

April 15, 2015

Jeremy DeVries
Sulphur Springs Custom Carpentry Ltd.
905-541-5932

Dear Mr. Devries,

I would like to thank you for inviting me to your home on April 13, 2015 to review the proposed Site Alteration L04/RE1 at 7827 Wellington Road 36. During our meeting, you asked if the proposed site alteration would improve the productivity of the agriculture lands under which the alteration will occur.

Upon reviewing the site plans and viewing the site itself, I have some serious reservations about the proponent's application to bring in 69,500m³ of fill to improve the land's agricultural productivity.

First and foremost of my concerns is the type of fill being hauled in. I have seen clean topsoil hauled onto fields for the intended purpose of leveling out steep hills with good results. The farmers have been able to farm lands otherwise too steep for normal farming practices and because it is actual soil being deposited, crops quickly are able to establish. The material being hauled into 7827 Wellington Road 36 is unconsolidated fill that has varying aggregate size. There is also concrete, and metal mixed in with it. Even if the owner were to add topsoil on top of this fill, extremely rapid drainage through the underlying fill will likely result in excessively dry soil conditions throughout the growing season, which would result in less productivity.

Secondly, the proponent has stated that the land is too steep to farm and must be leveled. The slopes on the farm range from 1-2% near the conservation area at the back of the property with an overall average of approximately 5%. These slopes are by no means too steep for most farming practices. I am concerned about the 30% slope that will occur at the edges of the fill area – especially alongside the conservation area. It will be very difficult to establish a soil and vegetation cover on this slope without excessive erosion. In addition – a 30 % slope is very difficult for farm machinery to operate on.

As an Agronomist and Certified Crop Advisor since 1993, I recognize the challenges farming on poorly drained, shallow soils. If an individual really wanted to improve the productivity of their farmland, there are measures far less drastic than the proposed one to achieve this goal. Simply purchasing commercial fertilizer or animal manure will significantly improve the productivity of the cropland. Seeding species of grass and legumes that are suited to the unique soils and drainage characteristics of Puslinch Township will also improve the land's productivity.

In conclusion, I believe the addition of unconsolidated fill on top of existing agriculture lands will negatively impact their productivity for crop production.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rob Alton". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R" and "A".

Rob Alton, PAg,
Certified Crop Advisor