

June 8, 2015

*Michael and Sharron Pizzuto
Woodbridge, ON*

Dear Chairman and Members of Regional Council,

We understand that the issue of turning restrictions for the Weston Downs community is on the agenda for the upcoming York Region Committee of the Whole meeting on June 11th, 2015.

As original owners of our home for the last 25.5 years, we have been actively involved with traffic calming in Weston Downs. In addition, my husband, Dr. Michael Pizzuto is a practicing family physician servicing this community since 1987. We are writing today to express our support for the turning restrictions being proposed for the community of Weston Downs, which were designed to address the traffic infiltration problem that exists because of a poorly designed road network in the community and the traffic congestion caused by the intersection at Rutherford and Weston Road, which is over capacity and cannot deal with the existing traffic volume.

As you are aware solutions for traffic calming and reducing infiltration through Weston Downs have a direct impact on Santa Barbara Place which was altered to become a short, narrow central link of an extremely busy Hour Glass design that was unfortunately created by the city's last minute change in the intended street design to permit a new subdivision build up that had not been adequately planned for. We have struggled long and hard to bring about change that would effectively reduce the volume and speed of traffic on Santa Barbara Place. It has been extremely frustrating to date to not have an effective solution over the progressive escalation of traffic volumes and speeds on our street which have resulted in numerous accidents and damage of property, and increasing concern for our safety, the safety of our children and pedestrians on our street.

We would like to point out some facts that become critically important when a road moves from the expected and typical volumes of similarly designed roads of 300-500 vehicles/day to that of the present day on Santa Barbara which is in excess of 4000-5000 vehicles/day!! Santa Barbara is a short street connecting the north and south of Weston Downs. The fronts of our homes are not set back as far as those homes on the collector streets in our subdivision and the road is substantially narrower. So the residents of Santa Barbara live closer to the cars on our street!!

I would like to provide some perspective into the volume of vehicles on Santa Barbara on a daily basis.

- 1) 5000 vehicles /day X 365 days/year = 1,825,000 vehicle trips past our door every year.

- 2) The peak hour rates of 300-400 vehicles per hour translates into 1 car passing every 8 – 12 seconds. This is despite 3 stop signs.
- 3) The average speed is 38 - 44 km/hr with 3 speed humps and a central stop sign on Santa Barbara. Calculated average speeds are just averages; even if 10 -15 % of the cars are speeding faster than the posted rate of 40 km/hr that translates into 500 -700 vehicles/day going dangerously fast on a street not designed to even be a collector road. That translates into 182,000-273,000 vehicles per year. This doesn't make us feel safe when the vehicles are 30 feet outside our front door!

To summarize,

1. Santa Barbara was never originally designed to be a collector road, but it has become the highest use collector road in Weston Downs in view of the hourglass configuration and the congestion on Weston and Rutherford roads.
2. Traffic volumes far exceed the accepted local road standards and unfairly exceed the more typical residential road standards that many of our neighbours in our community of Weston Downs are able to enjoy. The debate for change has become one of their convenience being more important than our safety and comfort!
3. Infiltration rates and cut through traffic far exceeds that maximum accepted threshold standard and is in violation of the planning and municipal bylaws for a local road.

With the high volumes of 1.5-1.8 million vehicles / year going up and down our street and narrowly designed road the probability of a tragic event occurring grows with each passing year! In medicine we say "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure"!!

We cannot help but question how it can be ascertained that Santa Barbara Place's concerns about the safety and comfort are unwarranted or need no further solution, when it has exceeded all the safety and comfort thresholds set by the city.

The changes that are long overdue to address safety and traffic volumes on Santa Barbara are needed immediately to protect the residents of Weston Downs. Change will not happen if Santa Barbara needs the onerous high level support of the community which resides substantially within either ends of the hour glass design.

Might in numbers should not make right of an obvious wrong. The street is a design and safety issue, well recognized by the City as a serious flaw, and it is necessary that measures be put in place to redesign the traffic flow without further delay.

We support the long overdue turning restrictions as a graduated step to at least help reduce the traffic volumes during the peak hours of the day on Monday to Friday.

Sincerely



Dr. Michael and Mrs. Sharron Pizzuto