

REPORT TO SYNOD REGARDING THE PROPOSED SALE OF PART OF THE CANTERBURY HILLS PROPERTY

An Overview

The Canterbury Hills property on Lions Club Road in Ancaster, owned by the Diocese of Niagara, is the site for two primary operations; the summer camping program and a hospitality ministry that entails rentals of cabins and buildings on the camp side in the spring and autumn as well as year-round rentals of the Conference Centre, (Bagnall Lodge). These operations are managed by an Interim Executive Director, The Reverend Canon Paddy Doran, and overseen by an entity separate from the Diocese, the Canterbury Hills Board of Directors.

In addition to the short-term hospitality rentals, the Canterbury Hills Board rents two buildings to Adventureworks! Associates Inc. whose mandate is: We partner with our clients to create innovative adventure programs and facilities which enable people to develop greater understanding of themselves, build healthier relationships, exercise more effective leadership, and make a positive impact in their communities. Adventureworks! rents the camp side regularly for training events, and they maintain and add to (at no cost to the Diocese or the Board) the nationally renowned ropes course/adventure equipment which is owned by the Diocese.

Camp Canterbury Hills has been a vital part of the Christian formation of thousands of young people over its 50 plus years, offering a safe community in which campers and staff alike are nurtured in their faith journey, learn how to live in relationship in Christian community, deepen their values, and explore different practices of faith. Being part of the Camp Canterbury Hills experience changes people's lives; shaping them through childhood, adolescence and beyond. While the camping program remains profitable, the numbers have diminished over the past several years. With the hiring of a new Camp Director, and an increased focus on marketing, the Board hopes to fill more cabins this summer.

The hospitality ministry has diminished significantly over the past decade. Parishes no longer use either the Conference Centre or the camp side and the local school boards, previously key users, no longer rent space. Other users find that the lack of private rooms with en suite bathrooms makes the facility unappealing and so are no longer using the Conference Centre. This loss of income has meant that the Conference Centre is no longer able to support itself; in fact, its current operations put it significantly in the red every month as fixed costs continue to accrue. A concerted attempt a number of years ago to update the facility was thwarted by the Niagara Escarpment Commission who will not permit expansion of the current footprint nor a building height increase.

The diminished Camp participant numbers and the spiraling decline in Conference Centre rentals, coupled with increasing property maintenance costs, have led to a growing deficit position each year resulting in the Diocese of Niagara holding an increasing amount of debt. As of February 2014, that amount was \$379,309. The current Board of Directors has undertaken the development of a new strategic plan with the goal of increasing use and revenue, and is developing strategies around marketing, programming, staffing, and customer service. The Bishop indicated at Synod 2013 that he was unwilling for the Diocese to continue carrying the Canterbury Hills debt and encouraged the Board's efforts.

Late in the spring of 2013, the Interim Executive Director of Camp Canterbury Hills had an exploratory conversation with the Executive Director of the Hamilton Conservation Authority (“HCA”) regarding the possibility of the HCA purchasing some portion of the Canterbury Hills Property. As this unfolded, the conversation was referred to the Synod Office as the property owner and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Synod and the HCA in October 2013 (approved by Synod Council).

Further negotiations have resulted in the Agreement of Purchase and Sale and the Property Occupancy Agreement, both of which documents we expect to have before Synod on April 5. Both documents are currently being finalized by the lawyers for both parties.

In essence, the agreement provides that:

