To: Town of Blue Mountains Council Members (and relevant committees);
Mike Campbell, Construction Coordinator for the Town of Blue Mountain;
Vince Pugliese, Project Manager for MTE Consultants Inc.

Object: Peel Street Reconstruction between Highway 26 and Georgian Bay

Comments regarding this project:

Peel St N is a very small residential street that runs north of Highway 26 a few hundred meters downhill before it ends at the lake in a cul-de-sac. It is not a thoroughfare.

It serves two different kind of communities:

1. In the upper part, the new developments where land has been clear-cut, wide roads are paved to urban standard, there are yet no trees/bushes along the roads/sidewalk and there is no water access;
2. In the lower part, the "old" community with established gardens, thick bushes and tall trees, multiuse roads, where old and new cottages disappear behind greenery. These cottages have water access (direct or deeded water access if they are across the road on Cameron, or water access through membership if they are on Peel or Bay). The lower part has a rural feel that is very much prized by residents and visitors alike.

For this reconstruction project, it is very important to keep in mind that Peel St N (including the loop along Cameron St and 10th Line) does not lead to any public access to the lake, and does not contain any more land of any significant size to be developed. Therefore there is no reason why car traffic below the new developments would ever increase greatly.

Another important point to keep in mind is that with Cameron St, the Georgian trail and 10th Line, Peel St N creates a very quiet loop for joggers, walkers and dog walkers, all of which appreciate the fact that, for the most part, they don’t have to walk or run on concrete.

For the most part, the road component of the plan MTE option 5 makes sense: modify the hilltop for better visibility, extends the paved surface to the waterfront and underground storm water drainage, which will minimize the footprint of re-construction, and street trees to recreated a green corridor, slow traffic and shade the road for all summer users.

However, for the older community or lower part I, it is clear that the inclusion of sidewalks and lighting, at the very least between Cameron St and Georgian Bay should be reconsidered.

Signed July 25, 2019
• **Sidewalk north of Cameron into Peel St N cul-de-sac.**

Building a sidewalk in the Peel St N cul-de-sac (north of Cameron) is *overkill.* This part of Peel serves all of 3 cottages and the water treatment plant. There is — and there always will be — very little car traffic. On weekend, people ignoring the "No Exit" sign are mostly cyclists who want to have a quick view of the lake as there is nowhere to sit. Even when a pedestrian bridge is built across the river (which would be great), Peel St N will never be a tourist destination.

Such a sidewalk would have a down-slope of 6 degrees facing Georgian Bay and would be a perpetual liability in the winter with ice accumulation, freezing rain and north winds off the Bay.

This sidewalk would replace established trees/bushes/greenery and would compromise the beauty of the approach to Georgian Bay, the very reason why people are tempted to walk to the waterfront at this very spot.

• **Street lights north of Cameron into Peel St N cul-de-sac**

The two light standards proposed for this section of Peel St N are a nuisance. There are rarely any pedestrians or cyclists in this area at night. If they happen to come there, it's for dark-skies and star-viewing.

The water treatment building already has light. Any additional permanent lights are unwelcome, unnecessary and inconsiderate. It is hard to evaluate the value of being able to see a night sky and the ability to see the stars is hard to assess, but it's nevertheless important for wellbeing.

Keep in mind that most people who come to Thornbury to visit or to live are escaping bigger cities where the sky is constantly lit up. Being able to enjoy a real darkness is amazing and it would be a great loss if the bottom of Peel (where it opens to Georgian Bay), was to be lined with road lights.

• **Overall road design**

With the new developments, car-speed has become a problem on the upper part of Peel St. The fact that large chunk of land has been clear-cut along the road increases visibility and gives drivers a false sense of safety. It is human nature to want to speed up.

As we all know, intelligent road design — not speed limit sign — is what makes drivers unconsciously slow down.

Therefore there are many solutions, such as: make some part of the street visibly narrower, plant a green corridor again, etc. A green corridor would also provide a home for many small animals and would be much enjoyed by humans: it is much nicer to walk and cycle on a calm road.

Signed July 25, 2019
• **Properties on Peel St N, 214 part 1 and 2**

Lastly, I would like to attract your attention to the lot at the very end of Peel St (Corner of Peel St N and Bay), which is currently empty (Peel St Part 2). This is a very small serviced lot surrounded by trees and thick bushes, high on the ground with steep slopes on either side. All the options currently proposed that involve building ditches also involve expropriating 25% of this lot. Not only this would make this lot very unattractive to live on, but also it would be impossible to build a property as we had hoped. This is not acceptable. A new design with underground storm water drainage located under the road is easily feasible without destroying this corner lot and making it unlivable.

Along with Peel part 1, we bought these properties because the trees create a nice buffer from the road and from the noise. In the Fall and Summer, we see loads of bunnies, wild turkey and foxes among other wildlife. Removing this entire green buffer to build a useless sidewalk that leads to nowhere is not only illogical, but it feels us with anxiety.

In conclusion, people who bought a property in the lower community did it for the trees, for the green, for the dark sky at night, for the feeling of being in nature although close to services. Although the willingness of the City to improve the road is welcome, the lower part of Peel St N should not be designed like the upper part, the feel and the need are quite different and it should be respected.

As with many people, we left Toronto to buy properties in a rural community. An urban road standard is not what we bargained for and I would guess many people would say the same. There must be a way to pave a road and bury underground storm water drainage without destroying everything else.

Furthermore, removing greenery and trees to make more space for cars and concrete do not make any sense at the age of global warming.

Véronique Ponce and Tim Urbshas

Peel St North, part 1 and 2, Thornbury

Signed July 25, 2019