

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NEW HAMBURG, ONTARIO - MARCH 22, 2024 – Farmers and landowners of 770+ acres of prime agricultural land in Wilmot Township have received offers from a US-based consulting company, acting on behalf of the Region of Waterloo, to purchase their land. There’s an underlying intention to rezone this land for industrial use and embark on a significant development project. The scale of this project is so immense that discussions about it have been silenced within the township and regional council levels. The 770 acres of land is situated northeast of the intersection of Nafziger and Bleams roads in Wilmot Township. This prime agricultural land, currently zoned for agricultural use, is slated for expropriation is to be rezoned for industrial purposes. “We should harbor deep concerns about the impending developments in this area. Both the Township and the Regional Council, entities entrusted to advocate for their constituents, have been conspicuously muted,” stated Alfred Lowrick, representing the landowners group. “It appears that provincial or federal authorities are concealing significant information from us, likely aware that the community would vehemently oppose their plans. We demand transparency and assurance that our land remains safeguarded against whatever ominous project looms ahead.” “The Township of Wilmot staff and council are not supporting us, and the Region of Waterloo councillors won’t communicate with us either. Something’s not right. We’re not just being mistreated as farmers and landowners, but the whole community is being left in the dark about what’s going on,” added Stewart Snyder, a landowner and farmer. Moreover, the proposed rezoning for industrial purposes poses a serious threat to the region’s water supply. The Waterloo Region continues to rely on underground aquifers for 80% of the region’s water. This area is not only a major supply of drinking water for the Waterloo Region, but has two creeks that flow into the Nith River. The Industrial development of this land can have severe repercussions on groundwater and water resources.

Lowrick also noted that “our group is deeply concerned because this action by the Region of Waterloo is so incongruent with so many of their environmental, sustainability and climate change initiatives - as well as inconsistent with all long-term official planning. This absurd location of this industrial site could destroy our Region’s visionary Countryside Line concept and make it impossible to reach essential Green House Gas emission reductions to meet our federal, provincial and regional Paris Accord commitments.”

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