

July 12, 2019

Members of the District of Muskoka Community and Planning Services Committee and the Planning Committee of the Corporation of the Township of Muskoka Lakes

**Re: Mary Jane Lake, Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendment and Draft Plan of Subdivision
Subdivision File S2018-7 (Ross) and Zoning By-law Amendment File ZBA-34/18 (By-law 2018-100)**

My name is Stephen Sims and I am here today representing the Muskoka Lakes Association. The MLA's mission is to preserve Muskoka for our 2500 families and future generations.

The Muskoka Lakes Association is here to express our concern for the proposal that has been submitted to the District and Township of Muskoka Lakes.

The development proposal takes a small lake, some 10 hectares in size, and lots out the entire lake. While the lots are big, they leave no room for the lake. No room for the environment.

We have reviewed the studies prepared for the proponent and by the objectors. It is not our intent to critique the various documents. Others will be speaking to this. There are many questions left unanswered though.

There was little consideration of the lake – what is the current quality? What are the current lake characteristics? How deep is it? How often does the water turn over?

There are wetlands around the shoreline. These wetlands, known as fens are sensitive because they are floating mats and represent a unique type with associated rare species, including potential endangered species that are not expendable. The evaluation undertaken for the proponent did not address the potential impacts on the fens from the expected boating use on this lake. When lots are created on a shoreline it is not just buffers and setbacks that need to be considered but also the uses of the shoreline and lake – including boating. Just as we consider when a septic system is built we expect it to be used and therefore consider potential impacts and mitigation measures. A potentially shallow lake with a sensitive shoreline would not be suitable for power boats.

If the uses of the lake result in poor water quality, then the District and Township will be the ones assessing the condition and being asked to remediate a situation that did not need to be created in the first place.

Council needs to the question - how many lots can be sustained on this lake not how many lots can be fit on the lake. This is at the heart of the questions being posed today throughout Muskoka – how can development occur and maintain the character of the lakes that we value?

The MLA maintains that this application is too much for this lake and for the sensitive environment present. The homework has not been done to demonstrate that the development can protect the natural features and functions that are core to the policies in both the district and township official plans.

We ask that you work with the proponent to reduce the size of this development, if, in fact development is appropriate at all in this location. The number of lots and their layout needs to protect the sensitive wetlands. The uses of the properties needs to respect the environment. We cannot knowingly degrade this environment, for we will be paying for it in the future.

We ask to be notified about this application and any decisions and further meetings.

Regards,

Stephen Sims

The mission of the Muskoka Lakes Association is to promote the responsible use, enjoyment and conservation of the unique Muskoka environment.