

Aware Essa Questionnaire Response

1/ I fully support clean water and I support protecting habitat for all the wildlife and fish stocks that rely on it as we do. As a Nottawasaga Board member in the 1990's I was proud to work with the Friends of the Boyne to plant trees on the shore line to reduce water temperatures. This project was a complete success and the fish stock returned. We do not do enough of these types of projects. We must work with our agricultural community to keep as much fertilizers and animal waste from making its way into our streams and rivers. There are solutions, we just have to work together and make them realities.

2/ As you know DC's are done through the by-law process. I fully support DC's funding the required services residential growth creates. I would also like to see an additional surcharge earmarked for the types of projects I identified in my prior response to the question of water. I do know that developers will appeal the by-law if they deem it unfair or excessive. This is why we need the support of our local MPP's.

3/ The Greenbelt question is an interesting one. When it was adopted for the GTA it pushed unprecedented development into Simcoe County. We can all see what that has done. Crazy traffic, hospital wait times of up to 18 hours, residential taxes skyrocketing (9.9% in 2015 and 12% in 2016 in Essa), and little to no affordable housing especially for seniors. My feeling is we should all be pushing for a "Work Where You Live Strategy" in conjunction with a Green Belt Plan. The arrogance of burning billions of litres of fossil fuels each year commuting to the GTA is unacceptable. We have great young families moving to our County and having knocked many of their doors I can tell you they would love to work here. We must also work across municipal borders. In Essa Township - Council approved running a sanitary sewer line from Angus all the way to Baxter putting hundreds of acres of land at risk of urban sprawl. This sanitary sewer line will cross water courses 7 times. Look at the Everett subdivision plan - POOR POOR planning.

4/ This waste facility location is as crazy as the Fuel Transfer Distribution Facility in the heart of Essa Township, also approved by Simcoe County Council. POOR POOR planning.

5/ I fully support keeping the Tree Seed Plant open. This was my first job at 10 years of age. I used to pick cones and take them there and they would pay you right on the spot. The Tree Seed Plant used to harvest and ship seeds all over the world. I remember them telling me even in the 1960's how many seeds they shipped to China. I never forgot that. I was always proud that trees growing on the other side of the world started in Essa Township. I would ask Council to deem the property historical as a start. Not a lot of folks know that one of the oldest basket ball courts in Ontario is or was in one of the buildings on that property.

5/ My 3 priorities would be:

a/ Traffic calming measures both urban and rural. I would ask Council for seasonal speed bumps in appropriate locations and reduced speed limits in rural areas. I would also push the province to allow municipalities to use by-Law officers to do radar. This would be revenue neutral.

b/ I will ask County Council to amend subdivision approval conditions. Currently if lands are within a settlement area with services then they will be approved. I want to include the following conditions: acceptable health care, proper transportation (roads and public transportation), affordable housing and that all developments have a dedicated seniors subsidized housing component. These are vital but the most important item is "local jobs". If we do not have employment - why do we continue to build houses?

c/ Vastly improve communication. With the loss of local newspapers I find so many folks I meet at the door have very little idea what is going on in their municipality to which they are a shareholder. 99% of those I ask had no idea of the proposed Fuel Transfer Station even though it was put forward years ago, and even those who live right on the rail line. I also support forming more committees to help Council garner feedback and communicate with ratepayers.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my vision of a better Essa Township.

David Guergis

Candidate for Mayor of Essa Township