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BY EMAIL (denis.kelly@york.ca)

May 31, 2016

York Region Chair Wayne Emmerson and Members of Council
17250 Yonge Street
Newmarket, Ontario
L3Y 6Z1

Dear Chair and Members of Council:

Re: York Region 2016 TMP – 15th Sideroad NHS Crossing

I am the solicitor for St. Thomas of Villanova College, York Region's only independent Catholic School located at 2480 15th Sideroad in the Township of King. I am also the Chair of its Board of Directors.

Our school fronts on and has its ingress and egress on the 15th Sideroad in the Township of King, just west of Keele Street. I understand that on June 9, 2016 Committee will be considering the 2016 draft Transportation Master Plan (2016 TMP) and that the plan will go to Council for consideration on June 23, 2016. I also understand that the current draft contemplates several new crossings of the Natural Heritage System, including one along the 15th Sideroad road allowance between Keele Street and Highway 400 in King (the "15th SR"). The TMP proposes that this road will be opened by 2041. Both roads are under the jurisdiction of the Township of King, but are proposed to be uploaded to the Region before they are constructed.

My client opposes the inclusion of the 15th SR in the 2016 MTP for the following reasons:

1. The proposed road connection will have significant impacts on the form and function of the existing Natural Heritage System through which the road would traverse;
2. The proposed road connection would traverse some of the most sensitive parts of the Oak Ridges Moraine;
3. We have a student population of 525 students (planned to expand to 800 students at full build out). We are concerned for student safety. A connection to the 400 will result in the school fronting on a major arterial road, rather than the dead end gravel roadway upon which it presently fronts;



4. The location of the school was chosen for its pastoral setting and rural character. The quiet peaceful surroundings are conducive to the educational pursuits carried on at the school. The atmosphere and aesthetic of the school are important to the school and fit in perfectly with the fundamental principles that govern its educational philosophy of "Unitas Veritas, Caritas". It was this reason that the land was acquired from its neighbour, the Augustinian Fathers (Ontario) Inc. in 1998. I understand that the Augustinian Fathers oppose the opening of the 15th Sideroad as well;
5. The PPS requires that public authorities maximize the utilization of major infrastructure. Large portions of the lands which would abut this proposed road are located within some of the most sensitive parts of the Oak Ridges Moraine. Much of the land is located within the Natural Core and Natural Linkage designations. Much of it contains Key Natural Heritage Features, much is hydrologically and ecologically sensitive and much of it consists of landform conservation areas. Construction of a major piece of infrastructure which will be adjacent to virtually undevelopable lands such as these does not utilize resources in the way contemplated by the PPS. It is in fact a poor utilization of resources.

I am aware that the TRCA has also commented on this proposal and has recommended that the MTP include a requirement for an Environmental Assessment before any NHS crossings, including this one, are proposed. While we agree that this is a minimum requirement, we do not believe the recommendation of the TRCA goes far enough. Where the potential adverse impacts on the environment and on our school community are so obvious from the beginning, we do not believe any purpose would be served by an EA which examines the 15th Sideroad as an option. For that reason, we request that the 15th Sideroad be removed entirely from the text, schedules and project sheets of the 2016 MTP.

I would appreciate being kept apprised of any decisions made, or meetings held or reports written which deal with this matter.

Yours truly,

LOOPSTRA NIXON LLP

Per:

Quinto M. Annibale

QMA/rg

cc Carolyn Woodland, TRCA
cc Minister of the Environment
cc Minister of Natural Resources
cc Mayor and Members of Council, Township of King