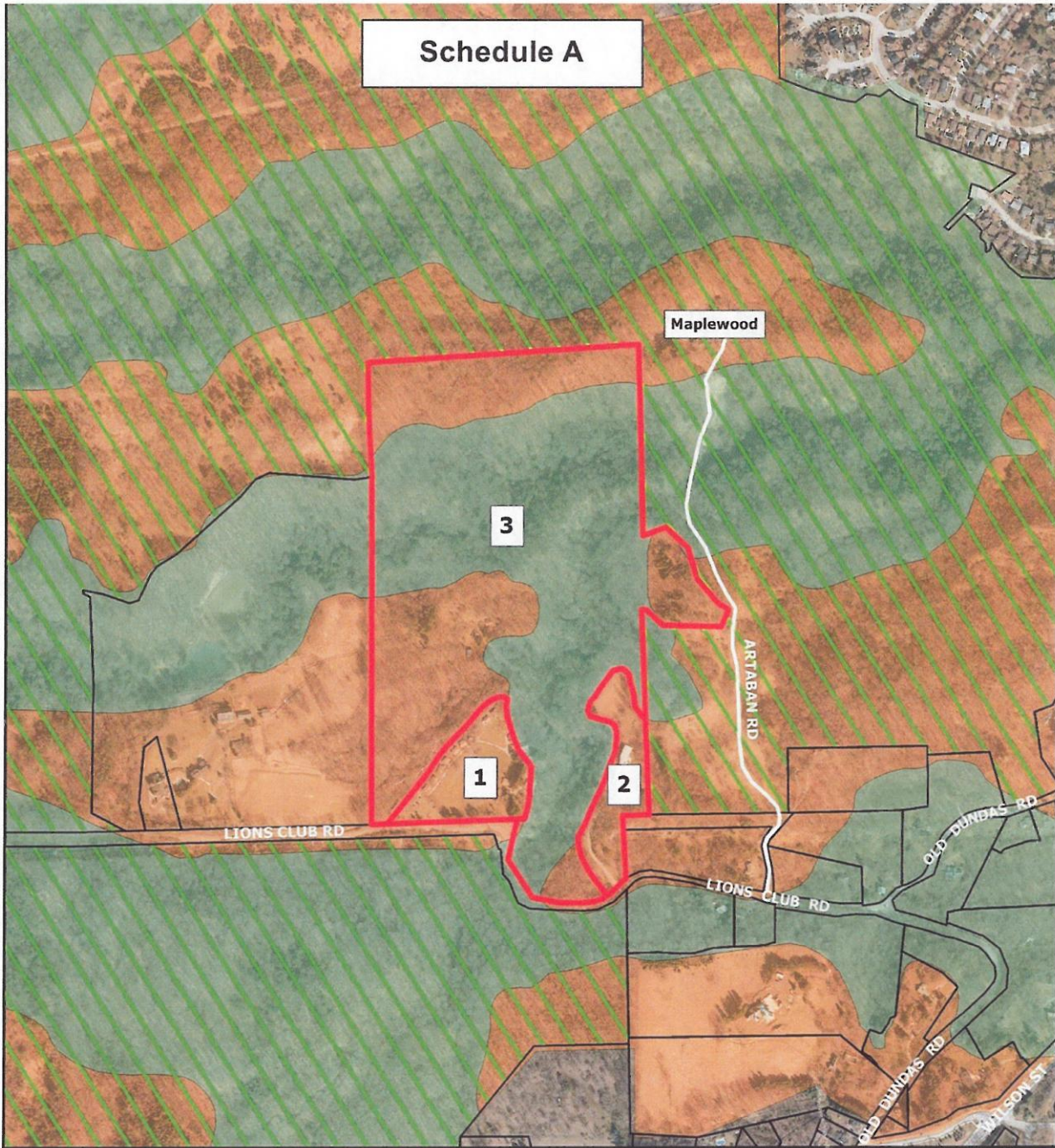
- HCA will undertake, at its cost, the severance of the 72 acre parcel of land known as Canterbury Hills into three distinct parcels as per the attached diagram.
- Parcels 1 (camp side flat upper level) and 2 (Conference Centre/Bagnall Lodge), each being roughly six acres, will remain with the Diocese. The Chapel and the road/trail leading to it will remain with the Diocese.
- Parcel 3 will be sold to the HCA for \$200,000.
- The Diocese will continue to have full access to the property being purchased by HCA. This access is known as “quiet enjoyment” and permits the use of the land in every way in which both Canterbury Hills and renters are currently using the property as long as the Diocese is the owner of Canterbury Hills. The meadow cabins will be on HCA property but Canterbury Hills will have exclusive and undisturbed use of the cabins at all times.
- Adventureworks! Associates Inc. will continue to have the same use of the property as they have enjoyed previously.
- HCA will provide land management for the acquired land for matters of hazardous tree removal, erosion, and watercourse management at its cost.
- The Diocese will provide land management for the parcels it retains at its cost.

This transfer is beneficial to the HCA because the acquisition of this property meets its mandate to conserve, restore and enhance watershed natural areas and ecological systems. In particular, the purchase allows the HCA to maintain a publicly-owned watercourse and corridor for wildlife that is currently private property.

The benefits to the Diocese are manifold; all of us as well as all the users/renters of the Canterbury Hills property will continue to enjoy the **full** use of the property without the worry about or cost of land maintenance; the Canterbury Hills debt to the Diocese is reduced by \$200,000; the Conference Centre (Bagnall Lodge) property is severed from the remaining property allowing the Diocese to sell that property; and finally, any rezoning required of that Conference Centre property (using the current footprint) will not be opposed by the HCA thus enhancing the value of the property to potential purchasers.

Respectfully submitted,

Canon Christyn Perkons, Director, Congregational Support & Development



Schedule A

Maplewood

3

1

2

LIONS CLUB RD




ARTABAN RD

OLD DUNDAS RD

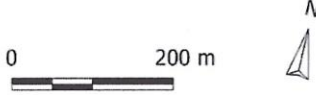
LIONS CLUB RD

OLD DUNDAS RD

HARRISON ST

 Subject Property	N.E.P. Designation
 H.C.A. Land (existing)	 Escarpment Natural
	 Escarpment Protection

CANTERBURY HILLS, Ancaster



Base Mapping supplied by the City of Hamilton, and the Ministry of Natural Resources.
 © 2012 Queen's Printer for Ontario, City of Hamilton and Teranet Land Information Services Inc. and its licensors.
 THIS IS NOT A PLAN OF SURVEY.
 May not be reproduced without permission.
 All information provided is believed to be accurate and reliable.
 We will make changes, updates and deletions as required and make every effort to ensure the accuracy and quality of the information provided.
 However, the Hamilton Conservation Authority assumes no responsibility for any errors or omissions and is not liable for any damages of any kind resulting from the use of, or reliance on, the information contained herein.