

TRCA??land grab? concerns Sinclair

Ian Sinclair held a round table recently to discuss what some constituents see as ?basic blackmail and extortion? from the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA).

?Landowners and farmers are being held ransom by the TRCA,? was the message given Sinclair. ?And no one on our council is doing anything to stop it!?

Sinclair had to agree that the TRCA is ?abusing its own rules and regulations in order to acquire more lands.?

?Farmers selling their properties in response to Town led urban planning are being told they must give the TRCA large portions of the land that the Authority considered sensitive,? he said.

?There is nothing in the mandate of the TRCA, or in their regulations, that gives them the right to demand these properties for free? Sinclair stated. ?But our current council has turned a blind eye to the process.?

He cited Section 21 (c) of the Conservation Authorities Act, which provides for TRCA to acquire by purchase, lease or otherwise and to expropriate any land. There is no power to take land from Caledon landowners for free, they must pay for it, he observed.

?The landowners should be able to gain approvals for severances or development permits without arbitrary and illegal demands for their lands without compensation,? Sinclair commented.

There is no record that TRCA manages lands they own better than private citizens.

He said that Caledon landowners, many of them farmers, are losing hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars in private equity to this very unfair practice.

?Someone has to stand up for the landowners? Sinclair stated. ?I don't know why it hasn't happened yet.?