

The Honourable Steve Clark
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing
17th Floor, 777 Bay Street
Toronto, ON M7A 2J3



Rescue Lake Simcoe Charitable Foundation
120 Primeau Dr.
Aurora, ON L4G 6Z4

December 16, 2020

Dear Minister Clark:

RE: Rama Road Economic Employment District MZO request

Ramara Council in Simcoe County recently requested an MZO for a huge development on Lake Couchiching. If approved it could double the population of Ramara, include 7 hotels, a water park, marina, and cut into the shoreline to make an additional 6400 ft of shoreline for slip and waterfront seasonal living. We do not have all the details, as planning approval is being sought through an MZO.

We urge you not to give Ramara Township a Minister's Zoning Order for the three expansive developments along Rama Road. The people of Ramara deserve an open discussion and consultation on the matter. One of the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition's member groups sent a letter to Ramara Council last week outlining many unanswered questions. The bottom line of the letter is:

“The Mayor [of Ramara] said the County will not be reviewing the developments and since the Conservation Authority has been significantly neutered, Ramara township staff and Council will be handling these giant developments by themselves. Our Official Plan is not yet completed. And we are in the midst of a pandemic. It needs to be right, not rushed.”

Further, we are concerned about the potential negative impact of development on another Provincially Significant Wetland. An EA has not been completed on this portion of the project, and arguably, this is the most important part to get right. It is on the shores of Lake Couchiching, which is already suffering from Lake Simcoe's rising phosphorus levels, and has already experienced blue-green algae outbreaks. Destroying provincially significant wetlands causes

harm to wildlife, water quality, and can make flood impacts worse. Your government has repeatedly committed to protecting wetlands, water quality, and Lake Simcoe. It would be great if you backed that up with some action, or at the very least, by not allowing development that impairs water quality. Following proper planner approvals would satisfy this concern better than an MZO.

We urge you to stop issuing MZOs, particularly in provincially significant coastal / shoreline wetlands.

On behalf of the members of the Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition could you please respond in writing to this letter outlining how an MZO would address environmental concerns on the shores of Lake Couchiching.

Sincerely,



Claire Malcolmson

Executive Director

Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition

The Rescue Lake Simcoe Coalition is a lake-wide member-based organization, representing 26 groups in the Lake Simcoe watershed, that provides leadership and inspires people to take action to protect Lake Simcoe. www.rescuelakesimcoe.org

CC: Minister Jeff Yurek, MOECP

Minister Yakabuski, MNRF

MPP Andrea Khanjin

MPP Doug Downey

MPP Jill Dunlop

Mayor Clark, Orillia

Mayor Clark, Ramara