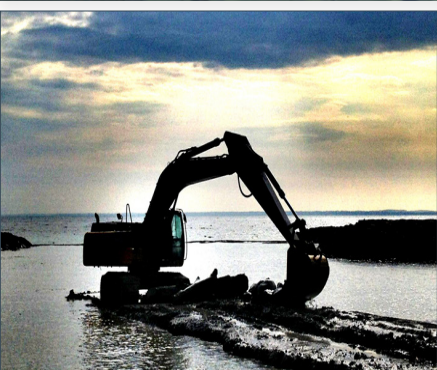


Implicating amenity migration in rural regions:

Examining land use planning policy through mega-developments in the Friday Harbour development on Lake Simcoe



School of Environmental Design and Rural Development
Rural Planning and Development
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To the faculty of Rural Planning and Development in the School of Environmental Design and Rural Development.

We the undersigned have read the Major Research Paper of:

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Titled:

Implicating amenity migration in rural regions:

Examining land use planning policy through mega-developments in the Friday Harbour development on Lake Simcoe

in its final form and have found that it meets the standards of the Rural Planning and Development M.Sc. program in all respects.

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Implicating amenity migration in rural regions:
Examining land use planning policy through mega-developments in the Friday Harbour development on Lake Simcoe

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Presented to
The Faculty of Graduate Studies

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Science

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List of Acronyms

EPA	Environmental Protection Area
GMS	Growth Management Strategy
GO	Government of Ontario Transit System (GO Transit)
IDA	Innisfil District Association
IT	Information Technologies
MMAH	Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
NIMBY	Not in my Backyard
OMB	Ontario Municipal Board
OP	Official Plan
OPA	Official Plan Amendment
PPS	Provincial Policy Statement
RIA	Residents of Innisfil Association
SAHA	Sandycove Acres Homeowners Association
SDA	Special Development Area

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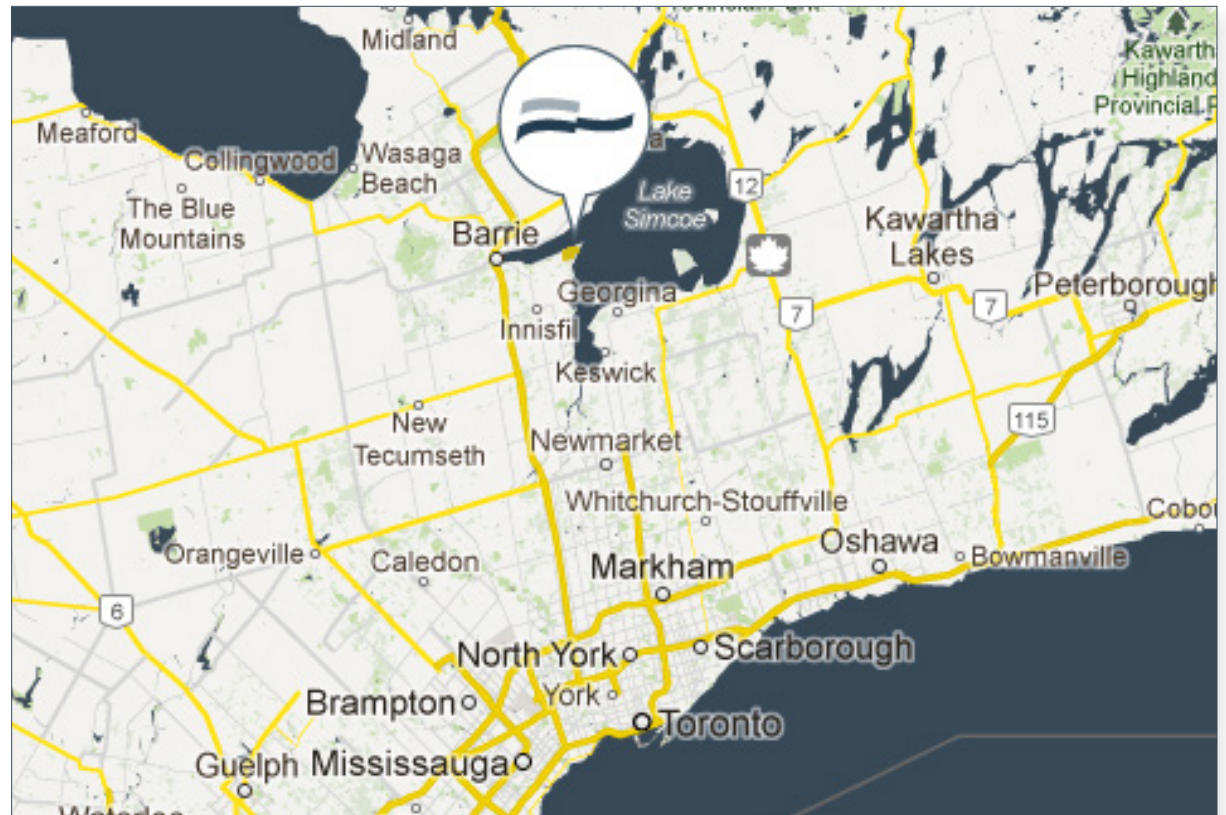
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“A thing is right if it tends to preserve the beauty, stability, and integrity of a community, it is wrong if it tends to do otherwise.”

Aldo Leopold, 1949

Abstract

Many rural communities are experiencing increasing numbers of new migrants to the area, including amenity migrants. Principal to these amenity migrants is the choice to settle on a permanent or intermittent basis in places that are perceived to be rich in environmental and cultural amenities. However, few land use planning strategies exist on behalf of planners to direct the placement of amenity migrants within communities, or mitigate the social implications of their development patterns on rural communities. Rarely are these developments planned for or undertaken from a community wide development perspective. Utilizing the Friday Harbour resort development located on Lake Simcoe as a case study, this paper examines the current land use planning practices surrounding amenity migration and mega-developments, while offering recommendations to identify and understand best practices for mega-development and amenity migration planning policies.



*Figure 1: Friday Harbour context map.
(Kentran, 2013)*

1.0 CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

Rural communities throughout North America are experiencing significant land use changes as large urban populations relocate to leisure and recreational areas. Capitalizing on this population influx, in rural areas there has been an increase of resort settlements in the form of mega-developments—“An investment project of great or monumental proportion, that require huge physical and financial resources, with a high profile within sponsoring firms and local politics” (McFadden 2006). A conflict exists as these mega-developments often attempt to create and commercialize an artificial deception of the existing community, such is the case at Friday Harbour. By branding the local lifestyle and market it to the masses, developers inherently change the way of life that drew people to the area in the first place (Chipeniuk, 2008). This change isn’t slow and organic, but sudden and almost overnight. To locals, this manufactured intimidation of community is often personal and deeply offensive. This amplifies the locals’ resentment towards such mega-development projects, while posing numerous challenges to many rural land use planning policies (Moss, 2008, Stolte, 2012).

While few planning tools and strategies currently exist to direct amenity

migration within rural communities, the associated impacts and repercussion of amenity led development strategies present a significant challenge to the social structure of rural communities (Banff Center, 2012). With commercial mega-developments offering overnight representations of existing rural destinations, communities often fall victim to the reform of their communities through this sudden influx of development (Gill, 2012). Rarely are these developments planned for or undertaken from a community wide development perspective, but more so from an isolated development perspective wherein developers seek to protect their investment through regulations which support their version of a rural idyll (Stefanick, 2012).

Friday Harbour is one such example of this. Located in Innisfil, Ontario, Friday Harbour is a \$1.5 billion dollar resort on Lake Simcoe being created by Geranium Corporation. While much of the development has been designed to high environmental standards, there are still concerns about what impacts it will have on the surrounding area socially.

1.2 Problem Statement

Land use planners are beginning to take notice of amenity migration processes and their impacts upon rural areas. This research will explore the effects of mega-developments on rural social structure. Using a mixed-method approach combining spatial data and interview analyses, investigation of both the structural and behavioural aspects of amenity migration in the Friday Harbour development of Lake Simcoe will be examined. With policy-makers more formally educated on societal implications of mega-developments such as Friday Harbour, strategies to promote regulations which identify societal rather than aesthetic and cultural function can be implemented. Through an analysis of Friday Harbour, this study attempts to suggest planning strategies that encompass community based planning to develop the potential to address, alleviate and prevent community tensions which affect rural communities facing amenity migration.

1.3 Research Goals and Objectives

The goal of this research is to identify how collaborative communication and community based learning development can effectively enable rural communities to develop and implement best practices for the establishment of mega-developments catering to amenity migrants. The specific objectives of the research include:

- i) Consolidate a definition of “amenity migrant” based upon identified characteristics
- ii) Conduct an examination of current land use planning practices and process through which amenity migration and mega-development is shaped
- iii) Understand the direct and indirect social effects of the Friday Harbour mega-project upon the local community
- iv) Identify and understand best practices for mega-development and amenity migration planning policy

1.4 Research Methodology

The table below (table 1) illustrates the methods used in the collection of data.

#	Objective	Data Required	Research Method(s)
I	Consolidation of a definition of “amenity migrant” based upon identified characteristics	expert and academic opinion	literature review
II	Conduct an examination of current land use planning practices and process through which amenity migration and mega-development is shaped	expert and academic opinion	literature review
III	Understand the direct and indirect social effects of the Friday Harbour mega-project upon the local community	thoughts and opinions of community members	case study semi-structured interviews
IV	Identify and understand best practices for mega-development and amenity migration planning policy	source documents, policies existing legislation	document review semi-structured interviews

Table 1: Data collection methods.

1.4.1 Literature Review

Utilizing electronic databases and physical libraries, a literature review was conducted to provide an overview and background to the issues, while serving to define the context of the topic of resort development and amenity migration. Given that literature directly addressing the topic of amenity migration was limited or sparse in certain areas, literature from neighbouring topics such as tourism, resort development and second home ownership were also drawn upon. Providing a greater context to the background of amenity migration and introducing key relevant theories, a historical overview of amenity migration was examined along with significant data researched and published by several key academics such as Raymond Chipeniuk and Stuart Gipton. Research focused primarily on complications communities face as amenity migrants settle while identifying any relevant gaps within the existing literature to present a broadly arching, balanced view on the subject and provide familiarity with key terms and concepts for future analysis.

1.4.2 Case Study

Grounded in the context obtained from the literature review, this research will utilize a case study approach to research factors that influence the effects of mega developments on rural social structure. Taking a mixed methods research approach to emphasize the detailed contextual analysis of amenity migration, the development of Friday Harbour within the surrounding community of Innisfil will be explored. Examining a contemporary situation in which amenity migration has become a controversial topic within the local community, a document review and semi-structured interviews will be conducted, aiming to provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods of best practices for amenity migration. This research will also determine how individuals within communities value different factors that influence or impact their perspective of amenity migrants role within the community.

1.4.3 Document Review

A document review will be utilized to assess the background documents and statistics of any applications to date in relation to the Friday Harbour Development, while providing a context to the regulatory framework under analysis. In regards to the Friday Harbour development proposed by Geranium Corporation, the primary source documents will be obtained from the two year Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing held from 2007 - 2008 in regards to this development. Reviewing the documents provided by internal contacts and public records, this research is intended to examine the process through which current planning practices preemptively shape amenity migration development as opposed to patching the results of it.

1.4.4 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews with local community members holding public positions such as planners and politicians will be conducted after establishing contact and obtaining consent. This research is sought to identify key issues which residents, businesses owners, local leaders and representatives of community groups have voiced as the benefits, drawbacks, tensions and issues that have arisen surrounding the proposed Friday Harbour development. Data gathered will focus primarily on opinions surrounding what the Friday Harbour development means to varying stakeholders, while identifying how these issues affect the community's social structure. This methodology is also intended to better understand the motivations, behaviours, and perspectives of the Friday Harbour project from an array of stakeholder perspectives, both pre and post development.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Need for Collaboration

The development and implementation of current land use policies and planning practices in Ontario are largely attributed to the adoption of successful collaboration between stakeholders. Frameworks and policies promoting the transfer of information and knowledge between parties have been developed surrounding the idea of social capital being arguably the most successful, but there is often limited information available regarding the success of knowledge transfer and translation between stakeholders. As a result, “how knowledge management theories and frameworks are applied in the public sector is not well understood” (Riege and Lindsay, 2006) while successful community relations rely on collaboration, communication, and learning to develop trust and understanding between stakeholders. The resort and mega-development industry in Ontario is consistently plagued with complex policy issues arising from stakeholder interests at varying scales.

2.2 Collaborative Planning Theory

In realizing that there are numerous stakeholders affected by resort planning and mega-developments, there is a need for the involvement of stakeholders within the decision making process of planning and policy developments at all levels. With collaborative planning based on the idea of “planning through communicative action” (Lawrence, 2000) Bentrup (2001) outlined the following as the fundamental characteristics of successful collaborative based planning in that it involves:

- i. an interdisciplinary approach and cross disciplinary integration
- ii. stakeholders educating each other
- iii. informal face to face dialogue among stakeholders
- iv. continuous stakeholder participation throughout the planning process
- v. encouragement of stakeholder participation to create a holistic plan
- vi. joint information searches to determine facts, and
- vii. consensus of stakeholders in order to make decisions.

The 7 characteristics of a collaborative planning theory can be used to test the success of knowledge acquisition and utilization between stakeholder parties, while keeping in mind the importance of application of common

sense throughout the planning process as outlined by Hillier (1995) in that “planning practice involves moral and practical judgements. It involves an appreciation of what matters and to whom.” In realizing that the planning process occurs in a real world where uncertainty and fluidity can not always be accounted for, Hillier further recommends “flexibility throughout the practice based on reflection are more important than adherence to theoretical or actual rule books and policy manuals. Therefore, planners need to use common sense.” This ideal further supports the belief that through equal consideration and involvement of all stakeholders, the best decisions will be made.

