

Hello

I live in Ancaster and would like to provide my concerns to the public elementary schools review. The use of the Ancaster High green space for a new build is not the solution and to use it as such would be wrong. These lands are used by all residents of Ancaster.

To build a mega school along side a high school will be a breeding ground for additional problems with students interaction, age and stage appropriateness. It will also contribute to the congestion on Meadowbrook which would then have to be addressed. This has now made the opening of Talyor St. a consideration. The reason Taylor was closed was due to the death of a child within the Spring Valley community who was hit by a school bus. We as a community do not want a re-occurrence of this event, feel our community lifestyle within the quiet narrow streets should not be compromised or put seniors and children at risk because the HWDSB finds itself in a situation that they themselves have created.

The Ancaster High green space has always been considered low hanging fruit. It is always the first thing to be eyeballed during discussions of elementary and high school reassessment. Trustees have said that the Ancaster High fields as an option for a new school was brought up by Ancaster community members but truthfully when i have spoken to trustees in the past they have made it clear that these lands and what they mean to the community at large is of no interest. For this reason, I am reaching out to you for help in protecting these lands because once gone, there is no going back and the community will suffer.

The green space is used by all residents of Ancaster. They contribute to the health and well being of adults, seniors and children during a time when living an active lifestyle is more important then every, difficult and costly. Not all of these voices are being considered equally in the current Assessment public meetings.

In our current economic climate, these lands offer the most affordable activity to families in a community which is growing exponentially. World wide, numbers show that soccer is the fastest growing sport because of its affordability. Ancaster has been using these fields for soccer since 1959. Active healthy children, mean active healthy adults with team and leadership building skills, lower obesity rate, less pressure on our healthcare system and better adjusted individuals in our communities. These lands provide outdoor soccer opportunities for over 2,000 children within our community alone and this number is growing. In addition, they enable people to leave their homes, spend time outside and get to know their neighbours, establish relationships, get involved.

These lands also play a big part of Ancaster economically. For the past, 13 years Ancaster Heritage Days Tournament has played a big part in the Ancaster Heritage Day celebration. It is Canada's largest outdoor soccer tournament with over 15,000 players, families, spectators, community members and sponsors attending from as far as the United States housed right on the green space which is being threatened. With the

tournament come thousands of dollars into Ancaster and Hamilton small business. Grass root entrepreneurs, small businesses, coffee shops, hotels, restaurants, merchants, as well as charities such as Ancaster Community Services have an opportunity for great exposure and financial benefit. Jobs are created, youth have the opportunity to volunteer and repeatedly become active within their community instilling life long lifestyle choices and developing into active community members. When we help local people, we are putting food on tables, helping families that live next door and building our community.

Heritage Day and the Heritage Day Tournament is an enormous draw for our community. Its a cultural event that enables us to carry on the tradition of what Ancaster is and its sense of community. It puts Ancaster on the map in a changing world. The loose these lands for a new school build would be detrimental to Ancaster. Maintaining green space in the core of Ancaster is critical. As the west of Ancaster gets further developed and even areas like Oak Gables having been sold off to developers, growth is coming at us from all sides faster then ever. With every lot of land at risk from being snatched up by hungry developers, if a new school is needed, it should be rebuilt on its existing site. Green space which is clearly used by the community consistently should not be threatened. It should be preserved for future generations.

CA Bray has been on the "No-Fix list" since 2012, at which time the school was already in a horrific state. The school board is responsible for the schools, it has received provincial funds for their upkeep and have chosen to do nothing. The School boards have neglected the upkeep of schools, closed them down, widened boundaries, sold off lands to developers (Maple Lane School), in today's environment everything is up for sale. Build the school on its property. Let the rest of ancaster be unaffected by your immediate need.

I humbly request your consideration of what this green space means to our community and our future and ask for your help to save it.

With gratitude,

Cathy

Received April 5, 2017

Dear Mr. Ferguson,

Please note this is the second letter we have written to you in regards to this issue.

My name is Shannon Holmes Shedden and I am a home owner, parent at Fessenden as well as the Vice President of the Fessenden Home and School Association. My property backs onto this green space and we need to SAVE it. I have been told there is a list of organizations and boards that it is offered to before the potential of developers getting it. I'm asking you as our voice and begging you as a parent to save this green space. We, as many families ( the park is always full), use this space for our children and families every day. We run , walk our dogs, use the climbers, play baseball, basketball, have Easter egg hunts, ride our bikes pull sleds in the snow and much more. This community would be lost without it. Not to mention the increase in traffic and safety for our children if it were to turn into a street with what??? Big box house??? We need you as our Councillor to help us in this venture to save this space and help Ancaster's Village remain just that. A place where our kids are free and save to play and roam. A place to gather with community and get outside. Technology may be the future but you will not find one parent in this neighbourhood that would rather their kids be outside! Please help us!!!

I wanted to let you know that I am working on writing a petition for saving the green space as well as saving Fessenden. We hope we can count on your support. We are concerned and confused why Fessenden is not in an option for staying open especially if Queens Ranger is. We feel this should be put on the table as an option. We feel that we really need to pull together as a school and community to save our children's space both inside the classroom and outside. We need signs, emails, and to inform these parents. Making our voices heard is imperative. We should also have a Save Fessenden school and green space Facebook page. Where parents can be heard, other schools have this. Post, advertisements information, pictures can all be posted there. Sitting quietly by is just letting this happen and I live right here so others may not want the change in drive or new school but we physically live here. This affects us in our day to day as well as our children. This is about our kids and we feel you as our representative needs to really let our voices be heard.

Regards,

Shannon Holmes Shedden  
Home Owner, parent, School advocate, voice