

## **Puslinch Township Council Meeting    Oct.21.2015**

Good evening Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen councillors. my name is Nicole Abouhalka, a Guelph resident.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you.

Allow me to take you very quickly to the year 1823 : the whole area was an unbroken forest when John Galt discovered it. (www: wampumkeeper).

If the recommended options in this EA are approved more trees will be removed along a forest that protects the river that both Guelph and Puslinch share. .

Mr. Mark Cullen, expert gardener, wrote in the Toronto Star of Nov. 23, 2012, under the title Landscaping reduces crime : *Green spaces, it has been found, can improve children's self-esteem, lower crime rates, improve moods, encourage social interaction and even reduce road rage.*

*Additionally, green spaces can boost children's intellectual resources and may enable them to think more clearly and cope more effectively with life's stresses.*

That is why I do not support a 2 lane bridge that will bring more traffic in Puslinch and Guelph.

I know that going to the river to enjoy its beauty and listen to the water is something that was enjoyed by people living both on the Puslinch and the Guelph side.

Now you hear traffic noise.

Nature gives us back what we feed it and treats us the way we treat it.

- We share the same river system, the same air.

- We have a unique and last opportunity to preserve and protect the edge of a forest and wetland that has survived since the logging of the ancient forest in the 1800's

The 116 acres in the area of the Niska Bridge/Speed River were purchased by the GRCA as part of the Hanlon Creek Conservation Area as a nature reserve. This area has been protected since 1948 when Horace Mack 1st made it the Niska Wildlife Park.

A triangular piece of this area is in the Puslinch Township on the Northwest side of the Speed.

Please help us to protect it for future generations

To conclude, I know from personal experience that it is extremely hard and it takes a great deal of courage and maturity to protect an irreplaceable asset and resist to pressures from strangers' experts' dry advice for the pertinence for a quick fix or short term benefit, like in our case to accommodate a regional traffic flow through a rural Puslinch Road and the Hanlon Creek Conservation Area

I plead with you, Mr. Mayor, Ladies and Gentlemen Councillors to project yourselves, 30, 40, 50 years from now and reflect what will happen if you were to oppose a 2 lane bridge and **instead be protective of our ONE lane Niska Bailey bridge.**

And make a recommendation to Guelph that this Bailey bridge be designated under the Ontario Heritage Act as a proud reminder of its role in World War 2 and at the same time it can continue to protect this beautiful natural area as all the one lane bridges have done since the 1800's.

You, your children and descendants can, without the shred if a doubt, be proud of that moment.

Nicole Abouhalka  
Guelph, October 21.2015