

57 BEAURFORT HILLS DRIVE

In 2003 and 2004, when my family was looking to purchase a home in the Beaufort Hills Estates area we were repeatedly and proudly informed by both realtors and homeowners that purchasing homes sited on these lots came with a great responsibility. Homeowners could not cut down any of the trees on these lots because they were part of the Natural Core Area in the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan. Homeowners of these sites were stewards of the land and the Oak Ridges Moraine. Trees could not be touched to install pools or any other structures.

Fast forward to 2020 and we have an application by a builder to cut down 97 trees on a lot contained in the Natural core area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan (Map 7). Furthermore, we have reports from city personnel which ascertain that the trees on 57 Beaufort Hills Drive do not form part of a significant woodlot based on certain criteria or loopholes that were found in the definition of a Significant Woodlot.

Looking at Map 4 “Official Plan Designation” in Section 3.1 of Council Meeting Agenda, we see an Asterix on the boundary of the Natural Core and Neighbourhood used to represent 57 Beaufort Hills Road.

However, when superimposing Map 3 “Existing Zoning” onto Map 4, titled below as Map 3 and 4, we see that the major part of 57 Beaufort Hills falls within the Natural Core designation.

Infact, most of the trees which will be removed from the lot in order to make way for the two new homes will be removed from the Natural Core area.

Quoting directly From the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan

In the Oak Ridges Moraine, new infrastructure corridors or facilities shall only be allowed in the Natural Core Areas and Natural Linkage Areas if they are shown to be necessary and there is no reasonable alternative. They shall also have to meet stringent review and approval standards.

What we have here is an attempt to chip away at the safeguards which were put in place in 2001 to maintain a Natural Core Area in the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan. It can be argued that removing 97 trees and constructing buildings next to the remaining tree canopies can not harm the overall Moraine Plan.

But it is exactly these small developments which we need to be wary of. They will set a precedent for further small developments on the Natural Core of the Plan, until we wake up 10 years from now and not very much is left in the Natural Core of the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan.

Taken directly from the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan, we know that:

“Oak Ridges Moraine is one of Ontario’s most significant landforms.

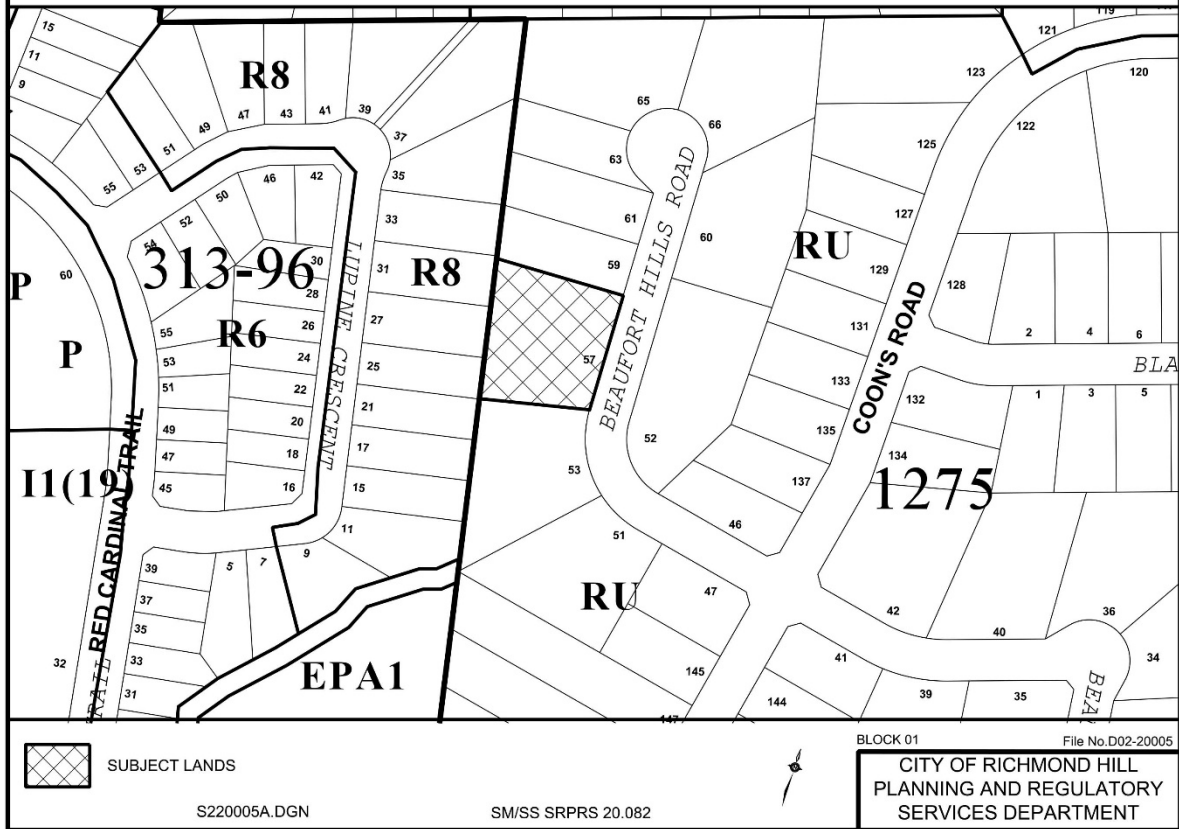
The purpose of the Oak Ridges Moraine Conservation Plan is to provide land use and resource management planning direction to provincial ministers, ministries, and agencies, municipalities, landowners and other stakeholders on how to protect the Moraine’s ecological and hydrological features and functions.

The vision for the Oak Ridges Moraine is that of “a continuous band of green rolling hills that provides form and structure to south-central Ontario, while protecting the ecological and hydrological features and functions that support the health and well-being of the region’s residents and ecosystems.””

Richmond Hill’s residents, employees and elected officials have an important duty to ensure that these natural core areas are protected according to the plan set up in 2001. The problems we see with the current climate and environmental conditions in Canada and throughout the world should only embolden us to not only maintain these natural core designations but to strengthen and broaden them.

I respectfully submit that the current plan for 57 Beaufort be changed so that it does not impact the trees contained within the Natural Core area of the Oak Ridges Moraine Plan.

MAP 3 - EXISTING ZONING



MAP 4 - OFFICIAL PLAN DESIGNATION



LEGEND



Subject Land

Natural Core

Natural Linkage

Neighbourhood

SM/SS SRPRS.20.082

NOTE: The information provided in this map is a depiction of a portion of the Richmond Hill Official Plan. For accurate reference, the schedules and policies of the Richmond Hill Official Plan must be consulted. In the case of a discrepancy between the schedules and the policies of the Richmond Hill Official Plan, the policies shall take precedence.

BLOCK 01

File No. D02-20005

CITY OF RICHMOND HILL
PLANNING AND REGULATORY
SERVICES DEPARTMENT