The collaborative planning theory is entrenched with the importance of multiple stakeholders and often competing interests. Hillier (1995) revealed the necessity for collaborative planning in allowing individuals to participate in a “reflexive exchange” between stakeholder groups. “For a reflexive exchange to be positive, it requires us to have openness to the other, a willingness to listen and take the other’s claims seriously” (Hillier, 1995). The importance of dialogue and information exchange between all parties involved in a decision making process was also recognized by Innes and Booher (2002) noting “developing common interests and beliefs among varying stakeholders through the process of collaboration

builds towards cooperative actions [and] outlines [a] suggested model for decision making (Innes and Booher, 2002). This reinforces the importance of facilitating stakeholder meetings, open dialogue, free flowing information and knowledge sharing within decision making processes. Working towards the building of trust and revealing shared interests among stakeholders creates the necessary development of understanding varying interests among stakeholders while creating a more trustworthy atmosphere for dialogue and collaboration to take place and agreement to formulate.

2.3 Learning, Knowledge, and Participation in Policy

Riege and Lindsay (2006) speak to the importance of public learning and the notion of knowledge attainment or transfer in stating that “the better the knowledge base upon which public policies are built, the more likely they are to succeed. In particular, good public policy seems to emerge when knowledge possessed by society is transferred effectively”. To effectively obtain and utilize knowledge in the formation of policy, the inclusion and involvement of all stakeholders is important as each possess varying and competing interests which should be essentially addressed if planning policy is to be successful. Meanwhile, Riege and Lindsay (2006) also noted that adopting the collaborative approach to stakeholder involvement improves the understanding of scientific and social implications presented to stakeholders. Successful land use policy implementation also requires the capacities of the affected stakeholders to be considered. In being inclusive in the policy development process, it is realized that stakeholders will have varying capabilities with regards to knowledge and information access as well as understanding (Steyaert and Jiggins, 2007). Capacities of all stakeholders are challenged in collaborative policy development as some sources of knowledge may not necessarily be practical or applicable in realistic scenarios where regulation is intended.

2.4 Separating Amenity Migration from Migration

Gaining popularity primarily in the 1990's, city dwellers under no economic restraints began massive transitions to locate in more scenic, rural areas. This migration is recognized as the driving force behind what has developed into what is today known as amenity migration. Recently classified as a post-tourism movement, (Borsdorf, et al. 12-22) amenity migration is defined by the fact that the individual's choice to relocate is not economically motivated, but rather based on socio-cultural and environmental draws. Recently amenity migration has also been referred to as in-migration, counter urbanization, and rural rebound (Chipeniuk 222-238). This is in sharp contrast to so called economic migrants - those choosing to relocate for financial reasons.

2.4.1 What is Amenity Migration?

Generally speaking, little is understood about amenity migration and no clear explanations regarding the development patterns or causes of this emerging phenomenon clearly exist. Even less is known about the driving forces behind amenity migration and their relation to local or regional conditions. Although sharing many qualities and characteristics with tourism, amenity migration is proving to be a great societal force that must be studied if planners and policy makers are to understand the full effects it is having on society and land use planning.

Many rural destinations have not reacted to the concept of amenity migration since the phenomenon is so recent and poorly understood; no real approach in shaping or influencing it has been developed. Further research by experts and academics is needed as little awareness of amenity migration and its affects currently exist, however tourism is believed to play a major causative role (Chipeniuk 327-335). In response, some regions and public planners are coming to the realization that amenity migration is a growing societal force that must be dealt with in order to address sustainable planning. However, although these individuals often want to address the issues of amenity migration leading change, they frequently do not possess the proper planning tools to systematically

address the issues. Moreover, amenity migration continues to be a subject of theoretical debate as planners possess a lack of empirical evidence supporting its existence, and many view it as merely an ambiguous phenomenon (Bartos, et al. 124-141).

2.4.2 Who is an Amenity Migrant?

In a recent 2009 conference regarding the understanding and management of amenity migration in rural mountainous regions, the classification of what constituted an “amenity migrant” became a topic of much debate. Held in Banff, Alberta, 85 “expert” participants ranging from academics to policy administrators and planners presented their ideas. The three key goals of this study were to (1) identify what drives amenity migration, (2) evaluate the effects and risks of amenity migration and (3) determine how amenity migration can be best measured and managed (The Banff Center). In this conference, 89% of the 85 respondents agreed that in-migration of new permanent residents constitutes amenity migration. Furthermore, 82% believe amenity migration is also composed of second home owners or renters (Chipeniuk).

Opposing, the often seasonal influx of visitors, transient tourists and economic migrants were deemed associated to amenity migrants but not applicable components of true amenity migration. Interestingly, 63% also identified that it was not appropriate to distinguish between amenity migrants and local residents as citizens of a community. This may cause issues when studying this phenomenon as simply clumping new migrants to rural regions together and not separating amenity migrants

from economic migrants overwrites the ability to plan appropriately for the two separate and distinct groups (Ried, Mair, George & Taylor, 2001). Furthermore, as noted, later tension can commonly arise between amenity migrants and locals.

When asked to judge in their opinion if amenity migrants effect on a community was good, bad or too complex to judge, 20% voted good versus 6.7% bad and 73% said the issue was too complex to judge (Chipeniuk). The experts also noted that three key data sets are needed for planners to effectively monitor amenity migration; these include the number of in-migrants, their origins and reasons for coming (Chipeniuk 327-335).

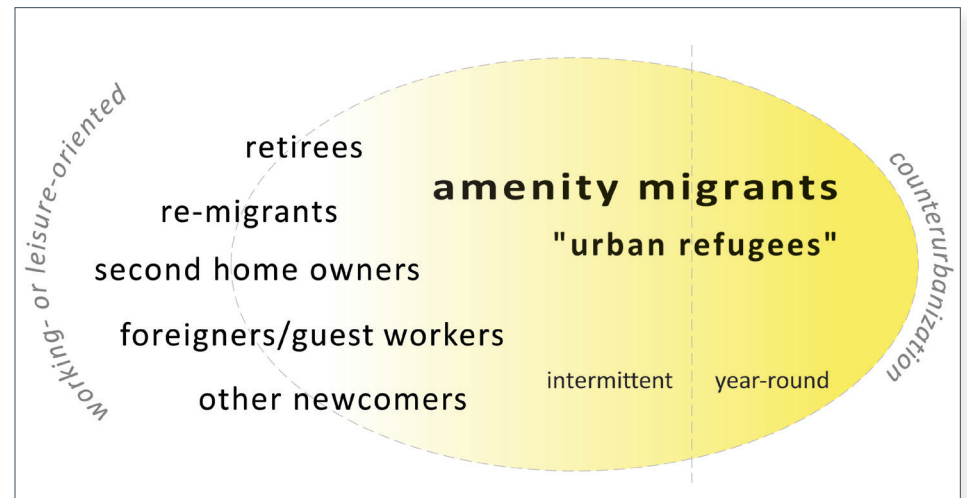


Figure 2: Amenity migration thought cloud.
(Beismann, 2011)

2.5 Facilitators of Amenity Migration

Laurence Moss, an academic studying local and regional planning change proposes there are two key “meta-motivators” of amenity migration; one the higher societal value the individual places on the natural environment and two, the differentiated or unique culture offered by these spaces. Nested within these mega-motivators, Moss proposes, are smaller motives including access to leisure, removal from unwanted or undesirable urban conditions, economic opportunities, and self indulgence.

The process of amenity migration may also be viewed as a push/pull theory, as Michael Bartos proposes. The crime, noise, traffic, pollution, congestion and failing natural environments of many urban centers may all be seen as factors leading to an anti-urban push, whereby individuals are fleeing their urban-civilian lifestyles for a slower change of pace. Often these individuals develop the viewpoint that cities are impersonal, artificial and seek the personal attachment often provided by rural areas. Likewise, the pull factors of a pro-rural movement include improved environmental quality, a more tranquil lifestyle and a move towards more “local” places with a defined sense of small community (Bartos, et al. 124-141).

Bartos also notes the complications of studying amenity migration due to its many interrelated factors. These can be classified into 3 main categories; (i) household characteristics, (ii) economic and state policy and (iii) landscape potential (Bartos, et al. 124-141). Meanwhile, another researcher, Stolte, countered that the draw of natural and cultural amenities, a more leisurely pace, refuge from global uncertainties, metropolitan living conditions and opportunities for personal and spiritual development all foster the relocation of amenity migrants (Stolte). Many different sources noted the following overlapping components that were similar in most cases of amenity migration; there was no fixed location, amenity migrants had abundant discretionary wealth, the region had abundant, affordable land, and lastly amenity migrants had discretionary time.

2.5.1 No fixed location

A key facilitator of amenity migration is mankind’s modern mobility. With the invention of information technologies (IT), tools became available to society facilitating movement with relative ease, meaning individuals were no longer tied to one geographic region. This included forms of communicative technology such as Skype, e-mail, cell phones and the internet. Through the creation of mass information technologies, the

geographical barriers and constraints of amenity migration were lifted.

The freedom and independence provided through the automobile also serves to promote amenity migration, as a relatively affordable means of transportation is readily available. However, with the rising cost of petroleum based fuels and the lingering threat of Peak Oil, this once affordable means of independence and transportation may severely limit the mobility of amenity migrants.

Another fostering aspect of amenity migration is the idea that individuals today are often psychologically less rooted in one specific place. Ergo, a personal attachment to multiple places is more common (e.g. a week home and weekend cottage) facilitated by the availability of cheap and accessible forms of transportation and sufficient economic wealth. This theory can be mirrored by the notion that non-spatial, interpersonal communities are theoretically replacing place-based communities, a debate that causes much anxiety for those who feel the need to be part of a place-based community. Indirectly, this can at times lead to issues with local place-based community and the role of the amenity migrant's participation within this community. As such, a "them" versus "us" ideology commonly ensues as issues of who belongs and who does

not commonly develop within the local community.

2.5.2 Abundant discretionary wealth

Mailbox incomes and individually accumulated wealth have both promoted the concept of amenity migration. As such, amenity migrants often bring with them substantial savings which can contribute to the economic vigor and social networks of rural communities. Thus, supporters of amenity migration argue that amenity migrants are for the most part, economically strong, in that they are from the upper to middle class of society. Therefore, they bring with them external funding as a source of revenue into the community (Bartos, et al. 124-141). Furthermore, for those not independently wealthy, there is often a willingness to accept lower incomes in order to move to areas that offer higher quality natural, social or cultural environments.

2.5.3 Abundant, affordable land

Amenity migration is also commonly fuelled by relatively abundant land availability and cheap acquisition costs. These, often more affordable real estate prices of rural areas are seen as a favourable pull factor, in that from a logic standpoint it is often cost prohibitive to live within most urban centers (Borsdorf, et al. 12-22).

2.5.4 Discretionary time

An abundance of available discretionary time and destination comforts are also a driving factor of amenity migration. As such, the two key age groups that compose the majority of amenity migrants, are elders looking for destinations for retirement, and the younger, independently wealthy who have no fixed ties to a workplace or are often looking for second homes (Moss). This brings to light a further significant factor in amenity migration, as the changing meaning of “retirement” dictates that many individuals choose to keep working well into their mid to late sixties. Semi-retired types are also more common now, leading to the changing ideal of a retirement continuum in modern society. Ergo, both these demographics possess abundant “free” time as they are retired, semi-retired or are able to work from home.

2.6 The Amenity Migration Environment

Regions targeted by amenity migrants are usually characterized by a perceived high environmental quality, existing tourism infrastructure, and strong sense of traditional, local culture. Typically, mountainous and coastal regions are among the most popular (Borsdorf, et al. 12-22). Moreover, amenity migrants are rarely attracted to an area based on what town offers on its own, but desire the features of the region or greater municipality at large, making collaborative planning a key consideration for amenity migrant planners (Chipeniuk 327-335).

2.6.1 Cultural Environment

Amenity migrants desire culturally rich destinations such as historic townscapes and landscapes, along with art galleries, museums, operas and fine dining. Within these spaces, amenity migrants are drawn to the less tangible aspects of “place” such as the ethnographic culture or its rural way of life. As such, planners find it difficult to both assess and plan for amenity migration, as amenity migrants are often uncertain exactly what they are drawn to within a region or their reasons for this attraction. Drawn to the perceived better cultural amenities, historical and cultural rich centres of rural small towns act as a “genius loci” luring individuals in with a sense of mystique. In this way, much of the driving force behind

amenity migration remains a psychological assessment (Moss).

2.6.2 Natural Environment

Amenity migrants often target the rural areas most “lagging” in development, assuming a better comparative advantage of better preserved environment and unaltered landscapes (Bartos, et al. 124-141). Building on this, the creation of golf courses is one of the most rapidly expanding types of amenity-driven developments (Markwick, 2000). There are an estimated 25,000 -30,000 golf courses worldwide. In Canada, the national population spends an estimated \$1.62 billion dollars annually on golf travel (Royal Canadian Golf Association, 2006). The global golf-industry serves a market of 60 million golfers annually, which spend over \$20 billion per year. The sheer size of the golf market is indicative of the significance of golf tourism as a niche market within the global tourism industry (Palmer, 2004).

2.7 A Source of Conflict

Amenity migration presents several key issues in highlighting societal and spatial changes in the context of urban planning and rural development. Change as a result of amenity migration can be viewed as both a benefit to some, and as a threat to others. While there is both good and bad aspects to amenity migration, consensus seems to be that the environment and social relationships sphere are often the two impacts hardest hit by uncontrolled amenity migration (Chipeniuk 222-238).

2.7.1 Environmental Based Conflicts

From a land use planning perspective, amenity migration is responsible for considerable land use changes on the local landscape as previously agricultural lands are converted to residential development. This trend has been especially predominant in mountainous regions, valleys and foothills, primarily due to their scenic vistas (Ried, Kralt, & Golden, 2005). Likewise, these changes impact real estate markets as land prices often experience dramatic and uncontrollable shifts as areas become increasingly inhabited. As a result, where relatively affordable land was available, prices become so inflated that it is often no longer economically viable for local residents or lower income amenity migrants to inhabit these regions. The U.S. state of Colorado is an example of this. In the

decade between 1987 and 1997, 57,100 hectares annually of agricultural land was converted to residential and commercial development (Moss).

Higher property prices as a result of this “rural” draw are not the only development effect amenity migration has upon the landscape. Typically rural residential development has been that of low-densities, sprawling out over valley floors and up foothill ridgelines, in sharp contrast to the dense urbanization of cities. While this is still the case with amenity migrants, the disposable income of many amenity migrants leads to the construction of larger homes on larger lots, further compounding the issue of residential sprawl. Evidence of this is in Park County, Wyoming, where the average size of a residential rural lot increased from 0.97 hectares in 1970 to just over 4.8 hectares in 1999 (Stolte).

