

# ARAC hears presentations on proposed Carp Ridge subdivision

By **ASHLEY KULP**

*Staff Writer*

Concerned residents against the proposed Carp Ridge subdivision brought city councillors up to speed at last week's Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee (ARAC) meeting at St. Isidore's Catholic School in Kanata.

The subdivision, which is proposing over 30 homes be built on the ridge, had its original application approved by the Municipality of West Carleton in 1991. The development hit some snags due to its zoning application and an ownership change and the new developers are now looking at moving forward with the project.

Local botanist-ecologist Martha Webber and member of the Carp Ridge Society, spoke first on the subject and gave some history on the Carp Ridge.

"The Carp Ridge was once mighty. The ridge you see today is just a nubbin of the original," she said. "West Carleton inherited the real thing with the Carp Ridge. It is a finely-tuned ecosystem with many plants and species of wolves and coyotes."

Webber said the ridge has suffered since the construction of the Thomas A. Dolan Parkway. A road she calls a "major intrusion."

"There are 34 or more two-acre estate lots proposed," she continued. "Their septics will be built on bedrock and what is now wetlands. There's a strong possibility groundwater contamination will happen."

Webber said contamination won't just affect homes in the new subdivision, but potentially the other existing homes below it.

"The wells below are also in serious harm of being contaminated," she said.

Many residents have been lobbying for a change in the site location, but since it was "grandfathered" in by the former Township of West Carleton, current city regulations in place, don't apply.

The effects of the depletion of the ridge's natural habitat are already showing.

"It's already influencing wells and there's been a change in the water levels," Webber explained. "The problems indicate that the Carp Ridge aquifer is

already overburdened. Regardless whether it's five or 40 homes going in, it will cause restrictions. There will be bush parties and the potential for fires."

Webber explained the nicely balanced ecosystem of the ridge will most certainly be destroyed by the impending development.

"Water levels will drop, natural resources will be destroyed and these cannot be restored. They will be lost forever," she concluded.

Kitchissippi Councillor Shawn Little thanked Webber for her presentation but thought the Carp Ridge matter was better suited to another of the city's committees.

"I thank you for coming, but I think this matter should go before the Planning and Economic Development Committee," he said. "You should make a presentation there as well because they are the ones that are going to be making the final decision."

Allan Joyner was another resident and society member who spoke on his concerns with the Carp Ridge subdivision.

"Martha got me interested in this and I live just

down the road from the site of the proposed subdivision, so there's an opportunity for this to impact me directly," he said. "It forced me to invest some personal time and company time in the cause."

Joyner said he'd prepared a web site for the Carp Ridge Society ([www.carpridge.ca](http://www.carpridge.ca)) and had discovered a new study prepared by the Mississippi Valley Conservation Authority (MVCA). The study, A Hydrogeological Investigation and Terrain Analysis study, is completed for each proposed site development and go to the planner. It is completed by hydrogeologists.

"It's important to draw the line. I'm not against the developer, but he didn't do his due diligence when he purchased the land," Joyner remarked. "If Martha hadn't started this and gotten involved when she did, the subdivision may have already happened."

The developer has said that wells won't be impacted, but Joyner said that simply isn't true. "My well surrounds the ridge on three sides. It's 75 feet and I have surface water," he said.

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"They're (developers) wrong when they say it won't have an impact. People are going to lose their wells and their property value. You can't reasonably prove on this land what will or won't happen. No one's connecting the dots on this."

"Unless we get all of you guys (city council) to stand up, it's going to happen. I'm not saying I'm against development. I'm just against this particular development. Other municipalities have taken cases like this prior to their draft plan approval and stopped

them," Joyner added.

He said concerned residents won't be silenced on the issue.

"We intend to hold everybody's feet to the fire and hope it doesn't slide through the cracks. There are too many things being taken for granted," he said. "We could have easily had a Walkerton here. I'm not being an alarmist, but it's true."

"If we get enough pressure behind us like our councillor, who is in favour of this. He thinks that the developer should go ahead as businessmen, which he is himself, but I don't think

that's a good enough reason," he added.

Little reminded Joyner that his councillor, Eli Chantiry was not in attendance at the meeting and shouldn't be talked about if he wasn't there to defend himself.

"The councillor is being talked about and he's not here and in on the actual presentations to defend himself and that's not right," Little said.

"In all fairness, he isn't here so there should be no discussion about that," chair and Cumberland councillor Rob Jellett said. "But it is with the help of

your councillor that you see where this goes."

Kanata councillor Peggy Feltmate said it's hard for new councillors to address issues that have been ongoing for years.

"It's one of the most frustrating things as a new councillor to come in on decisions made many, many years ago prior to being a councillor," she said.

"These are important issues that shouldn't be ignored," she added.

Katherine Willow of the Carp Ridge Naturopathic Centre presented the committee with a slideshow of

the types of vegetation and animal species that will be destroyed by the impending subdivision.

Councillors thought the slideshow proved effective and gave them an idea of the beauty of the ridge.

"Thank you, this gives us a picture of what the ridge is like and what will be lost," Jellett said.

Before the close of the meeting, Little told the audience that it didn't have to be their ward councillor supporting them.

"As long as you have support from any city councillor, the matter can go further. It doesn't have to be

your own councillor," he said.

With the support of a councillor and if they ask for it, the city would be able to hold a public information meeting for the Carp Ridge Society and residents.

It would be a meeting to explain process issues and the progress of the subdivision, rather than a venue for public input on the serious harm the subdivision will have on the natural ecosystem of the Carp Ridge.

For more information on the Carp Ridge Society and background on the Carp Ridge subdivision, visit [www.carpridge.ca](http://www.carpridge.ca).