

We are Dean and Dinah Scammell living at [REDACTED] since 1993.

[REDACTED] home phone

We are opposed to neglecting or 'naturalizing' the walkway for many reasons and concerns.

Walkway is road allowance and public land and Woodlot is city property. Public use and liabilities. Please keep a long lasting, safe walkway.

We are concerned that doing nothing today means a much larger cost in the future because problems will necessitate more complex and major work.

Doing it properly today so that it endures as an asset into future may be more economical for the long run or avoids catastrophes.

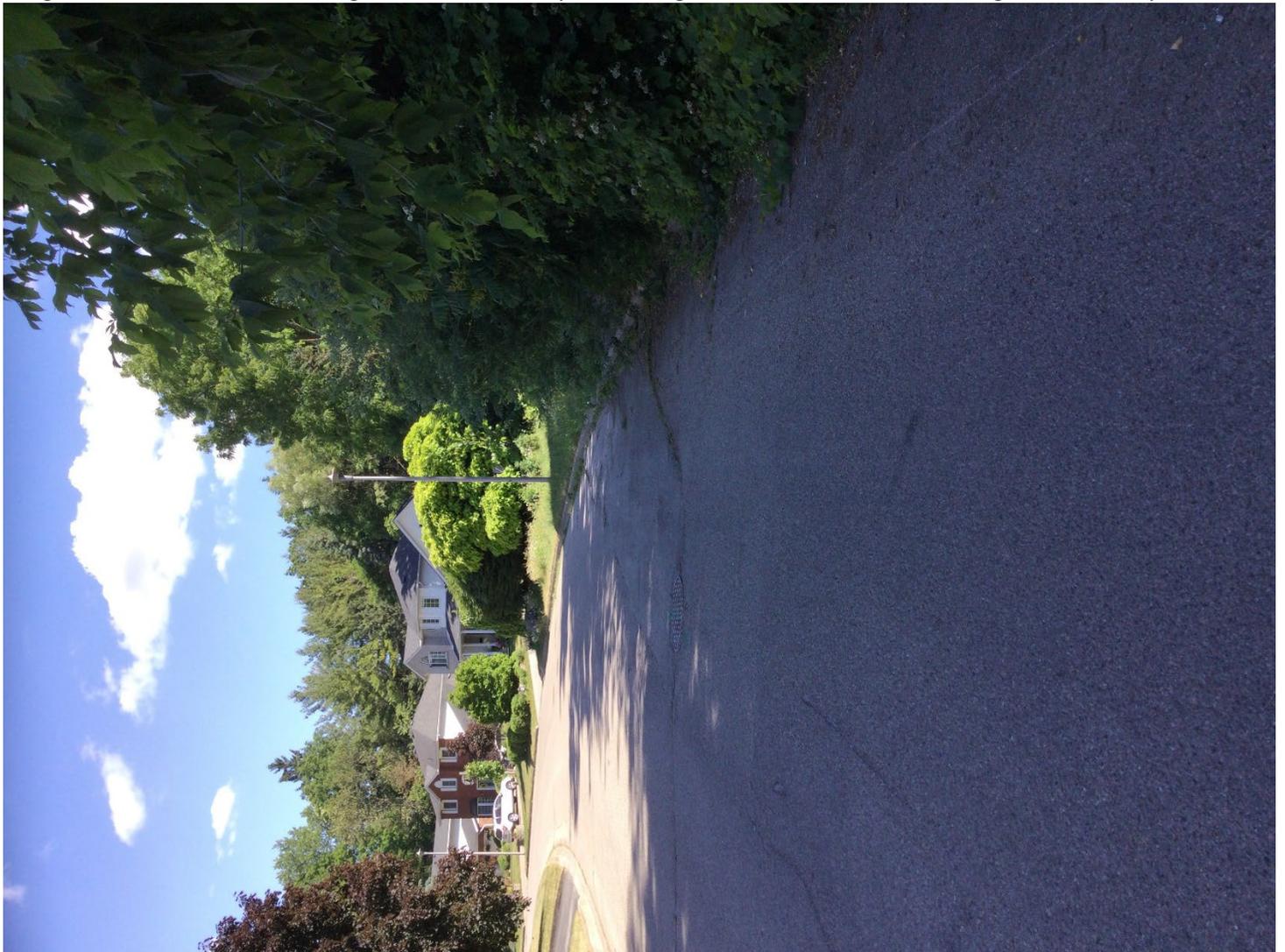
1. emergency escape.