As developers build in natural areas to provide more housing for amenity migrants, the natural environment also becomes more fragmented through the effects of subdivision creation, fencing, access roads, clearances for utilities and infrastructure. This loss of wildlife habitat and the recreational disturbance of large mammals via exploitation of hiking and game trails are all unintended consequences of amenity migration (Chipeniuk 222-238).

While amenity migration may counteract population decline in rural areas, its benefits on de-populating communities also include the prevention of declining real estate values and tax increases as lower community populations lead to wasteful and unneeded infrastructure. Ironically, amenity migrants may also pose an additional burden on community infrastructure as explosive growth and natural resource consumption become “red flag” issues for planners. This is the case in some rural mountain communities such as Jackson Hole, Whistler, and Canmore; all of which have unintentionally witnessed some of these consequences in the way of soaring housing prices, high cost of living, massive out movements of local employees and a huge conversion of agricultural lands to residential (Chipeniuk 327-335). While policy related responses to these and other amenity migration created problems serve as a potential solution, implementation of such policies are often enacted after development occurs, lagging behind and becoming harder to implement in higher growth areas (Gill 9-12). This is evident in the form of policies response to affordable housing issues in local resort locations such as Whistler, B.C.

2.7.2 Societal Based Conflicts

Consciously or sub-consciously, amenity migrants alter the very places in which they live as an act of personal indulgence. Through this indulgence, they as individuals possess a compelling desire to become a part of the rural lifestyle – a strange fascination that is often their initial draw to become part of a different community (Bartos, et al. 124-141). As a result, amenity migration commonly introduces a social and political separation between local residents and amenity migrants. Furthermore, remains the questionable fact; are rural communities even conscious of changes that may be occurring because of amenity migration?

Communities are not likely to account for amenity migration within their planning measures if they are not even aware of amenity migrations existence (Chipeniuk 327-335). If amenity migration is to be adequately addressed by municipal planners and policy makers, it will require the recognition of the changing attitudes about land use and community development (Chipeniuk 327-335).

Often values between local residents and amenity migrants clash, as community officials lack appropriate responses in dealing with sprawling growth and indirect social effects within the community. Commonly

communities deal with issues such as increases to property assessments and taxes as a result of development for the sake of amenity migrants. Ergo, local resident's property taxes increase, without proportionate increases in the level of government services they receive. This skirmish between taxpayer's expectations and reality is often a further point of tension between locals and amenity migrants (Chipeniuk 327-335). Furthermore, social services such as policing and fire regimes must also change as more people place additional weight on services at a municipal level. Resource allocation such as freshwater use, traffic congestion, sewage disposal and water pollution also become pertinent (Bartos, et al. 124-141).

Activists of amenity migration commonly voice concerns over the environmental degradation that may be occurring as a result of ineffective planning for amenity migration. This encompasses, for a large part, the "NIMBY" (Not in My Backyard) portion of the population, along with those unaccustomed to change (Moss).

While some experts argue that amenity migration may help to improve the environmental and cultural quality of sterile rural regions, others foresee the massive invasion of urban behaviour patterns into rural areas as a threat to the creation of cultural uniformity. The incoming urban

culture often leads to a decline in rural traditions, changing what was the original draw for many amenity migrants (Borsdorf, et al. 12-22). As mentioned, a “them” versus “us” ideology then commonly ensues as issues of roles within the local community develop. This local tension is further compounded by the fact that amenity migrants are commonly perceived as tourists, stigmatizing amenity migrations strong social and philosophical ties to tourism.

This all sparks discussion regarding amenity migrants local belonging and participation within the community. While amenity migration can bring in new residents with different values who can affect communities that are not only theirs, there is an increasing need to draft amenity migration guidelines in order to identify, address and hopefully rectify this and other related issues (The Banff Center).

2.8 Planning Responses

Amenity migration shows that as more individuals choose to travel, it becomes increasingly difficult to track their movement, planning and projecting accordingly. This is an important consideration for planners and policy makers as accurate forecasting is necessary for successful planning, particularly in areas such as resource use and taxation. For instance, how does a resort community such as Whistler with a population of 150,000 in the winter but only 4,000 in the summer adequately address these issues? While the community statistics only record 4,000 registered residents, the town must accommodate a plan for 150,000 to provide adequate infrastructure and services base. (Moss) Furthermore, in terms of fair taxation, should “ski-bums” residing locally for only 4 months of the year be charged the same as year-round residents? Often this dilemma is tied to the communities lack of ability to distinguish and track amenity migrants, as it is often difficult to obtain reliable resources to track amenity migrants influences on the community – postal codes, housing numbers, etcetera (Chipeniuk 327-335).

Amenity migration also creates a planning concern regarding the usefulness of statistical trends currently available for analysis, projection and decision making purposes. The common temporary or locality

characteristic of many amenity migrants raises issues surrounding access to public services, servicing fees and equitable or fair taxation (Moss).

Development as a result of amenity migration tends to follow three key patterns. First is the “leapfrogging” approach by which peripheral growth is observed at the edges of rural settlements, incrementally extending outward into previously unoccupied areas. In sharp contrast, resort development acts as a destination approach to development, exemplified

by dense core communities being sporadically situated throughout the pristine landscape. The third pattern is subsequently a mix of leapfrogging and a dense core community.

Sustainable and effective planning for amenity migration displays many of the same sustainable land use principles as new urbanism and smart growth. By applying these traditional urban planning principles to rural contexts, new catch phrases such as “New Regionalism” and “New



Figure 3: An illustration of development design techniques using conservation and community design (Wilmink, 2008)

Ruralism” are beginning to make their way into the literature of amenity migration planning (Moss).

Meanwhile, the primary economic motive of amenity lead development fails to address many of the societal spin off problems caused by amenity migrants such as resource scarcity, altered associations of community pride, defined individualism and independence. This is primarily due to the fact that a large majority of amenity migration development is a direct result of promotion through private developers (Ried, Mair & Taylor, 2000). Often elected officials are not adequately involved in these planning process, and as such many important considerations are either overlooked and/or rejected by planning staff. Administrators and policy makers may also not appreciate how a 1-2% increase in populace base through the influx of amenity migrants can quickly compound to a point where amenity migrants compose the primary community center (Chipeniuk 327-335). This in turn results in weak or generalized oversight when it comes to amenity migration related planning decisions,

translating into lack of conformity between initial plans and their actual outcomes (Moss).

Most town planners are currently ill-prepared to deal with amenity migration as most were unaware of the size and force of amenity migration within their community (Chipeniuk 327-335). It was also noted that the concept of amenity migration is commonly discussed with citizens and planners on behalf of local governments, as opposed to elected officials and administrative staff. This is intriguing as the primary purpose of

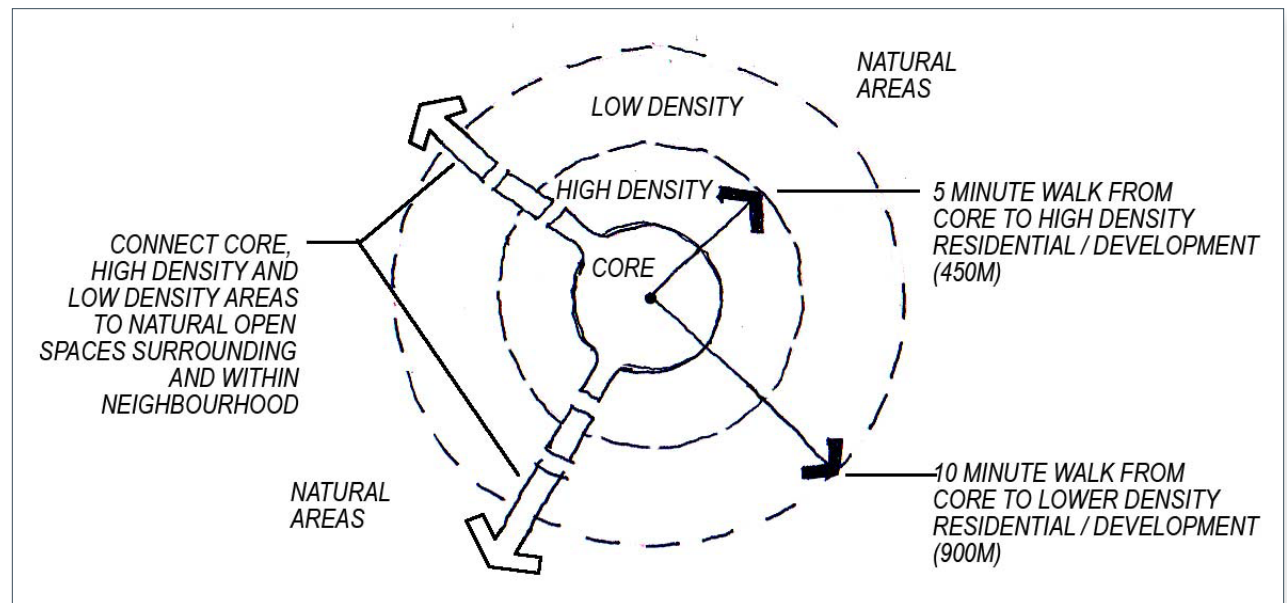


Figure 4: Concept of an ideally structured New Urbanist development. (Wilkinson, 2008)

planners is often to facilitate and enable land development through promotion of market forces and goals of private developers, a process which is often best done through investments in private infrastructure and servicing. Amenity migration, unlike other form of policy development, often does not follow the conventional assumption that social development will follow in accord with economic development (Chipeniuk 222-238). Moreover, planners often counteract the loss of resource based jobs to that of amenity migration, similar to making tourism a foundation of the local economy. Additionally, the recommendations of municipal planners are not always followed by municipally elected officials, as economic, development, taxation and other concerns are often the primary priority. Controversially, amenity migration seems to foster an anti-planning ethic – it is something that can't be predicted, can't necessarily be proactively fixed, so it will be accommodated or addressed after the fact (Moss). Comparatively little research has been done to test the usefulness and cost of tools to promote and manage amenity migration within rural regions (Chipeniuk 222-238).

2.8.1 Planning Scale and Amenity Migration

The main limitation to amenity migration planning may be capacity based in a lack of government mobilization at both the regional and provincial scale. This further supports the idea of shared resources as many villages and towns are often too small to conduct effective amenity migration planning on their own (Chipeniuk 327-335). This ideal is supported by some amenity migration academics who argue that ultimately the provincial government should be facilitating and to some extent performing amenity migration planning. However, it seems that there is a lack of interest from provincial governments as the bulk of amenity migration only serves to re-arrange individuals within the province, and ergo no need is seen by the province to participate in such actions (Chipeniuk 327-335). As a result, local government and town planners must be prepared to act proactively in order to get ahead of the curve, stomping out community fires before they arise (Stolte).

Some issues of amenity migration may be overcome through planning and policy restrictions such as maximum lot size and encouraging economies that supports local community interdependence. A further possible solution looks to local empowerment within a regional context, whereby towns think and act regionally, but without giving up their local autonomy

(Stolte). It is suggested that using volunteers and community groups as opposed to additional staff may be an alternative regional approach to address amenity migration involving the pooling of resources between areas or regions (Chipeniuk 327-335). Despite amenity migration as a force for good, much of the modern planning theory is concerned with employing amenity migration on behalf of community development to promote development in its infancy (Chipeniuk 222-238). While some municipalities track amenity migrants through tax assessments, the cost of doing so is impractical. An alternative method may be to track economic migrants manually through realtors and questionnaires (Chipeniuk 222-238).

Currently there exists a lack of ability to track amenity migration within rural regions – or perhaps a lack of tracking is indeed taking place. As such, little to no strategies currently exists to combat the issues that arise from this trend. Moreover, no coherent amenity migration planning strategy guide exists, as most information and research available is anecdotal or from varying and often conflicting sources (Chipeniuk 222-238).

2.9 Literature Review Synopsis

Amenity migration brings up several key planning issues:

- i. Could hinterland communities suffering with population decline utilize amenity migration to replace economic out migrants?
- ii. Are communities aware of the problems amenity migration can cause? Are communities currently planning to attract or manage amenity migration?
- iii. Are communities planning for amenity migration in conjunction with other planning bodies?
- iv. Do municipalities see their communities as attractive to amenity migrants?
- v. Do rural areas and/or towns have adequate resources to efficiently and effectively plan for amenity migration?
- vi. Do planners and administrative staff have the imaginative capacity to plan for amenity migration?
- vii. Is there a need to plan for amenity migration at a Provincial or Federal level? If so, what is this role? (Chipeniuk 327-335).

Each of these issues and more will require further research and ultimately, planning at some scale to preemptively shape amenity migration as opposed to repairing the results of it; from over-extended utilities, to degradation of the natural environment, to increasing urban mentalities and tensions between amenity migrants and those who were there

before. A general consensus among experts and academic is that further research is required if we as planners are to adequately address and plan for amenity migration (Bartos, et al. 124-141). While amenity migration has the ability to stimulate smaller rural economies and curb declining populations, it cannot continue to go unmanaged with results as serious as it is currently presenting. If current trends continue, amenity migration could have profound effects in shaping the rural countryside of North America, while it is indiscernible what these changes may result in.

3.0 CASE STUDY

3.1 Background

Friday Harbour is a mixed-use, recreation-based development in the Town of Innisfil, Ontario. A pedestrian friendly “New Urbanist” resort community consisting of a mix of residential, commercial, entertainment and recreational land uses, the development is to be located on approximately 239 hectares of land bounded by Big Bay Point Road to the north and west, Thirteenth Line to the south and Lake Simcoe to the east. Marketed as an all season destination, the site is divided into three sections - a golf course, a central area 200 acre nature preserve, and a 40 acre marina surrounded by the Marina Village. The Marina Village consists of condominiums, a hotel, along with retail and entertainment venues.

