

March 7, 2023

Dear Adrian, neighbours, and Carlsbad Springs Community Association,




Thank you for your time to discuss the tree clearing on our property at 4401 Eighth Line Road. First of all, I want to apologize about the communication bungle on our end. As you know, AOO and Taggart jointly own thousands of acres of land in the area. Since these lands are designated rural and outside the urban boundary, we were not planning to include them in the consultation program for the new community of Tewin. Of course, we realize now that was a mistake. Given the sensitivity of the project, people in the surrounding area are rightfully interested in what we are doing with all our lands, not just those inside the urban boundary. I apologize for not coming to the community sooner and commit to doing a better job of keeping the community informed about the work we are doing in the rural area. Our Community Liaison Committee Terms of Reference will be out later this week and we look forward to working together.


A bit of background on the property. The area being put back to farm uses is located entirely outside of the City's urban boundary. The majority of the property has a history of being actively farmed. By approximately 1991, farming activity had largely ceased. Aerial photographs show that between 35-40% of the property was, by 1991, covered with a coniferous plantation farm, with the remainder of the property maintained as open fields. Since 1991, additional portions of the property have been subject to further tree plantings.

On approximately May 21, 2022, the City of Ottawa and surrounding areas were the subjects of a significant derecho storm – one of the most impactful and costly weather events in Canadian history. The property was heavily impacted by the storm, resulting in large-scale damage and destruction to the wooded areas of the property. Data from the Western University Northern Tornadoes Project confirms that the property was located within one of the most heavily affected areas, being in a corridor which experienced maximum wind speeds of 190 km/h with confirmed tree and property damage throughout the region.

Following the storm, the property was surveyed by our field staff on multiple occasions. Extensive damage to trees was observed, and it was determined that large areas of the property contained trees that posed immediate threats to public health and safety. Photos showing some of the damages are enclosed. We determined that the portions of the property which suffered the most extensive damage to trees would be cleared and would be renewed with dedicated farming activity.

Integrity. Quality. Community. Since 1948

 613-521-3000  613-526-5909  taggartgroup.ca

 3187 Albion Road South, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, K1V 8Y3

On May 25, 2022, the City of Ottawa issued a news release, titled “After the storm,” which stated:

For now, you do not need a permit to remove dead or hazardous trees on your private property where the tree is an immediate threat to public health and safety or will not survive the damage sustained.

Part VIII of the Tree Protection By-law contains a number of exceptions to the ordinary permit requirements. Section 82 provides that a tree permit or a distinctive tree permit is not required in circumstances where:

(6) the tree is an immediate threat to public health and safety; or

(7) the injury or destruction is a normal farm practice carried out as part of an agricultural operation by a farming business.

The City of Ottawa has confirmed that these exceptions apply with respect to the tree removal which occurred on the property and that no permit was required.

Following the storm, we determined that an agricultural use for the property would be the most productive use for the land for the foreseeable future. As described above, the property was previously used for agricultural use, and the applicable RU zone permits agricultural uses and agricultural-related uses. We have engaged in discussions with commercial agricultural operators respecting potential land leases to permit agricultural operations. We received multiple written offers to lease this land for farm purposes and have signed a long-term farm lease with a local registered farmer.

We understand that the City’s Significant Woodlands Policy provides that any future development application for the property would be required to consider forest cover present within the 10-year period prior to the application, as if the forest cover were still present. Therefore, the City’s own policies will provide adequate security that the conversion of the property to an agricultural use will remain for a minimum of 10 years, ensuring that the removal of trees was, and will continue to be, directly in service of the agricultural operation.

We have requested that the stop work order be lifted so that we can complete the work in preparing the land to get our farming operation up and running this season. The remainder of the clearing is necessary in order to farm the lands efficiently as we have to access the farm ditches. The City of Ottawa has since lifted the stop work order, and work will continue to prepare the site for farming use.

We realize that we have upset our neighbours by moving ahead with this work without informing the community. Again, we apologize for this. After much discussion and engagement with Councillor Darouze and Community Association President Adrian Becea, as an act of goodwill, we would like to offer to help with a community project. The preliminary suggestion is to fix up the rink at the Carlsbad Springs Community Centre. As a demonstration of our commitment to the community, Taggart would like to undertake this project at no cost.

I would be happy to set up a follow-up meeting with you at your convenience to further discuss the details.

Thank you again for your attention to this matter, and we look forward to working more collaboratively with you and the community as we advance this exciting project forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Taggart", with a stylized, cursive script.

Michelle Taggart
Vice President, Land Development
Taggart Group of Companies

