

## PROTECT HUDSON'S NATURAL AREAS

Are you worried about how current and future residential developments will affect the **quality of life** in Hudson?

Are you concerned that current development is not being adequately planned to protect our natural areas, water resources, distinctive natural heritage and will negatively impact our quality of life through more flooding, increased traffic and road safety?

**Have your voice heard by signing this petition to be submitted to Hudson Town Council.**

The residents of Hudson deserve a thoughtful and intelligent approach to future development. Residents should expect the Mayor and Council to the lead town administration to protect Hudson's natural heritage, including its wetlands, water resources, waterways, green spaces and fresh air, while still attracting growth.

### RATIONALE

1. Unfortunately, Hudson does not have an established, integrated or enforceable plan for protecting and minimizing the impact of future developments on our wetlands, waterways and green spaces.
2. In 2017, the Town of Hudson completed a **Conservation Plan for Wetlands and Natural Areas** (urban perimeter only). This plan determined a list of priority conservation areas (wetlands and surrounding wooded areas of interest) and recommended the Town conserve these areas in their entirety. This plan was never adopted or implemented into bylaw.
3. Three of these priority conservation areas identified in the 2017 Conservation Plan face imminent development pressure (**see attached map**):
  - a. Como Bog wetland complex (MH4 - #5),
  - b. Wetland and wooded area on the former Ellerbeck property aka 'Willowbrook' (MH12 + BI11 - #6);
  - c. Wetland section of the Ottawa River and mouth of the Viviry River known as 'Sandy Beach' (MH6 - #2+3).
4. While the Town's Site Planning and Architectural Integration Program, **By-law 571** (and it's amendment, **By-law 690**) does include criteria for assessing new residential developments environmentally, it is difficult to see how these criteria are met or applied to current projects. Example criteria include the following:
  - [The developer must] Perform a natural site characterization to demonstrate how the chosen project location presents the lowest potential environmental impact for the area;
  - Use construction practices that limit environmental disruptions to protect mature trees, while keeping backfilling to a minimum;
  - Prioritize compact development in clusters ... to create a sense of community and to preserve important natural areas.
  - Actively develop a true living environment in harmony with its surroundings and landscape
5. In June 2019, Hudson councillors passed a resolution to engage environmental consultants **Eco2Urb** to conduct a comprehensive town-wide Conservation Plan, as a first step to develop a guide for future urban planning that takes into consideration priority conservation areas. The report is expected in November 2019. Consultations with the public will take place this summer, but more time will be needed by Council to implement the recommendations.

6. Until this Conservation Plan is completed, the community consulted, and the recommendations integrated into Hudson by-laws by Council, a moratorium should be placed on any development that has the potential to impact previously identified priority conservation areas.
7. Hudson would not be the first town in the region to do so: See *Your Local Journal* **article**: 'Regulation protecting Saint-Lazare wetlands moves forward', 27 June 2019.
8. We know that wetlands and natural areas are essential and that as we damage or destroy them we reduce their ability to sustain populations of plants, animals, and the many economic, recreational and health benefits they bring to people and to our community.

Sign this petition to show your support. You will also be able to access and sign the petition online soon – please email us (below) for more information.

### **Want to become involved or need more information?**

- Contact us at naturehudson@gmail.com
- Attend monthly Council Meetings, first Monday of every month, 7:30pm. Next meeting 5th August 2019
- Attend your monthly district meetings: contact your councillor for details.

### **References and further reading**

1. Intelligent development that maintains the ecological integrity of an area benefits all stakeholders. For example, 'The proximity of nature has an impact on the value of a residence and, consequently, on the property base of the municipality ... land located in conservation-type subdivisions (where conservation is prioritized) would be 12-16% more valuable' (**Boucher et al, 2010**).
2. 'Despite the importance they represent in Quebec, wetlands have been altered for more than a century and the phenomenon has accelerated over the past 40 years' (Guide d'élaboration d'un plan de conservation des milieux humides; **Joly, 2008**). See also **article** in *La Presse*: 'Les milieux humides et le dogme de la croissance', 16 May 2019.
3. 'Urbanization is the main cause of the disappearance of natural areas. Biodiversity is an assurance for future ecological services that remain to be discovered' ('La biodiversité et l'urbanisation', MAMROT (Ministry for Municipal Affairs), **Boucher, 2010**).
4. 'The municipality may, in particular, look for a location of buildings that is more respectful of the site's biodiversity. For example, a municipality that is concerned with runoff and forest cover could, as part of its SPAIP (Site Planning and Architectural Integration Program) By-law, set objectives and criteria for evaluating construction projects against these concerns. Since the SPAIP By-law must prescribe the documents that must accompany the plans, a municipality may require the applicant to provide various studies and inventories related to the natural environment' (**Boucher, 2010**).