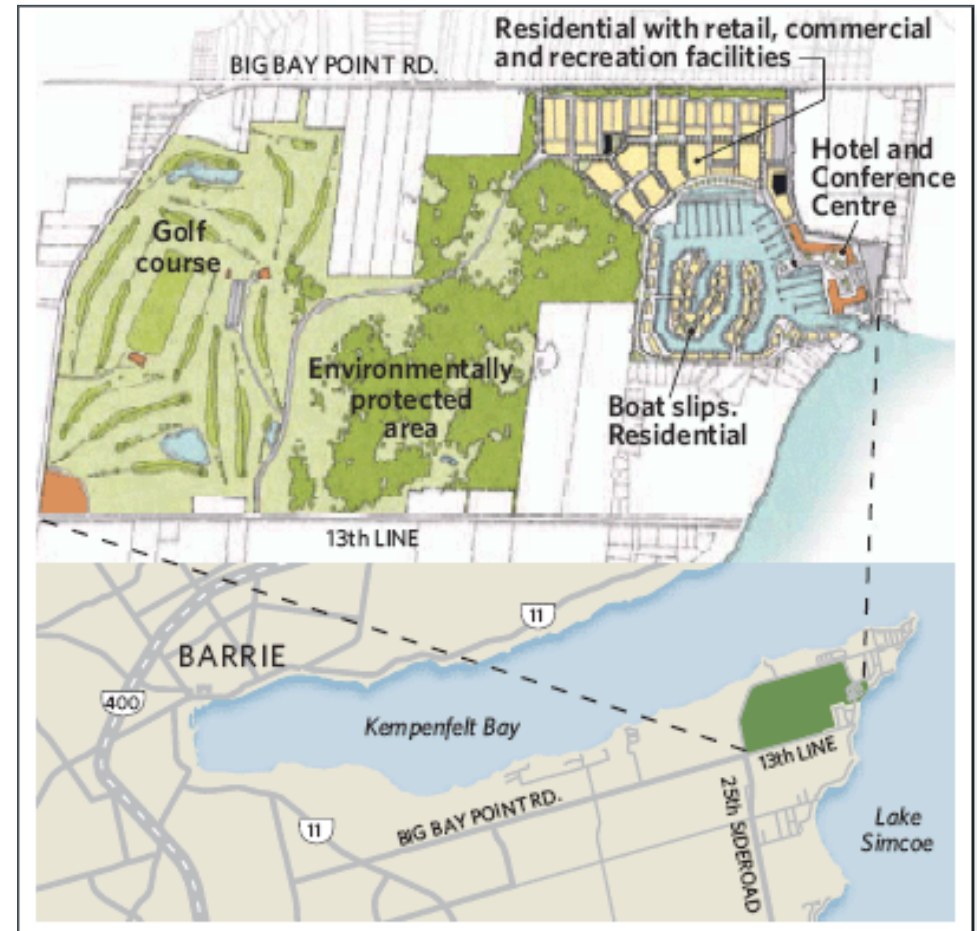


Figure 5: Friday Harbour conceptual master plan rendering.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)

3.2 Site Features

- 18 hole, Doug Carrick Championship golf course
- 200 acre nature preserve
- 1,000 slip marina
- minimum of 400 resort hotel units and conference centre
- 1,600 non-permanent residential units
- rural location, minutes from Barrie Go-Station

The developer of this project is Geranium Corporation. The Town of Innisfil has retained an independent professional firm to monitor work by Geranium and its contractors, and to ensure that the project is developed in compliance with all applicable planning laws and regulations, including environmental regulations and approved plans, primarily due to the scale of the proposed development.

3.2.1 Golf Course

Designed by Doug Carrick, the on-site golf course is Audubon certified, meaning extremely high environmental standards are set as it is the National Audubon Society's mission to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity (National Audubon Society, 2013). Sculpted out of fill excavated from the marina and placed onto the formerly flat agricultural field, creation of the golf

course involves relocation of 1.8 million cubic meters of earth from the excavated marina basin. Designed with extensive elevation changes to add intrigue and interest to players, the final hole showcases the fully mature butternut grove in the environmentally protected area.



*Figure 6: Proposed golf course layout with marked holes.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

3.2.2 Nature Preserve

The 200 acre nature preserve was created to shelter natural woodland and amphibian habitat. The main entry road to the resort traverses the nature preserve, and 7.5 kilometers of walking trails circling through it. Two wildlife corridors have been established below municipal roads for frog and turtle crossings. Furthermore, new amphibian habitats including deep pond habitats for turtles and frogs as well as hibernaculum areas for amphibians such as snakes have been designed and incorporated. For every tree removed, two will be planted, including 300 of the endangered butternut saplings. This area is intended as a retreat for wildlife displaced from other areas of the site, including Southern flying squirrels, frogs, snakes, five different types of dragonflies, and thirteen distinct species of birds, including the loggerhead shrike, cerulean warbler, Louisiana waterthrush, red-shouldered hawk, and red-headed woodpecker.



*Figure 7: Endangered Butternut tree.
Top.(Boysen, 2010)*

*Figure 8: Southern flying squirrel.
Middle. (White, 2010)*

*Figure 9: Frog.
Bottom. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)*



3.2.3 Marina

The 40 acre marina is perhaps the most controversial part of the Friday Harbour development plan, although built to Clean Marine standards. It will accommodate boats that can navigate the Trent Severn waterway, from runabouts to 100 foot yachts and cabin cruisers with a maximum

boat draft of 2 meters. Concerns over water quality, noise, as well as shoreline damage from increased wave action were all noted by local residents during the OMB hearing. There were also concerns regarding the construction of a pier extending into the marina for boat watching, separate from the slips accessible from the Marina Village.



*Figure 10: Conceptual rendering of Friday Harbour marina.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

3.2.4 Marina Village

The surrounding Marina Village boasts a theatre, hotel and conference facilities with a minimum of 400 rooms and 8,000 square meters of commercial floor space. The marina village neighborhood has six core focus areas as follows, with numbers corresponding to the location on figure 11 (top right).

- 1 - Nature Preserve Interpretive Centre, weekend market
- 2 - Sports equipment shops and rentals
- 3 - Family friendly shops, activities, and restaurants
- 4 - General Store, Brewhouse
- 5 - Café Bookstore, gifts and antiques
- 6 - Performing Arts Centre

The lake club is a unique feature to Friday Harbour, a full-service desk including an Adventure Concierge to assist in the planning of resort activities, including a fitness centre, daycare, spa, and business facilities. Highlighting the water, there is a hot tub, wading pool, and lap pool with infinity edge to the lake. There is a lawn for badminton and croquet, an outdoor firepit and patio bar and lastly an upscale restaurant.

*Figure 11: Marina Village facilities plan.
Top. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

*Figure 12: Marina Village rendering.
Middle. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

*Figure 13: Lake Club rendering.
Bottom. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)*



3.2.5 Residences

The 30 hectare residential area of the resort is proposed to contain a maximum of 1,600 units, primarily in apartment form on the eastern portion of the site. Named the Boardwalk Condos, Harbour Flats, and the Marina Residences these units are proposed to be 100% non-permanent residential in tenure, signifying their use as “resort” units as opposed to a residential settlement. Again, this was a highly contested aspect of the OMB hearing, calling into question the OMBs ruling that the resort was approved on the basis that residents live there 300 days or less per year and not year-round, while it still remains unclear how this condition of approval would be enforced. Similarly, the harbour portion of the site containing direct access to Lake Simcoe and a maximum of 1,000 boat slips is proposed to include newly constructed islands with waterfront town homes.

*Figure 14: Boardwalk Condominium rendering.
Top.(Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

*Figure 15: Harbour Flats rendering.
Middle. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

*Figure 16: Marina residences rendering.
Bottom.(Geranium Corporation,2012)*



3.3 Development Status

The plan for Friday Harbour, formerly Big Bay Point Resort, was first proposed in 2002, but was not approved by the Ontario Municipal Board until December 2007. The largest resort of its kind in the Muskoka region, the development generated significant controversy between the Town of Innisfil, the County of Simcoe, the Lake Simcoe Region Conservation Authority and the Province of Ontario.

While several approvals were required before the resort could be fully constructed, the Council for the Town of Innisfil granted permission for initial site preparation work to begin on the site through a Pre-Development Agreement with the developer. This included tree clearing, grading, excavation of the marina basin, construction of a haul road through the Environmental Protection Area (EPA) and stripping/shaping of the golf course lands.

3.4 Site Preparation Schedule

A tentative schedule of site preparation works, broken down by year follows:

3.4.1 Development from 2010 - 2011

- approved tree clearing operations (Stage 1 Complete, Stage 1B/1B2 commencing early November)
- installation of erosion/sediment control measures (February)
- grubbing and stumping operations of cleared areas (December)

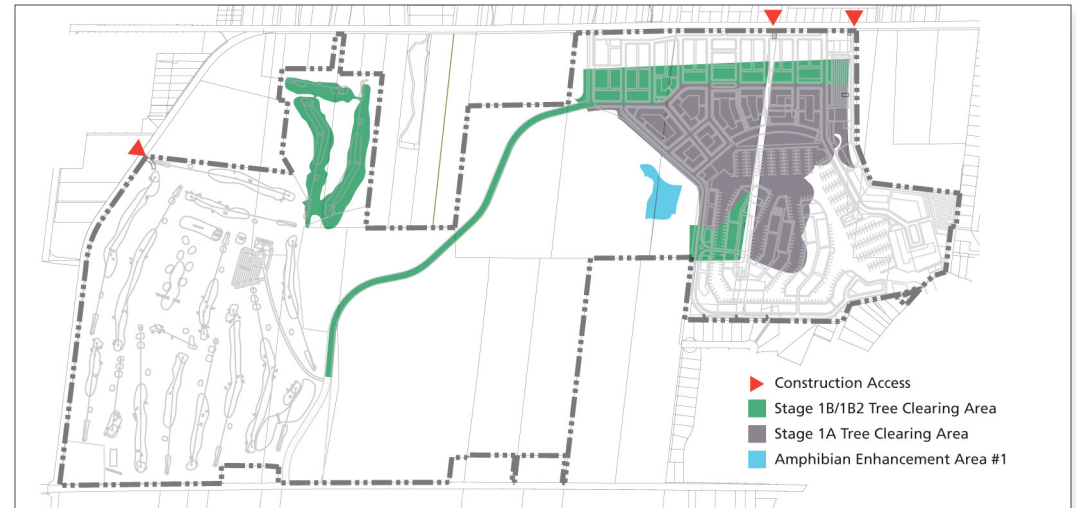


Figure 17: Site Preparation Schedule schematic, November 2010.
(Town of Innisfil, 2010)



Figure 18: Site Preparation Schedule schematic, March 2011.
(Town of Innisfil, 2010)

3.4.2 Development from 2012 - 2013

- haul road construction
- stripping of golf course (Spring)
- excavation of marina and marina resort area (ongoing through 2013)
- hauling of excavated materials to golf course lands
- dewatering of existing marina basin
- preliminary site preparation of external trunk servicing route

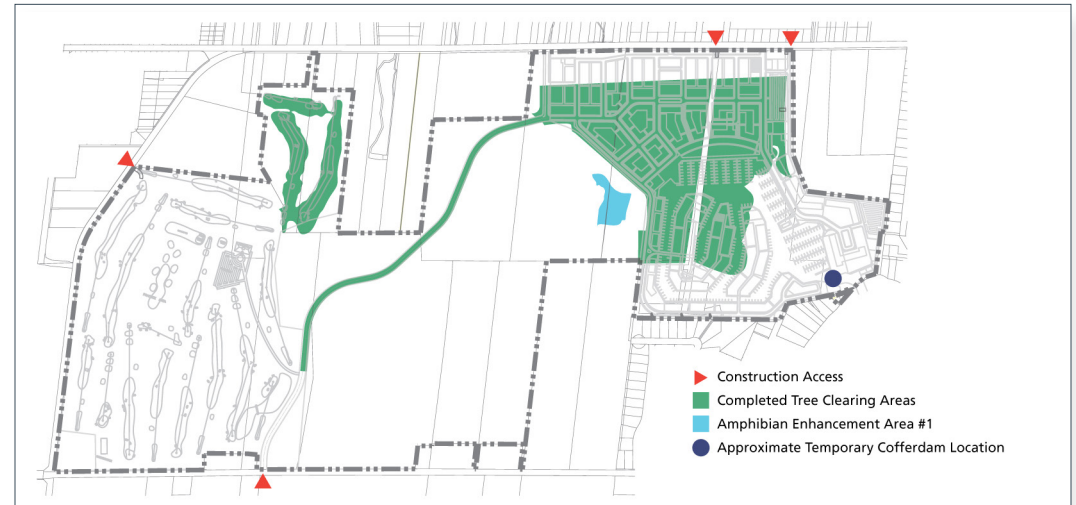


Figure 19: Site Preparation Schedule schematic, May 2012.
(Town of Innisfil, 2010)

3.4.3 Development from 2013 - 2014

- golf course shaping, seeding
- fine grading and shaping of marina basin and islands
- installation of underground services
- installation of external trunk services
- installation of marina and resort features (dock anchors, landscaping, boardwalks)

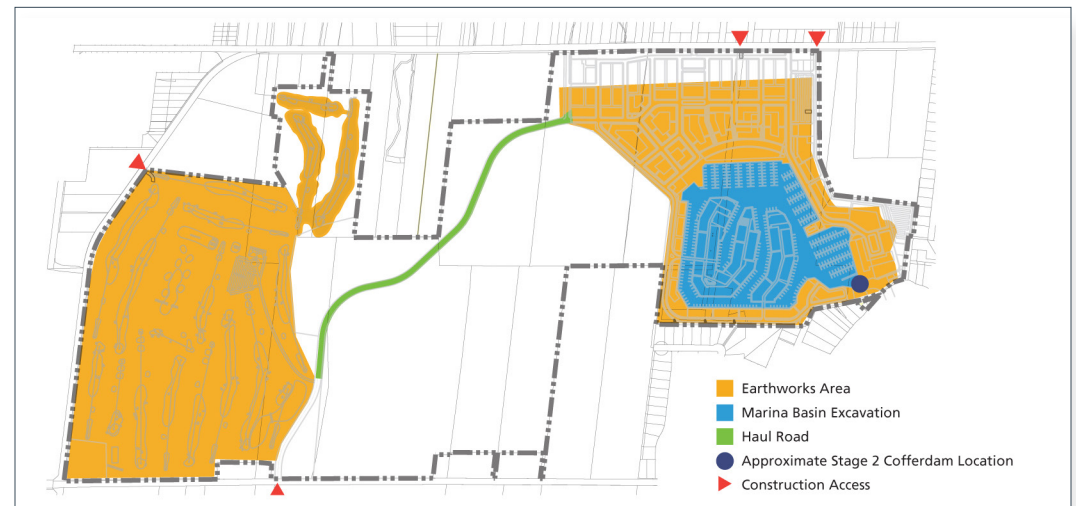


Figure 20: Site Preparation Schedule schematic, September 2012.
(Town of Innisfil, 2010)

3.5 Development Phasing Schedule

The following is a breakdown of each phase of the development:

Phase 1

- golf course and club house
- marina basin, entrance and service building
- public road
- boardwalks
- reforestation measures
- construction of an open water wetland
- other roads, services and works necessary to implement these components as well as the pre-grading required for future phases.

