my property already.
- We are adding to the already present echo between the homes,
- Taking away from the privacy many of us paid extra for
- Changing the charm of the area and turning it from small community to big city which none of us want.
- We are killing the trees that are protected under the Oak Ridges Moraine act. (shame on everyone who is willing to do that)
- We are driving away wildlife

While we all know changes will be coming, I'm begging you to reconsider allowing the subdivision of this lot. Do not give builders the right to cut down trees as they will. Do not allow greed and money to change the most important streets in our neighborhood. Please offer them the opportunity to put up a home that takes up similar size on the lot and limit the cut down of the trees. I would even go as far as to require of the replacement of every tree they cut down on the property.

I believe that this request will be a turning point for our town. What ever you decide to do with it will have long lasting effects on our future. I hope you will take it to heart.

Please walk down these streets (or drive) They will amaze you for sure. Don't make decisions sitting behind your desk only because you will never understand what treasures you are throwing out the window. Please do not decide without looking around and talking to people in the area first.

Please save the trees and the neighborhood. It is up to you

Sincerely,

Kornelia Stefanidis

35 Lupine Cres, Oak Ridges