

Friends of the Eramosa Karst

Working to preserve lands in Stoney Creek's Area of Natural and Scientific Interest (ANSI)

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Response to Public Information Session

Friends of the Eramosa Karst (FOTEK) wishes to clearly state its strong opposition to the stated preferred disposition option for the lands adjacent to the Eramosa Karst Conservation Area.

The Ontario Realty Corporation concludes that “to sell lands & protect sensitive lands while pursuing land use approvals” will “not result in negative impacts to the ANSI”. It is unclear how these conclusions were reached given that the relevant studies are incomplete.

It appears clear that the ORC has always maintained this approach as its preference and had little intention of modifying its plans. Its statements regarding the potential impact of development on the ANSI are based upon preconceived plans and not on scientific analysis or on public input.

The ORC's planning is based on an untenable Secondary Plan approved before the discovery and creation of the ANSI and on unsubstantiated confidence of primarily financial “benefits” to the taxpayer.

In addition, FOTEK is concerned about a potential conflict of interest in that a number of those involved in conducting the studies have very strong links to the development market in this area. The personal financial gain to be had by these individuals surely must be taken into account in judging the validity of any study reports issued.

Friends of the Eramosa Karst strongly urges the Ontario Government to show true leadership and seize this opportunity maintain a viable ecological system of feeder creeks to this Area of Natural and Scientific Interest. This can easily be achieved by protecting these lands from further development through the deeding of the property to the Hamilton Conservation Authority.

The resulting Conservation Area would be the envy of any municipality.