Phase 2

- up to 800 resort residential units
- hotel with a minimum of 100 rooms
- recreation centre at least 3,000m² in size
- at least 4,000m² of retail and service commercial floor space
- at least 3,000m² of resort conference facilities, integrated with the hotel
- civic uses
- internal road network and general open space necessary to accommodate Phase 2
- a continuous system of pedestrian trails and bicycle pathways, as required to accommodate Phase 2

Phase 3

- up to 400 resort residential units
- a hotel, or hotels, with at least 200 rooms and a spa
- at least 2,000m² of resort conference facilities which may be integrated with a hotel use

- at least 2,000m² of retail and service commercial uses
- the internal road network and general open space necessary to accommodate Phase 3

Phase 4

- the remainder of the Resort Residential Units, not to exceed 1,600
- the remainder of the 400 hotel rooms
- the remainder of the retail and service commercial uses, to a minimum of 8,000m²
- resort theatre uses
- the internal road network and general open space necessary to accommodate the Phase 4

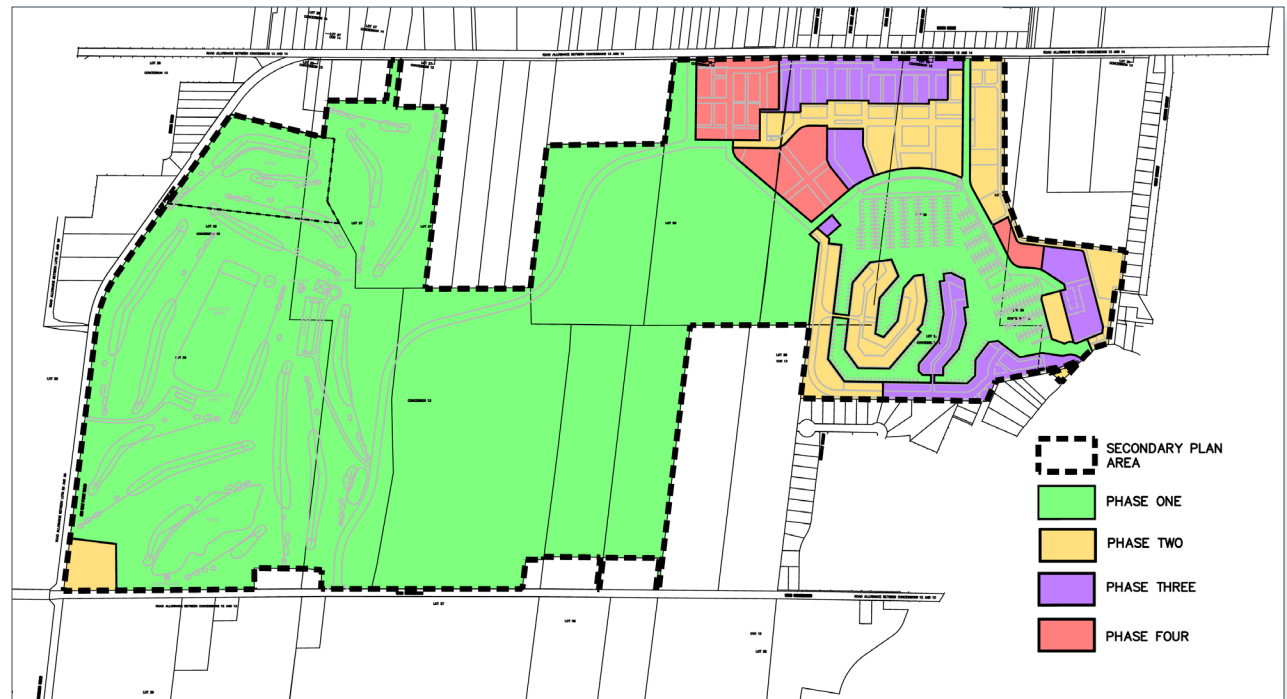


Figure 21: Development Phasing Schedule, in accordance with OPA 17.
(Town of Innisfil, 2010)

4.0 DOCUMENT REVIEW

4.1 The Issue

The matter before the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) consisted of a series of appeals in connection with the proposed resort project for the subject lands know as Big Bay Point on the south-west shore of Lake Simcoe. The proponent of the development, Kimvar Enterprises Incorporated (Kimvar) sought official plan amendments, a comprehensive zoning by-law amendment and approval of a draft plan of subdivision.

Having obtained the lands of Big Bay Point, Kimvar's plan was to refurbish and enlarge the existing marina while constructing a resort village including a hotel, conference facilities with commercial and retail center. Partial-occupancy condominiums along with an 18 hole championship golf course and environmental protection area (EPA) occupying walking trails for recreation and a collector road were also proposed to traverse the site.

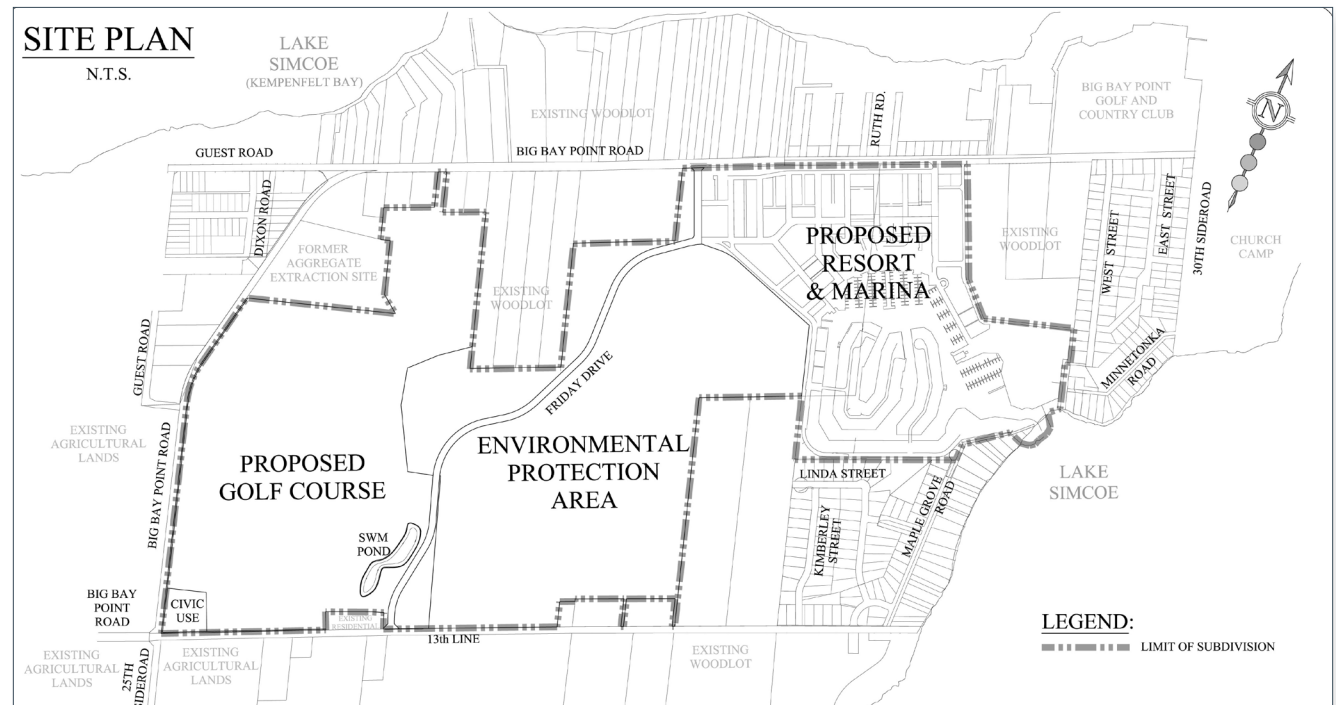


Figure 22: Friday Harbour site plan as proposed by Geranium Corporation.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)

4.2 Site Description and Elements of the Project

The site in question for the Big Bay Point Resort is situated on a 590 acre (239 hectare) parcel of land on the south-west shore of Lake Simcoe adjacent Kempenfelt Bay. The site is bordered by Lake Simcoe to the east, 13th Line to the south and Big Bay Point Road to the north and west. At the time of application, the parcel of land was comprised primarily of agricultural land to the west, a forested woodlot and wetland centrally located and a 375 slip abandon marina to the east. The area of Big Bay Point itself is home to a mix of seasonal and permanent residents, most of whom are oriented towards Lake Simcoe at the east end.



Figure 23: Proximity of neighboring land uses to the Friday Harbour site (Toronto Life, 2013)



Figure 24: Aerial perspective of cottagers facing Lake Simcoe and woodlot adjacent marina to be preserved. (Toronto Life, 2013)

4.3 Position of the Parties

Preceding the OMB hearing, Kimvar had managed to reach an agreement regarding its proposed resort development with the two planning departments of the County of Simcoe and the Town of Innisfil, two residential groups of the Sandycove Acres Homeowners Association (SAHA) and the Residents of Innisfil Association (RIA). The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH), a former appellant, also became in agreement and a Memorandum of Agreement was signed after a successful settlement process carried out with the assistance of the Office of the Provincial Development Facilitator. As such, having resolved all of the outstanding issues with these respective parties, counsel on the part of Kimvar, the County, the Town and SAHA/RIA coordinated their efforts throughout the course of the hearing including cross-examination of witnesses, direct evidence and document submissions.

The need for an OMB hearing arose from the positions of Nextnine Limited (Nextnine), 2025890 Ontario Inc. (the company) and the Innisfil District Association (IDA). Participating in the settlement negotiations held with the Provincial Facilitator, they choose not to sign the Memorandum of Agreement, choosing to oppose approval of the development. All three parties were opposed to the idea of the development proceeding and

held the belief that the Official Plan Amendments (OPA), draft Plan of Subdivision and proposed site-specific by-law should not be approved by the OMB.

4.4 Organization of the Hearing and Witnesses

The opponents brought a motion to adjourn proceedings, which was dismissed. A pre-hearing process ran from 2005 to June 2007, during which a list of issues was defined, along with the organization of the proceedings before the actual OMB hearing was held from 2007 - 2008. Originally prepared by the County of Simcoe and the MMAH, the list was adopted by the Opponents after significant changes caused the County of Simcoe and MMAH to no longer oppose the development. The agreed upon order indicated Kimvar (the proponents and developer) would call their case first. After several witnesses, all parties agreed to change the order and hear from the Opponents witnesses first thereafter. This was done to reduce the length of the trial and only call the proponents necessary witnesses, in response to the Opponents arguments. The parties agreed that each would call a planning witness, the Opponents would state their entire case, and the proponents agreed they would call any additional witnesses if requested by Counsel, and they would be available for cross-examination. The opponents agreed they would not make submission on the basis they did not have opportunity to cross-examine experts who had pre-filled witness statements. After the evidence of the planners for the County of Simcoe and the Town of Innisfil, the Opponents did not require any additional witnesses to be called and the Board said that it did not

require further evidence. Both parties made final submissions, and the OMB extended the hearing day to allow registered participants and those who could not attend the hearing during regular hours an opportunity to present evidence. An extensive list of witnesses is located below (table 2).

Proponents	Opponents
Kimvar called to testify: Wendy Nott (land use planning-factual background) William Green (resort planning and development) Michael Hoffman (agriculture) Christopher Middlebro (transportation planning and engineering) John Genest (land use planning, with expertise in resort planning economic development and tourism planning) Jeanette Gillezeau (economics) Mark Freedman (condominium law expert) Milo Sturm (coastal engineering and marine design) Lou Locatelli (geoscientist, with expertise in environmental site assessments) Testified during the course of argument on the Motion Paul Henry (who conducted the archaeological assessment) Others called to testify: James Bennett (land use planning)-called by the Town Ian Bender (land use planning)-called by the County Kimvar and the SAHAIRIA adopted the planning evidence and opinions offered by Messrs Bennett and Bender in support of their respective positions on the planning instruments under appeal. In addition, expert witness statements and supporting reports were prepared and filed by a series of witnesses retained by Kimvar, the County of Simcoe, and the Town of Innisfil, none of whom testified following the agreement of parties to re-order the evidence and shorten the length of the hearing.	Robin Craig (fisheries, wildlife, wetland resources) Robert Bowles (biological inventory surveys and wetland evaluation) Alan McNair (land use planning) Tom Watson (fish biology, aquatic toxicity, risk assessment, environmental contamination and management, evaluation of impacts of human related activity on fish and fish habitat, and water quality) Peter Dillon (bio-chemistry, environmental chemistry, limnology and interaction of terrestrial and aquatic habitat). Mr. Avery, President of the IDA and Mr. Bulloch provided evidence on behalf of the Opponents

Table 2: Proponents, opponents and those called to testify at the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearing.

4.5 Issues and Findings

A number of issues arose throughout the OMB hearing, as will be addressed below.

Issue 1: Resort versus Settlement

Is the Big Bay Point development proposal a resort or a settlement and are the planning approvals sought premature?

Issue 2: Public Transit

Is the Big Bay Point development proposal adequately serviced and accessible by public transit?

Issue 3: Potential Environmental Impacts

Does the Big Bay Point development proposal demonstrate adequate regard for protection of natural features?

