

April 26, 2023

Mayor Mark Sutcliffe & City Councillors  
110 Laurier Ave West  
Ottawa, ON  
K1P 1J1

**Subject: Tewin Clear Cut**

Dear Mayor Sutcliffe and Councillors,

ReImagine Ottawa wishes to express its strong dismay that the Tree Protection By-law did not prevent the massive clear cutting of 70 hectares and 25,000 trees in an area just outside the urban boundary -- an area covered by the By-law.

We urge that Council concur with the following direction given to staff by the Environment and Climate Change Committee:

1. "Direct staff to investigate and report back on potential changes to Exemption 82 (7) of the City's Tree Protection By-law to require landowners to obtain a formal exemption with evidence provided and communicate with neighbours, the local City Councillor and City staff prior to tree removals including where a permit is not required by By-law (e.g. where the activity is exempt from the provisions of By-law).
2. That the tree cutting incident near Tewin lands be referred to the Normal Farm Practices Protection Board."

The Normal Farm Practices Board, Section 6 of the Farming and Food Production Protection Act requires consideration as to whether the clear-cutting was carried on as part of an agricultural operation. It is important to note that the Ontario Agricultural Atlas reveals there are Class 5 soils on this land. Soils in this class have very severe limitations that restrict their capability to produce perennial forage crops. **Soils in Class 5 have such serious soil, climatic or other limitations that they are not capable of use for sustained production of annual field crops.**

As you are aware, forested wetlands occupied much of the cleared area. Only after clear-cutting was largely complete did the parties responsible claim that their intent was to engage in farming. In view of the lack of any evidence of the suitability of the land for farming and of the furtive nighttime deforestation by the owners, it seems likely that the area will either simply lie idle, its wildlife value destroyed, with little or no value for food or timber production, or will be developed for low density, car-centric residential uses.

We strongly urge Council to take this into account when determining whether the City's interpretation of the non-application of the Tree By-law in this case is consistent with the Farming and Food Production Protection Act.

The Tewin incident also illuminates the need to investigate why enforcement of the Tree Protection By-law failed and to make whatever amendments are required to prevent a similar event in future.

We sincerely hope that you will interpret the Act in favour of the by-law, improve it, and to hold those responsible to account.

Sincerely,

Richard Moon  
Chair/for

**REIMAGINE**  
**OTTAWA**

Cc Normal Farm Practices Protection Board