INNOVATIVE PLANNING SOLUTIONS

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June 24th, 2025

Mayor Coughlin and Township Council
2231 Nursery Road
Minesing, Ontario L9X 1A8

Attention: Mayor Coughlin and Council

Re: Comments on Midhurst Landowners Group Submission and Ongoing Barrie/Springwater Boundary Discussions

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On behalf of 2252841 Ontario Inc. (Paul Sadlon), Innovative Planning Solutions is submitting comments regarding the June 2nd, 2025 correspondence from the Midhurst Landowners Group (MLG) and to provide Council with an update on our project located at 742 Bayfield Street. The subject property and surrounding land uses can be reviewed under Figure 1.

Figure 1: Subject Property and Surrounding Lands

647 WELHAM ROAD, UNIT 9A, BARRIE ONTARIO L4N 0B7

3800 STEELES AVENUE, UNIT 200, VAUGHAN, ONTARIO L4L 4G9

TEL: (705) 812-3281 FAX: (705) 812-3438 EMAIL: INFO@IPSCONSULTINGINC.COM

On December 20, 2023, Council unanimously approved Springwater Village, a new master planned community focused on wellness and affordability for its residents and the Township of Springwater. This new community houses a range of people in diverse housing typologies, creating an inclusive and accessible living environment. Outside of the new residential community, commercial space focuses on medical service uses which will form a Village Campus fronting Bayfield Street. The Village Campus will also include a year round farmers market facility that can host a number of community associations and activities.

On January 15th, 2024, an application was submitted to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing under MZO-2023-002, requesting Provincial approval of the Council endorsed master plan (Figure 2). Since that time, the Province has remained very clear that a decision on our MZO application is contingent upon confirmation of available water and wastewater capacity. The proposal includes a total of 2000 residential units, including both affordable and attainable options, with commercial space and community uses.

Figure 2: Master Plan

Since Council endorsed the MZO, Springwater and Barrie have been engaged in boundary discussions to address growth management objectives that could benefit both municipalities.

On May 9th, 2025, the City of Barrie and Township of Springwater released key principles that would establish a new partnership between the two municipalities. The City of Barrie has offered to extend municipal water and wastewater services to a portion of the Township of Springwater, which would include the Springwater Village development. These lands would remain in the Township of Springwater in perpetuity and could be developed immediately. In exchange for cross border servicing, the Township would transfer supplementary lands to the City of Barrie to be included within their urban structure.

The Township has also received correspondence from the MLG outlining an alternate servicing and expansion plan that would see no realignment between Barrie and Springwater, keeping all of the lands within the Township, and servicing provided through an expansion to the Midhurst water and wastewater planned infrastructure which would include lands to the east and south of the current settlement area boundary.

As you can appreciate, the objective of my client is to assess both available servicing options in order to make a determination which option provides the most economical and timely service connection. In reviewing the June 2, 2025 correspondence from the MLG we would note the following:

- Other than an email exchange between the period of January 29-30, 2025, the Midhurst Landowners Group has not been in contact with the owner or any member of his consulting team.
- In was clear during that communication that our interest would be to review both servicing options to determine the most viable servicing solution for Springwater Village to proceed in a timely and economical manner.
- If the MLG proposed a servicing solution that would affect individual landowners, communication from the MLG to each landowner should have been necessary. This has not taken place.

Our engineering team has had an opportunity to consider both servicing options and after careful consideration and review, we would like Council to be aware that we support the servicing option through the City of Barrie. It is our opinion that the May 9th, 2025 shared principles proposal issued jointly by the Township of Springwater and City of Barrie can provide an immediate response to the ongoing Province mandate of building more homes faster.

The City of Barrie solution provides guaranteed services, with existing infrastructure in close proximity to the subject lands. Servicing through Barrie is considered the most economical and timely option to allow Springwater Village to proceed in a time when housing needs to be shovel ready, not a decade or more from now.

The consideration for servicing through the Midhurst infrastructure leaves many unknowns, particularly when the sewage plant to which the expansions are being proposed is not even constructed nor in the Townships possession. Although the MLG has worked with the Township of Springwater since 2006, a limited number of new homes have been constructed in comparison to the 10,000 units that are approved. There remains significant infrastructure and construction that will take many years, if not decades, to accomplish what is already approved under the Secondary Plan. This is not the time to consider expanding infrastructure that doesn't even exist.

The Township of Springwater can benefit from a new working partnership with the City of Barrie that aligns with the Province's goals for more homes built faster. We believe this is the responsible course of action for both parties. We are excited that our development will remain in the Township of Springwater and obtain the necessary services from the City of Barrie that can deliver our project swiftly. We will continue to advance the necessary applications to implement Council's support for Springwater Village and are hopeful that both municipalities will work cooperatively towards a better future.

Respectfully submitted,
INNOVATIVE PLANNING SOLUTIONS

Darren Vella, B.Sc., MCIP, RPP
President and Director of Planning

CC:
Paul Sadlon, 2252841 Ontario Inc.
Nick Millington, Tatham Engineering
Chris Russell, Director of Planning and Development
Trevor Harvey, Director of Public Works
Basil Clarke, Warden, County of Simcoe
Mark Aitken, CAO, County of Simcoe
Rob Elliot, General Manager Engineer, Planning and Environment
Hon. Doug Downey, MPP for Barrie-Springwater-Oro Medonte & Attorney General
Jeff Schelling, Office of the Provincial Land and Development Facilitator