Issue 4: Are the Planning Applications Premature

Is the Big Bay Point development proposal premature given the need for additional studies and the potential for approvals beyond those required under the Planning Act?

Issue 5: Is this Good Planning

Do the planning instruments under appeal represent good planning with regard to the Big Bay Point development proposal?

4.5.1 Issue: Resort versus Settlement

Question: Is the Big Bay Point development proposal a resort or a settlement and are the planning approvals sought premature?

It was argued by the opponents land use planner Mr. McNair that the Big Bay Point development was not a resort exactly, but rather a residential settlement. After much debate it was concluded that even if the OMB finds the development a resort, it's characteristics are so similar to a settlement that any approval would be premature until the completion of the Growth Management Plan and County wide planning, which would identify the need and locations for resorts, as to do otherwise does not represent good planning. Furthermore, as there is no development in the Official Plan (OP), an analysis of the costs and benefits is required.

Then Mr. Bender stated that the proposed development was a resort, as the current settlements ensure year-round residency, while Big Bay Point development prohibits it. The argument for fractional ownership as well as the existence of hotels units and the leisure amenities that will draw in the public, as opposed to work activities furthered their case. Mr. Freedman testified to the legality of prohibiting permanent occupancy. As such, the OMB determined that Big Bay Point development was

in fact a resort, operated as a resort and not a settlement. Ergo, it was not premature to grant approval based on documents that would be needed if it were to be classified as a settlement. The OMB accepted Mr. Noskiewicz's submission that the planning exercise was development driven, and not policy led, and that the Big Bay Point development was within the confines of the PPS, and the County OP.

Mr. Bender testified that policies in the County OP support resort development outside of settlement areas, however a clear distinction between resource related development and non-resource related development, with non-resource related developments directed to settlements. The County's OP acknowledges that some growth will occur outside of settlements, such as recreational districts, shoreline areas and special development.

Since the subject lands were defined as a Special Development Area (SDA), it was deemed consistent with the OP. In doing so, the County

of Simcoe OP indicates that the majority of growth will be directed to settlement areas, but some growth will also be accommodated through country residential subdivisions, recreational districts, shoreline areas, special development areas, business parks and rural consents. However, the County of Simcoe OP also requires local municipalities to undertake Growth Management Strategies (GMS) as the basis for identifying the

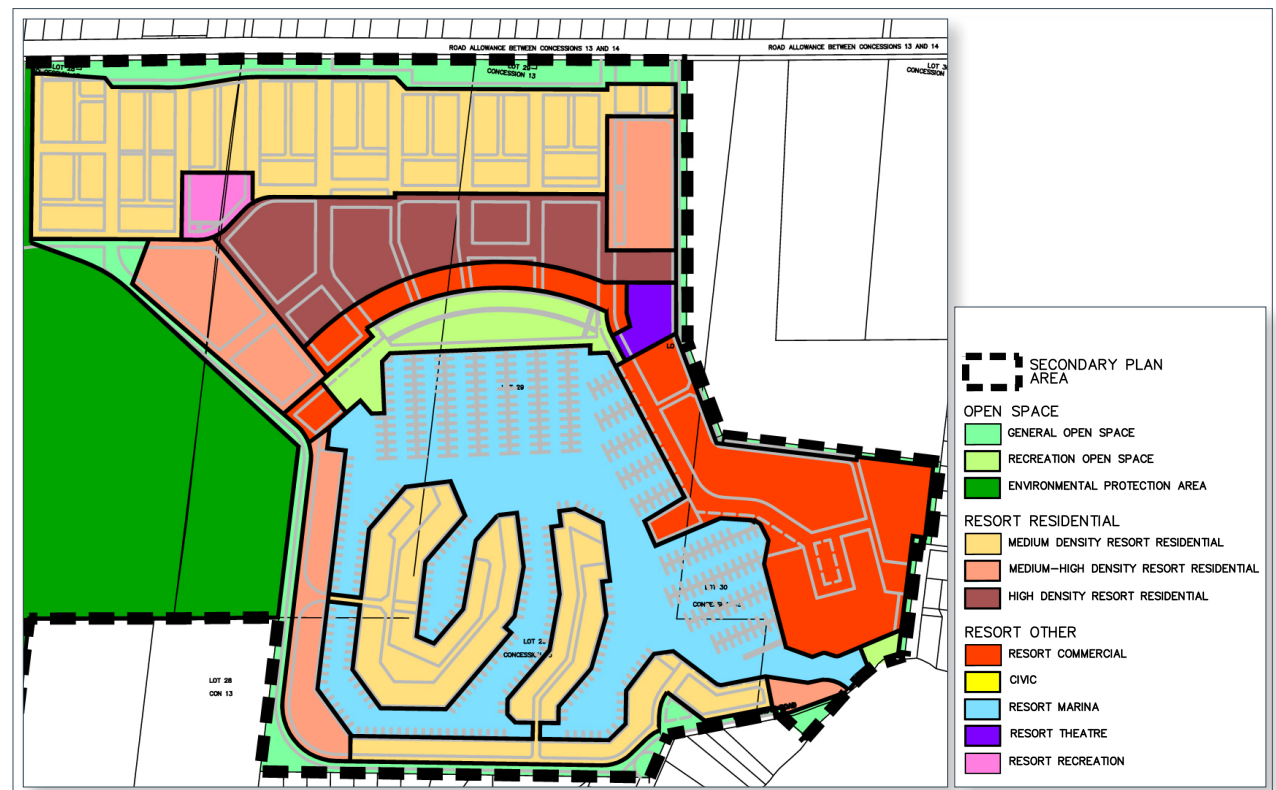


Figure 25: Proposed development density of the Friday Harbour Marina Village. (Town of Innisfil, 2010)

amount of growth to be directed to settlement areas and other land use categories.

With this decided, the planners agreed that the property required re-designation. Mr. McNair suggested again that this decision was premature, however Kimvar re-stated that resorts are proponent driven, not determined through a GMS process. The OMB determined that pre-designating lands as resort areas was unrealistic, and would overlook the benefits of such a project.

Ms. Gilezeau provided expert testimony regarding the perceived economic, environmental, and community benefits of such a development. These include the creation of an environmental protection area (EPA), jobs during building and later operation, retail tax revenues. Increased transportation networks and

increases to public services were also noted as beneficial community elements offered by this development.

Furthermore, the SAHA/RIA were identified and numerous community benefits are testified to by Ms. Wale. Mr. Kagan testified his clients were concerned about the environment. The OMB rejected the submissions made by the Opponents that the approvals are premature and not supported by the PPS, County of Simcoe OP and Town of Innisfil OP.



Figure 26: Rendering showing built development at Friday Harbour, similar to a settlement or resort. (Geranium Corporation, 2012)

4.5.2 Issue: Public Transit

Question: Is the Big Bay Point development proposal adequately serviced and accessible by public transit?

Mr. McNair argued that the Big Bay Point development was proposed without regard for the PPS where it states transportation systems should be safe, environmentally sensitive, and energy efficient. This argument was fuelled by the lack of public transit and therefore required a reliance on private motor vehicle ownership for access, which was not environmentally sensitive or energy efficient. It was also identified that while Innisfil does not have a sufficient population base to support an independent public transit system, there is a potential for public transit in the future. Big Bay Point can however accommodate bus access, and emphasis would be placed on walking. Mr. Middlebro testified from a transport engineering perspective, that public transit is not necessary to the operation of a resort. Mr. Bennett also agreed, stating there are still opportunities for them at a later point in time. Plans are underway with GO Transit commuter rail from Barrie, and GO has an extensive linked service including reaching into the core of Toronto.

Three observations were made by the OMB. First was that the project does incorporate walking, hiking, golfing, and not driving. Second,

Innisfil does not have the population to support public transit. Third, as a destination, resorts are visited primarily during off-hours; weekends, evenings, and from a large variety of other destinations. Mr. Green and Mr. Genest concurred in stating the normalcy of resorts to rely on private motor vehicle access. Kimvar did also undertake a detailed analysis of transportation in the broader context. The OMB concluded that the planning instruments do have regard for the necessary policies.



Figure 27: Friday Harbour connection to GTA transit systems; rail (yellow) and automobile (blue). (Geranium Corporation, 2012)

4.5.3 Issue: Potential Environmental Impacts

Question: Does the Big Bay Point development proposal demonstrate adequate regard for protection of natural features?

The Opponents argued that Kimvar had not demonstrated enough protection for the features and functions of Big Bay Point. Mr. Bowles, Mr. Craig, Dr. Watson and Dr. Dillon for the Opponents outlined the negative impacts on the environment and Lake Simcoe. Two overarching areas were identified as primary concerns;

- i) Woodlots, wetlands, natural heritage and naturally vegetated areas,
- ii) Fisheries, marine and water quality.

It was identified by Mr. Craig that significant woodlands would be affected by the approval of the development as significant amounts of core interior habitat would be lost from the existing woodlot. Of particular concern in this respect was the loss of endangered Butternut species and disruption of wildlife corridor connectivity. A suggestion for the need of an additional reptile survey was noted as confirmation of the species and



*Figure 28: Construction of the marina basin at Friday Harbour.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)*



*Figure 29: Tree removal and site preparation work for the Marina Village at Friday Harbour.
(Save Lake Simcoe, 2012)*

numbers of amphibians on site were questionable, as significant wetland and reproductive habitat was to be destroyed.

Mr. Hoffman, a representative of Kimvar, noted that the agricultural lands of the site, where the golf course is to be constructed, were not prime agricultural lands and that the agricultural qualities of lands within the site were relatively poor quality. Furthermore, he reassured the OMB that the existing forest cover would be protected through the designation of an Environmental Protection Area (EPA), and although there would be a road traversing the EPA, its placement would avoid any significant features. This EPA would also serve as refuge for species whose habitat had been displaced through the development process, such as threatened species possibly located on site such as the Banding's Turtle. Furthermore, the woodlot was not designated to be provincially significant within the PPS, and previous development applications had been approved in instances where larger percentages of forest cover and interior habitat had been lost. Kimvar then testified to the fact that they had conducted a detailed Butternut survey and management plan, along with a wetland evaluation which found that there was no evidence that the wetlands were provincially significant under the PPS.



*Figure 30: Butternut sapling to be planted within the Nature Preserve.
(Geranium Corporation, 2012)*

4.5.4 Issue: Is the Application Premature

Question: Is the Big Bay Point development proposal premature given the need for additional studies and the potential for approvals beyond those required under the Planning Act?

The Opponents argued that the Kimvar project application was premature in nature as there is no urgency to immediately approve the development applications prior to the appropriate studies being conducted. This prematurity was argued on several grounds, including the prospect of an extension of the Greenbelt under the Places to Grow Act and the for the Province of Ontario to introduce either new policy or legislation pertaining to the protection of Lake Simcoe. It was also noted that the approval of a development prior to completion of a watershed study by the Conservation Authority, which will likely result in a new watershed plan, would be premature. Furthermore, the subject lands were noted to be a significant cultural heritage landscape that the County of Simcoe and Town of Innisfil have failed to recognize in their Official Plan (OP) and establish policies to protect these sites while consulting with representatives of surrounding First Nations communities. Accordingly any approvals were argued to be pre-mature as the need for additional approvals, including a provincial class environmental assessment and permits under federal legislation were evidence that the project is premature.

The OMB found that while the arguments posed were substantial, the evidence was not. The Greenbelt is not currently in the area of the Big Bay Point development, and an extension is unlikely at best. No evidence of a new watershed plan was presented, and no arguments from the Conservation Authority were raised. All necessary cultural heritage policies were abided by including an Archaeological Assessment. After thorough arguments, the OMB agreed the policies had been followed and necessary protective measures were in place.

4.5.5 Issue: Is this Good Planning?

Question: Do the planning instruments under appeal represent good planning with regard to the Big Bay Point development proposal?

The OMB ruled that the proposed site plan represented good planning in accordance with the OPA 5 and 17, after evidence provided by Mr. Bender and Mr. Bennett was largely uncontradicted by the Opponents. Furthermore, the OMB found that each of the criteria set out in the Planning Act had been considered and addressed by Kimvar, while the evidence provided on the part of Mr. Bennett and Mr. Bender further reinforced that the draft site plan and conditions satisfies the requirements.

4.6 Decision and Order

The OMB concluded that the Big Bay Point development proposal is to proceed, with conditions.

5.0 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

5.1 Interview Opinions

As mega-developments and amenity migrants affect community members in varying ways, community members holding public office were sought as interviewees regarding opinions and effects of the Friday Harbour development upon the local Innisfil region. Having a working knowledge of land use planning practice and a comprehensive view of multiple community members from varying backgrounds, respondents were sought to identify key issues which residents, business owners, local leaders and representatives of community groups. Benefits, drawbacks, tensions and issues that have arisen from the proposed Friday Harbour development were discussed in an attempt to better understand the motivations, behaviors, and perspectives of the Friday Harbour project from an array of stakeholder perspectives.

5.1.1 Interview Questions

1. What are the challenges to developing tourism within your community? How is your community addressing these challenges?
2. Would you say there are people or organizations in your community that have very different ideas or interests about what form tourism development should take? What, if anything, is your community doing to bridge the gaps between these different ideas or interests in tourism development?

3. In your opinion, what would be the major conflicts that have developed within your community as it has expanded its tourism industry in the past? How has the community addressed these conflicts?
4. What advice would you give to a rural community just beginning to explore tourism development?
5. What advice would you give to a rural community that is experiencing success and/or growth in its tourism industry?
6. Do you think that tourism in your community has been a useful tool for rural economic development? Why or why not?
7. Is there something that can be done in your community that would make tourism development more effective as a tool for rural economic development?
8. Who or what are the key factors that should be considered when developing tourist activities or policies?
9. Would you say your community has goals or ideals about amenity migration?
10. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about tourism development in your community?

