

To: Town of Mississippi Mills Municipal Office:  
All Councillors, Planning Staff, Roads and Public Works Staff  
3131 Old Perth Road, R.R. #2,  
PO Box 400 Almonte, Ontario K0A 1A0

CC: County of Lanark, c/o Planning Approvals Department,  
Engineering Building, 99 Christie Lake Road (Sunset Blvd.),  
Perth ON K7H 3E2

Re: County file number 09-T-06001 Plan of Subdivision (Spring St Ext Proposal)

This letter is a formal submission to the above offices. It is to be considered alongside all submitted documents regarding the Spring St. Extension Proposal (file number #). Also, please include this letter as well as all other written submissions concerning this file # in the agenda and notes package that goes to every Councillor and staff member in attendance at the scheduled 30 January Public Planning Meeting at the Old Town Hall in Almonte.

People from all parts of Mississippi Mills attended the Spring Street Extension 'ad hoc' Committee meeting (on Saturday, 20 January) including the Mayor, the Chair of the Planning Committee, five other councillors, business owners and community volunteers from Pakenham, Ramsay and Almonte, and members of the Mississippi Mills Residents' Association (MMRA) and other official Committees of Council. These people met to review the proposed Spring Street subdivision plan (file # above) and amendments to the zoning by-law scheduled for review at the Planning Committee meeting on January 30th.

The Mississippi Mills Residents' Association is a solid association with a nearly 4 year history of political "watchdog" practices. The MMRA is particularly interested and involved in planning and development in Mississippi Mills. The MMRA has roughly 200 members and also maintains a Yahoo online discussion forum and archive where, currently, 49 members share and communicate opinions and recommendations about Council policies and decisions.

**The MMRA wishes to fully endorse and reinforce the comments and suggestions that the Spring Street Extension 'ad hoc' Committee put forward at its community meeting and submitted in written form to the offices listed above (see David Baril's 24 January emailed submission on behalf of the Spring Street Extension 'ad hoc' Committee).**

The specifics of the Spring Street Extension 'ad hoc' Committee recommendations (also the recommendations of the MMRA) are roughly described in the following six points:

1. Mississippi Mills' Design Guidelines have not been developed or finalized. It is critical that these guidelines are used to evaluate the Spring Street development proposal which will add 30% to Almonte's population over the next 20 years.

**Recommendation:** Do not rezone or approve the Spring Street Subdivision until the Design Guidelines Committee has completed its work. One example of an excellent design principle: streets and houses should be oriented in a primarily east west direction to maximize the use of sunlight for heat and light in the homes.

2. A traffic study needs to be designed and completed before this development can be approved. There are two schools along the main access road to the proposed Spring Street development. There are other already overloaded intersections in the area. The proposed Spring Street subdivision = 508 units = approx 1270 people (probably many more) = loads of traffic.

**Recommendation:** Do not rezone or approve the Spring Street Subdivision until a full traffic study of the area has been completed, assessed and accepted - including the necessity of a new access road via Patterson / Old Almonte Road to the Appleton Side Road to alleviate much of the traffic in the school zones and along Patterson. The necessity of this road is such that it is to be built prior to any development - to ensure that construction vehicles can access the proposed development along another route away from the schools.

3. The Riverfront is one of Almonte's greatest assets and there is an opportunity for the proposed Spring Street development to showcase the river - building on the current downtown riverwalk and the in-progress Martin Street Lookout.

**Recommendation:** Dedicate the riverfront to a major park over and above in size to what is legally necessary to buffer the Environmental Hazard and other designations at the waterfront area. This park needs full road frontage (i.e. with houses on the other side of the road) to maximize public access and alleviate safety concerns. This park needs to have careful design input - the Mississippi River is the only river to enjoy and protect in Almonte - forever. Do not rezone or approve the Spring Street Subdivision until all riverfront requirements and requirements for a riverfront park are satisfied.

4. There is a need for residential Density and commercial land use in all proposed development in Almonte - this is supported by the Mississippi Mills COP in order for residential growth to support local commercial areas and encourage pedestrian access. The current plan for subdivision of Spring Street does not encourage pedestrian traffic leading to downtown and contravenes the COP. The Community Official Plan mandates 70% R1 and 30% R2 (and above) - the Spring Street proposal has proposed a much higher density. The proposed plan is too heavily weighted in favour of HIGH density, which doesn't reflect the current Almonte mix, nor the wishes of Almonte residents.

**Recommendation:** Put higher density units next to the arterial road (Patterson) in order to minimize traffic into the rest of the community. Include an area zoned for commercial use (e.g. a convenience store) to enable pedestrian and local purchasing/access. Decrease the proposed 4 storey buildings to the COP mandated 3 storey maximum and any building adjacent to the river or river road should not exceed 2 storeys. Include a number of smaller parks within the subdivision. Do not rezone or approve the Spring Street Subdivision as currently proposed.

5. Mixed use and mixed zoning is needed for all phases of the proposed plan of subdivision and for this reason the entire plan of subdivision must be designed and approved in one parcel - not in phases. The concept of "floating zoning" has no legal basis in the Community Official Plan and is fraught with the potential for future abuse, if it is allowed to be applied now to future, unapproved phases.

**Recommendation:** To avoid creating concentrated "ghettos" of a single type of housing, do not zone a large R4 block as is currently proposed. Mixed zones and use must be planned across the entire development to match the mixed residential character of current Almonte. A greater consideration and emphasis on R1 zoning is needed. **Reject the zoning amendment as submitted at the 30 January meeting.**

6. An independent review of the engineering studies, particularly in relation to water and sewer, is required. There is clear evidence that the Spring Street pumping station is at or beyond capacity and an upgrade required prior to putting additional load on the system.

**Recommendation:** Do not rezone or approve the Spring Street Subdivision until an independent review of all water and sewer proposals has been satisfied.

The Spring Street Extension 'ad hoc' Committee has prepared an alternative concept plan to present to MM Council at the meeting of January 30th. This same, MM community-produced, plan was presented at the community meeting of Jan 20th, and the MMRA endorses this plan as a viable and improved choice over the Spring Street plan of subdivision (at file # above) that is currently be considered for approval by MM Council at the developer's request.

The developer-proposed Spring Street plan of subdivision puts an unmanageable strain on our community's physical and social infrastructure and our community vision. One developer working behind the scenes for four years has not earned rights of consideration equal to that of hundreds of tax-paying citizens who have contributed to Mississippi Mill's social and economic growth over the thirty year life of the Gale subdivision, nor to those other hundreds of taxpayers scattered across the Municipality that oppose the proposed plan for Spring Street subdivision and zoning.

Sincerely,

Arnie Francis  
President  
Mississippi Mills Residents' Association (MMRA)  
*"Striving to promote a shared vision for Mississippi Mills"*  
[www.mmra.ca](http://www.mmra.ca)

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