If fire, explosion or strange catastrophe with nearby railway forced the need to evacuate, the stairs allow people and pets to walk out of a dead end trap. Backyards are very steep and fences block.

2. Visibility.

Can't see anyone or any animal on walkway nor step out of Woodlot anywhere. Teenagers skateboarded off the walkway in front of hood of my car years ago. They were as shocked as I was. I always drove as far left as possible feeling uncomfortable about not seeing the walkway and thank goodness I did. The flora is so dense and branches over the roads scrape vehicles.

Deer, foxes, coy dogs, ... live in entire neighbourhood and run across roads. Drivers cannot react when any living being is right in front of their car suddenly. Silent e-cars don't help pedestrians nor animals either. No sound warning. More dangerous in future. Those teenagers learned that day, but next generation has to learn and might not be lucky.



Can you even see the walkway?

3. lack of visibility reduces safety. Dangers?

Inside overgrown, dense healthy Woodlot areas we cannot see anything. One nasty person is enough to create tragedy. Anything can happen. If we can see that a human, child or adult, or animal is in distress, we can assist. Visibility is protection. Increased usage is protection.



4. Covid and future infectious diseases increased the need for walking families. Humans take shortest distance. It is a long way around for students walking to/from schools or seniors getting groceries at Sobeys. Only grocery store this side of river in Cambridge ? New subdivision of 1000 or so homes off Blenheim may want to walk through in future. Lots of future taxpayers. Seniors who can no longer drive, can walk up stairs that are well built and last long time. If high costs of fuel and climate concerns want more people to choose to walk, eliminating this choice is not wise. Year round usage is also better and more impact.

5. Over decades, wheelbarrows of yard waste dumped everything in Woodlot area. The walkway/steps and Woodlot are one continuous entity now. Public access for humans and wildlife. Not only accessed by residents living on street but by increasing numbers living in neighbourhood. Noxious weeds, invasive species, garden perennials, non native species, poisonous plants, all flourish for decades now. Original flora fauna wiped out? Rare species Woodlot originally meant to protect has dried out because swamp/marsh with droughts changed. One hogweed seed or plant dumped in there would hide among all the other greenery. Be well fed by the rich built up soil.

6. Water runoff. Vertical slopes. Landslides. Major downpours. Soil erosion. Anyone can slip on slopes. All properties with steep slopes have water problems eventually. Several neighbours had insurance claims. Liability or lawsuits for city or more tax burden is not wise direction to go if avoidable. Uncared for cliff, could it ever result in the increasing downpours flooding houses or collapsing onto any house at base of another? I have no intention of causing trouble or anyone. Doing something is excellent and necessary. But elevation difference and water running down is guaranteed, therefore, proper enduring maintenance will always be needed.



7. Buildings, asphalt, resculpting the topography to build houses years ago, wiped out original streams and tiny ponds. Natural? Human manipulation already altered the natural original habitats and nature and wildlife had to adapt. Water piped off higher points directly over those below, not only thaws freezes, original species protected gone?

8. Not far from our neighbourhood, I am aware of residents stopping people from entering people's backyards. Robbery attempts foiled by men who knew who actually lived in specific homes. Hidden spots can help escape or not impede criminals.

9. Animal trappers have parked and released animals into this wood lot. Will cell phone video from now on.

Some of this sounds far fetched. However, seeing tornado start to form just west of the Woodlot years ago, experiencing wind sheer damages and knowing insurance claims existed, gas was immediately shut off by neighbour after one storm because we saw it was pulled away from the house and sheared by fallen fence. Luck has existed many times already. Luck doesn't last forever. Wise long lasting planning and decisions for all living beings and their habitats is what I am asking to be considered. Not good at public speaking. But I will talk to many neighbours and ask if someone is already a delegate. Or has petition started. In meantime, I hope you accept our concerns based on some past events for future protections. Avoid pain, harm or future expenses liabilities.

I have not had chance to talk to neighbours yet. But will. Too many oncology related appointments.

Thank you for listening
Dinah