5.1.2 Parties Interviewed

Barb Baguley, Town of Innisfil, Mayor

Dan Davidson, Town of Innisfil, Deputy Mayor

Maria Baier, Town of Innisfil Councillor, Ward 6

Bill Loughead, Town of Innisfil Councillor, Ward 5

Ken Simpson, Town of Innisfil Councillor, Ward 3

Richard Simpson, Town of Innisfil Councillor, Ward 2

Doug Lougheed, Town of Innisfil Councillor, Ward 1

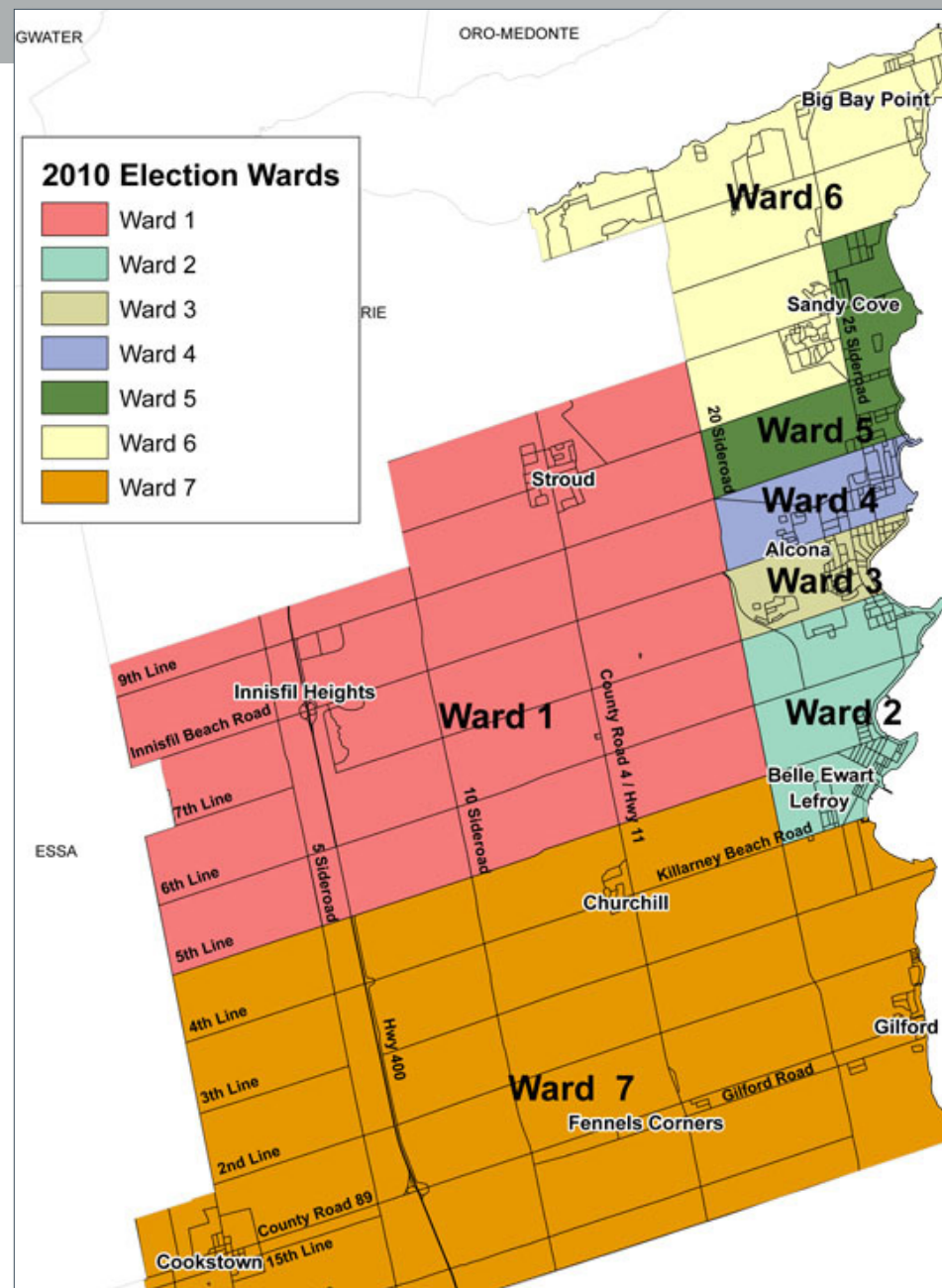


Figure 31: Town of Innisfil electoral wards, 2010 - 2014.
(Town of Innisfil, 2013)

5.2 Summary of Interview Results

Just as every place has a story to tell, with every site plan a tale unfolds about the current and future state of a space. Nevertheless while land-use planning is important in asserting private ownership rights and community values, it is also an opportunity to engage a community in shaping its future goals and visions. While a land use plan is “a conception about the spatial arrangement of land uses,” it is also “a set of proposed actions to make [a vision] a reality” (EcoTrust Canada, 2009). Furthermore, while the reasons for undertaking a land use plan may vary depending on the environmental, economic or social needs of a community, in the end, a successful planning process must include diverse views and backgrounds while encouraging participation from the community at all stages. As was touched on by the 7 individuals interviewed, land use planning for amenity migrants has the potential to lead communities to realize many unexpected benefits beyond their initial planning intentions, including:

- an increased connection and understanding of their community resources
- forged relationships with other agencies, businesses and individuals within the community
- strengthened social capacity and communication skills

- reinforced cultural importance and identity amongst community members
- a sense of ownership and engagement in future development

While a broad range of topics and concerns were also touched on during the discussion, these 3 key themes of capacity building, collaboration, and communication were critical, running throughout the majority of the planning discussion process. As such, community leaders felt it was important to keep them at the top of their minds throughout the entire planning journey.

A recurring theme of capacity building resonated throughout the interviews, with all interviewees mentioning the challenges of overcoming increasing population issues within the community. One respondent identified capacity development as the biggest obstacle in successfully completing a land use plan for resort communities as a specific land designation does not commonly exist for such land uses. Moreover, rural municipalities working with smaller staffing resources and increased development pressures often feel overwhelmed by unrealistic time frames to complete new planning designations on top of their existing day to day responsibilities. Combating this, many rural communities

have chosen to outsource many aspects of the planning process to consultants, as opposed to traditionally completing these tasks in-house. This was the case with much of the Friday Harbour application, wherein outside agencies were contracted to deal with the needed capacity to help manage the increased workload demands. Stantec, MMM Group Limited and others were all consultants on behalf of the Town of Innisfil, fulfilling roles such as that of Mike Oldham, Senior Project Manager with MMM Group Limited.

While the primary goal of this research was to identify how collaborative communication and community based learning development can effectively enable rural communities to develop and implement best practices for the establishment of mega-developments catering to amenity migrants. However, the interview respondents provided many sentiments which may inform the management of the planning processes dealing with other aspects of amenity migration, such as lack of infrastructure, servicing and environmental degradation. As many of the respondents in the case study noted, the amenity migration phenomenon has begun to influence Innisfil as a result of the Friday Harbour development. The community is beginning to face escalating demands from urban residents for vacation residences and

second homes. Discussing the rationale behind this growing demand, it was indicated that the abundant natural, recreational, and cultural amenities available in Innisfil and the proximity to urban centers such as Barrie and the GTA are all contributing factors to this trend. Particularly the seasonal and second home ownership tendencies of amenity migrants to the Friday Harbour development were touched on:

“ This new development in the area, [Friday Harbour] has about 1,500 units and I believe about 90% of them have been bought as secondary homes being scooped up by out of towners.”

While individual residents of Innisfil have, and undoubtedly will face the hardships of amenity migration led growth, planning staff are thought to have control over the potential implications of inflows of amenity migrants. While such tourism induced growth is often managed in a more spontaneous fashion, appropriate measures should be outlined within planning policies to prevent overwhelming tourism-induced growth. For instance, in the case of the Friday Harbour development, local residents of the community expressed strong opposition to allowing seasonal occupancy of the site, and as such zoning that facilitated full time occupancy of the residences, if only in small pockets, would help maintain the community feel and atmosphere. While many of the

respondents expressed that they feel the community has some control over amenity migration at present time, they also voiced concerns for the future. As one public representative noted, amenity migration is slowly, but clearly, changing the face of Innisfil:

“It’s funny. I go into town and people are asking “Oh, do you live here?” Thirty years ago, you knew everybody in Innisfil, but it’s a lot different now. It’s a different demographic and a different time. The fact is that telecommunications today are so good that you can do the things here equally as good and as efficiently as you could in downtown Toronto.”

This is an important consideration when assessing the potential effects of emerging mega-developments such as Friday Harbour on the community, and the ways in which planning and municipal staff have worked to arm the community against the often negative transformations associated with amenity migration. Undoubtedly seen as a catalyst for growth and population bases of the community, public inquiries were commonly made as to whether the municipality desired the attraction of new semi-permanent residents. As such, most respondents felt that semi-permanent ownership was the greatest community concern, and as one respondent summarized:

“I see that development [Friday Harbour] as more of an attraction for the transient kind of part-timers that will

maybe buy homes, this is going to be an expensive golf course, marina and I don’t see it as being an attraction for true permanent residents.”

Additionally, it was also expressed that the demographic of the anticipated newcomers and their motives for occupying Friday Harbour to be questionable. Entrepreneurs and retirees of the babyboom generation were not viewed as contributing substantially to the overall sense of community, or as seeing the community as a place to call home, but more so a playground. One interviewee in particular provided their sentiments to this effect:

“Having a golf course and marina here is going to attract a lot of people that want the cottage lifestyle. It seems though that we are starting to attract “that” demographic, primarily for retirement purposes. You know... the “boomers” buying up condo’s and living here 2-3 months of the year, and then putting their children in them. That kind of seems to be the phenomenon that’s going on here.”

While it appears that Innisfil will not remain immune to the effects of amenity migration, the case study demonstrated that unique approaches to engaging, pro-active community planning may help mitigate the negative effects of this phenomenon. In conversations surrounding possible improvements to the planning and development

of the space, there was little suggestion for change. The three improvements recommended included greater public involvement on a more regular basis (such as through the use of a planning advisory committee) third party assessments on development proposals and reports (to ensure suitability and neutrality) and greater use of phased development agreements to facilitate more effective and more easily administrated development on a smaller scale.

Positive Impacts of Amenity Migration from Interviews		
I	Environmental Impacts	increased stewardship and awareness of environmental issues as a result of impact to environmentally significant lands adjacent to amenity migrant developments
II	Social Impacts	- promotion of a healthier, more active, rural lifestyle - great social network for migrants and host community members - more community programs for host community as a result of amenity migrant desires
III	Economic Impacts	- increased availability of goods and services - increased tourism base - more opportunities for employment for all income levels - economic growth and appreciation of home values

Table 3: Positive impacts of amenity migration to Innisfil from interviews.

Negative Impacts of Amenity Migration from Interviews		
I	Environmental Impacts	- natural space fragmentation - hydrologic problems - rural / urban sprawl and density concerns - lack of planning and proper zoning to protect environmentally significant areas - increased automobile dependency due to remote access areas of amenity and lack of public transit systems
II	Social Impacts	- loss of cultural identity within in host communities - social hierarchy disconnect with wealthy migrants and host community - restricted access of general public to newly private environmental amenities
III	Economic Impacts	- economic status of low income residents further decreased - many local residents pushed into service industry and forced to move to more affordable adjacent towns - loss of affordable housing and rental accommodations, increased taxes and servicing fees

Table 4: Negative impacts of amenity migration to Innisfil from interviews.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Summary

Based upon the objectives outlined earlier in this study and summarized in Table 1, the following findings were found with regards to amenity migration in respect to the Friday Harbour mega-development on Lake Simcoe.

6.1.1. Objective I

i) Consolidate a definition of “amenity migrant” based upon identified characteristics.

Based upon the literature review, an “amenity migrant” is someone who relocates for a non-economical motive but more so based on socio-cultural and environmental draws. It can also be attributed to “in-migration” of new residents on a permanent basis to a region. Second home ownership and seasonal occupancy of second residences also comprise those classified as amenity migrants. In the case of Friday Harbour, amenity migration will be occurring with those moving into the on-site residences such as condominiums, and will likely come from the urban core of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

Factors or characteristics associated with amenity migration but not classified as components of true amenity migration included two separate

movements. First, a trend of seasonal influxes of visitors occupying destinations for short periods of time occurred, which relates to tourism. Secondly, a desire for “pristine” or undeveloped locations, possessing high environmental qualities, existing tourism infrastructure and a strong sense of traditional, rich local culture or history. In the case of Friday Harbour, the tourist appeal of “cottage country” acts as a significant draw to attract amenity migrants, playing off the idea of a new, “trendy” form of cottage ownership.

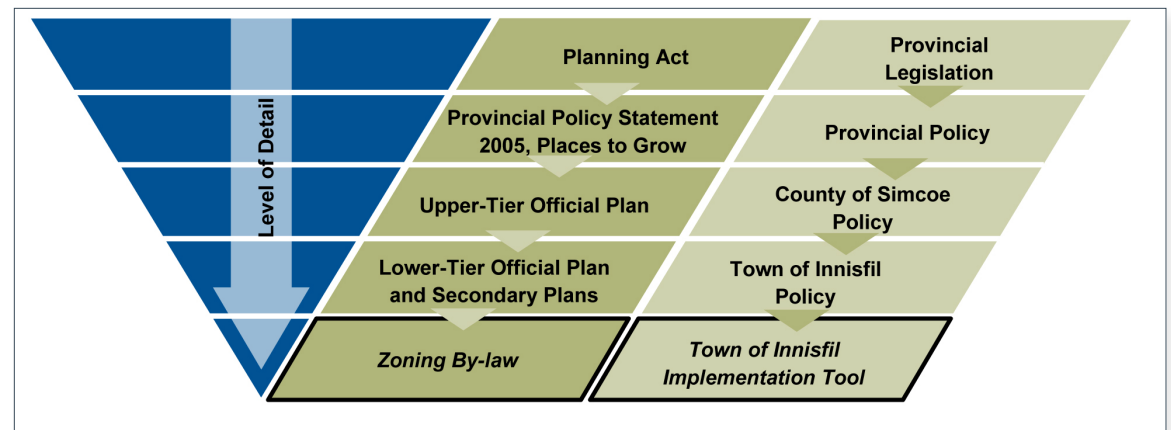
6.1.1. Objective II

ii) Conduct an examination of current land use planning practices and processes through which amenity migration and mega-development is shaped.

