

Media Advisory

Taxpayers need to ask – “Why?”

Newmarket, ON, February 12, 2018 – The Town of Newmarket has announced its intent to purchase the Mulock Estate, 11.6 acres, at the north/west corner of Yonge and Mulock. The cost to taxpayers is \$24 million to be "financed through responsible debt financing." The Town of Newmarket media release states "...this could equate to a one-time \$50 per household tax increase, or \$10 per year, phased-in over five years."

The 2016 Canada Census records the number of households in Newmarket at 27,410. At \$50 per household, the remaining debt would be over \$22.6 million dollars. Additional money will be required for costs such as insurance, maintenance, development, renovations (sprinklers, accessibility, etc.), and staffing. It is unknown what revenue generation will come from this purchase. "To suggest that this purchase will cost taxpayers a mere \$50 per household is irresponsible and incorrect." states NTAG President, Teena Bogner.

In 2003, the Town of Newmarket purchased the Stickwood Walker property on Mulock Drive for \$13 million stating "the primary focus is to ensure that the land is used for purposes that satisfy community needs" and to preserve the "the Stickwood-Walker Farmhouse, Barn and Ash house." The house, which had been the residence of a senior Town staff member for over a decade, has fallen into disrepair to the point that it is now uninhabitable. Taxpayers still owe over \$6 million for this property, 15 years later.

"The Town of Newmarket has a clear history of mismanagement of large land purchases and capital projects. The projected long-term debt for the Town as of December 31, 2017 is \$33.7 million. The Town has failed to preserve the Stickwood Walker Heritage Farmhouse and Barn. The Magna Centre – over \$10 million owing, and a \$3.3-million breach of contract lawsuit. The Old Town Hall - \$5 million over budget, and four years late" states Bogner.

"The question taxpayers should ask is 'why'? Why make this purchase without ANY public consultation? Why undertake this project now, just months prior to a municipal election, with an outgoing mayor? Why make this purchase now when interest rates are rising and markets are volatile? " asks Bogner. "Will we be left with enough money to repair our aging infrastructure? The upcoming October municipal election will give taxpayers the opportunity to articulate to our current Council how they feel about this, and other decisions, with taxpayer's money."



Newmarket Taxpayers Advocacy Group Inc. (NTAG) is a provincially incorporated non-for-profit ratepayers group in Newmarket, ON. NTAG is a non-political, non-partisan, advocacy organization dedicated to fair taxes, less waste, and transparent and accountable government in all levels of government (town, region and school boards) in Newmarket, Ontario, Canada.

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