A review of literature and experience with planning for amenity migrants in rural communities across North America has shown a plethora of tensions. Many land use planning practices and hierarchal frameworks such as the Planning Act, Provincial Policy Statement and Zoning By-Laws rely on the adoption of successful collaboration between stakeholders. These frameworks and policies are aimed at promoting the transfer of information and knowledge between parties, however there is often limited information available to all individuals within the process, or alternatively, the information is inappropriately conveyed or ill-timed.

Furthermore, the resort and mega-development industry in Ontario is consistently plagued with complex policy issues arising from conflicting stakeholder interests at varying scales, promoting the need for a more efficient and effective means of stakeholder engagement within the land use planning process for resorts within rural communities. In the case of the Friday Harbour mega-development, the primary tension arose between long time residents of the community and cottage owners adjacent the site. Unhappy with the possible alterations to the rural ideology they withheld of their community, the difficulty they endured in obtaining information regarding the proposed development only fueled their anger and distrust towards the local planning system. This distrust clearly demonstrates the need for a more transparent and informed system through which mega-developments are introduced into local, rural communities. Moreover, the fact that amenity migrants are rarely attracted to an area based on what the town offers on its own, but desire the features of the region or greater municipality at large, make collaborative planning a key consideration for rural land use planners between rural municipalities.

It has been identified that the better the knowledge base upon which public policies are built, the more likely they are to be successful, becoming increasingly effective when knowledge is transferred and shared between parties. This speaks to the need to formally educate individual members of the public and rural communities on common land use planning practices and process, while promoting their involvement throughout key milestones of the process. In the case of the Friday Harbour development, very few local staff members were involved as an outside consultant from MMM Group was hired to oversee the project, and information transfer was limited to dissemination through elected officials to the public. Successful land use policy implementation also requires the capacities



*Figure 32: Levels of decision making within the planning framework.
(Town of Innisfil, 2011)*

and capability of affected stakeholders to be considered, while realizing and understanding that the stakeholders will have varying capacities with regards to knowledge and information access and understanding. This involves an understanding that the capacities of stakeholders may be challenged within the collaborative policy development approach to rural land use planning, as some sources of knowledge are not necessarily practical or applicable in realistic scenarios as regulation intended. Such was the case in the Friday Harbour development where a large majority of the affected residents were elderly, long term residents of the area with little to no knowledge of common planning practices and frameworks. This further supports the idea and need for an inclusive, participatory process through which large scale projects such as Friday Harbour which are often highly controversial can be slowly introduced to the community in an attempt to be more widely accepted and lead to fewer disputes.

While third party organizations such as the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) are tasked with the role of intervening in land use disputes, however, the efficiency and use of the OMB has become increasingly scrutinized in recent years. The efficient use of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), as provincially-appointed administrative tribunal to resolve land use planning and development disputes has become increasingly

controversial, suggesting its role within the planning framework may need to be reviewed. Inarguably a powerful decision-making body with respect to matters of rural planning in the province of Ontario, the OMB model of conflict mediation and resolution has both pros and cons but is certainly

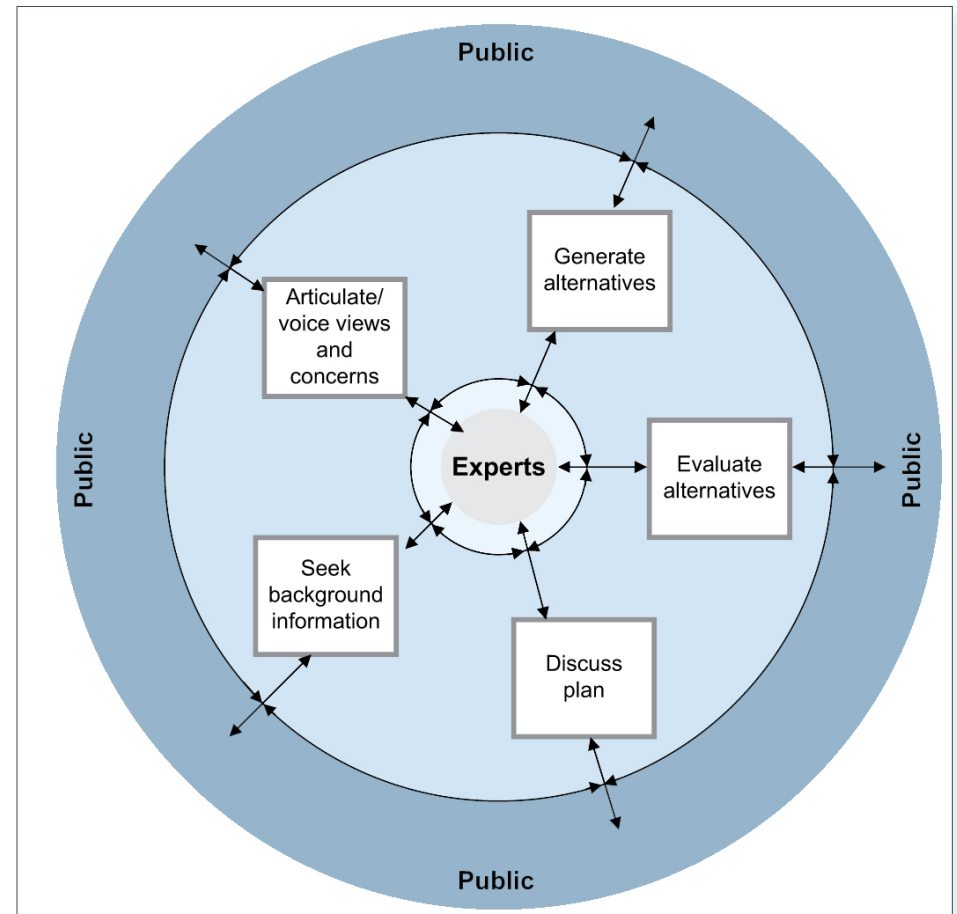


Figure 33: Schematic of an ideal collaborative planning process (Simao, 2008)

not fully conducive for reviewing and adjudicating design elements often associated with the historic, cultural and “genius loci” elements of amenity migration and mega-developments. While the OMB may make conscious attempts to recognize elements of rural developments as an important and integral part of the planning process, it tends to support less rigid design control measures despite being mainly concerned about the “measurable” impacts of a design on a community. Overall, this adjudicative process attempts to balance private and public interests but while doing so may not have led to the best design solution. Such was the case with Friday Harbour, where key design features such as the marina basin and nature preserve layout were not examined in-depth. More so, the OMB trial itself left many residents with the impression that it was simply a “smoke-screen” in the planning process, as whoever could front the most money to hire the best lawyers and specialists (i.e. the developers) came away the victor.

Some of the conflicts watched over by the OMB are the result of a lack of information about amenity migration, or how to plan for it. There are a few complications to amenity migration that further confuse attempts to study it. As more individuals choose to travel, it becomes increasingly difficult to track their movement, plan and project for community needs

accordingly. This is an important consideration for planners and policy makers as accurate forecasting is necessary for successful planning, particularly in the areas of resource use and taxation. The usefulness of statistical trends for analysis, projection and decision making purposes is also commonly called into question. A main limitation to amenity migration planning was identified as being capacity based in a lack of government mobilization at both the regional and provincial scales, in collaboration between regions to share resources. However, due to the fact that the majority of amenity migration serves to re-arrange individuals within the province, an unwillingness and no need is seen on the part of the province to participate in such processes. Finally, the underlying ideal that amenity migration fosters an anti-planning ethic as it is thought to be something that can not be predicted or proactively fixed and as such is merely accommodated or addressed after the fact.

Planners and policy makers viewing amenity migration and mega-developments solely from a primarily economic motive fail to address the countless societal spin off problems such as resource scarcity, altered associations of community pride, defined individualism and independence. At large, this is primarily due to the fact that a large majority of amenity migration driven development such as that of Friday Harbour

takes place as a result of promotional development on the part of private developers. Likewise, often elected officials holding public office are not adequately involved in these planning processes or fail to address many important planning considerations that are often overlooked by planning staff. A weak or generalized oversight is often observed when dealing with amenity migration planning related decisions, translating into lack of conformity in community ideals and visioning.

For all of the complications encompassed by amenity migration, there are a few tools that may assist specifically in planning for such communities. At a smaller, more local scale, many land use planning issues related to amenity migration and mega-developments may be overcome through enactment of policy restrictions such as zoning by-laws and regulations restricting maximum lot size and encourage local independence. Studies have shown that sustainable and effective land use principles attributed to amenity migration communities and mega-developments are those modelled after the principles of New Urbanism.

6.1.3. Objective III

iii) Understand the direct and indirect social effects of the Friday Harbour mega-development upon the local community.

The social effects of concerns over the Friday Harbour mega-development

stem firstly stem from the size and scale of the development, as the idea that the Friday Harbour development project was a settlement rather than a resort. It was perceived as a threat to “cultural uniformity” with the exploitation or alteration of rural traditions and in doing so altering the community identity that was the original draw in the first place. During the OMB trial, it was decided that the project should be classified as a resort as opposed to a settlement on the basis of seasonal or interim residency by occupancy – again, the idea of what constituted seasonal or part time was subjective, along with the means through which this provision would be enforced. In support of this, the OMB found mega-development projects such as these to be development driven, as opposed to policy led and so long as they adhered to the confines of the legislative frameworks such as the PPS and OP, should be granted approval. Furthermore, discontent in that the development disregarded the PPS clause on transportation, stating transportation systems should be safe, environmentally sensitive and energy efficient, but being located within a rural setting and the lack of public transportation appeared to support this concern as a development such as Friday Harbour would promote a reliance upon private automobile ownership. The fact that the existing Innisfil population does not support an independent public transit system reinforced this idea. The argument that the development placed an emphasis on walking was weak, while

the idea of connections to the GO Transit terminal in Barrie supported the idea of Friday Harbour utilizing the community of Innisfil as a “bedroom community” or weekend destination. Lastly, environmental concerns of a development on such a monumental scale were also a primary concern of community members, noting especially concerns over the loss of wildlife habitat and threat to endangered species.

6.1.4. Objective IV

iv) Identify and understand best practices for mega-development and amenity migration planning policy.

The development and implementation of current land use policies and planning practices in Ontario are largely attributed to the adoption of successful collaboration between stakeholders. Frameworks and policies promoting the transfer of information and knowledge between parties have been developed surrounding the idea of social capital being arguably the most successful, but there is often limited information available regarding the success of knowledge transfer and translation between stakeholders. As a result, “how knowledge management theories and frameworks are applied in the public sector is not well understood”

(Riege and Lindsay, 2006) while successful community relations rely on collaboration, communication, and learning to develop trust and understanding between stakeholders. In realizing that there are numerous stakeholders affected by resort planning and mega-developments, there is a need for the involvement of stakeholders within the decision making process of planning and policy developments at all levels.

This includes:

- i. an interdisciplinary approach and cross disciplinary integration
- ii. stakeholders educating each other
- iii. informal face to face dialogue among stakeholders
- iv. continuous stakeholder participation throughout the planning process
- v. encouragement of stakeholder participation to create a holistic plan
- vi. joint information searches to determine facts, and
- vii. consensus of stakeholders in order to make decisions.

The collaborative planning theory is entrenched with the importance of multiple stakeholders and often competing interests. Hillier (1995) revealed the necessity for collaborative planning in allowing individuals to participate in a “reflexive exchange” between stakeholder groups. “For a reflexive exchange to be positive, it requires us to have openness to the

other, a willingness to listen and take the other's claims seriously" (Hillier, 1995). As outlined by Hillier (1995) in that "planning practice involves moral and practical judgements. It involves an appreciation of what matters and to whom." In realizing that the planning process occurs in a real world where uncertainty and fluidity can not always be accounted for, Hillier further recommends "flexibility throughout the practice based on reflection are more important than adherence to theoretical or actual rule books and policy manuals. Therefore, planners need to use common sense." This ideal further supports the belief that through equal consideration and involvement of all stakeholders, the best decisions will be made.

Continuing in this stream, the importance of dialogue and information exchange between all parties involved in a decision making process was also recognized by Innes and Booher (2002) noting "developing common interests and beliefs among varying stakeholders through the process of collaboration builds towards cooperative actions [and] outlines [a] suggested model for decision making (Innes and Booher, 2002). This reinforces the importance of facilitating stakeholder meetings, open dialogue, free flowing information and knowledge sharing within decision making processes. Working towards the building of trust and revealing

shared interests among stakeholders creates the necessary development of understanding varying interests among stakeholders while creating a more trustworthy atmosphere for dialogue and collaboration to take place and agreement to formulate.

Riege and Lindsay (2006) speak to the importance of public learning and the notion of knowledge attainment or transfer in stating that "the better the knowledge base upon which public policies are built, the more likely they are to succeed. In particular, good public policy seems to emerge when knowledge possessed by society is transferred effectively". To effectively obtain and utilize knowledge in the formation of policy, the inclusion and involvement of all stakeholders is important as each possess varying and competing interests which should be essentially addressed if planning policy is to be successful.

As noted earlier, there are many real-world complications surrounding the open transfer of information between parties and the collaboration process. Much of the political sphere occurs behind closed doors, with considerations by elected officials overlooking the importance of clearly informing constituents of decision-making protocols, or favouring the economic factors of a development (tax revenues, increased in businesses

overall) often accompanied with a mega-development process. While Innisfil does have a Friday Harbour website portal, the information available on it is limited and contains broken links. The contact section lists a consulting firm as well as the town coordinator, but lacked information on an upcoming meeting about Friday Harbour. As this is the Town's information web site about the Friday Harbour development, this is a gross oversight. Developers have long viewed developing in rural communities in a negative light, with much conflict and tension. However, given the lack of accurate information updated, available, and advertised, having an ideal collaborative relationship is near impossible.

6.2 Conclusions

While the need for rural resort land use planning can be comprehended, it is also consistently the case that adequate resources and facility are not built into the public engagement process to effectively make the framework acceptable and transparent to community members. Lacking these elements of engagement, the planning process is often met with much apprehension and anxiety. Integrating land use plans and processes into the broader community is important, so that development interests and community values can be integrated into the planning process, while incorporating community input and empowering independent decision making. A key aspect of this is the recognition for the need to integrate the perspective viewpoints of all community stakeholders early on in the process.

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