

# Myler Ecological Consulting

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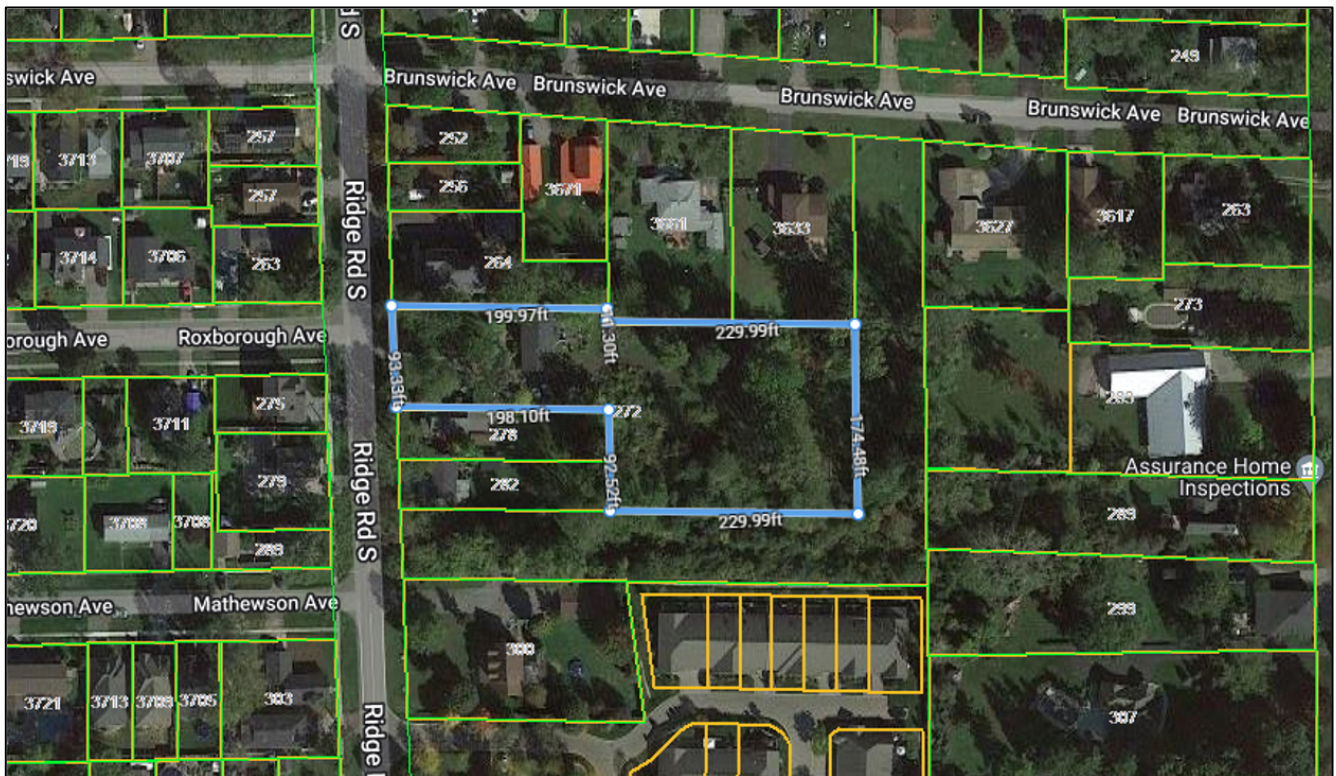
23 June 2022

Culture Developments  
5824 Main Street  
Niagara Falls ON L2G 5Z5

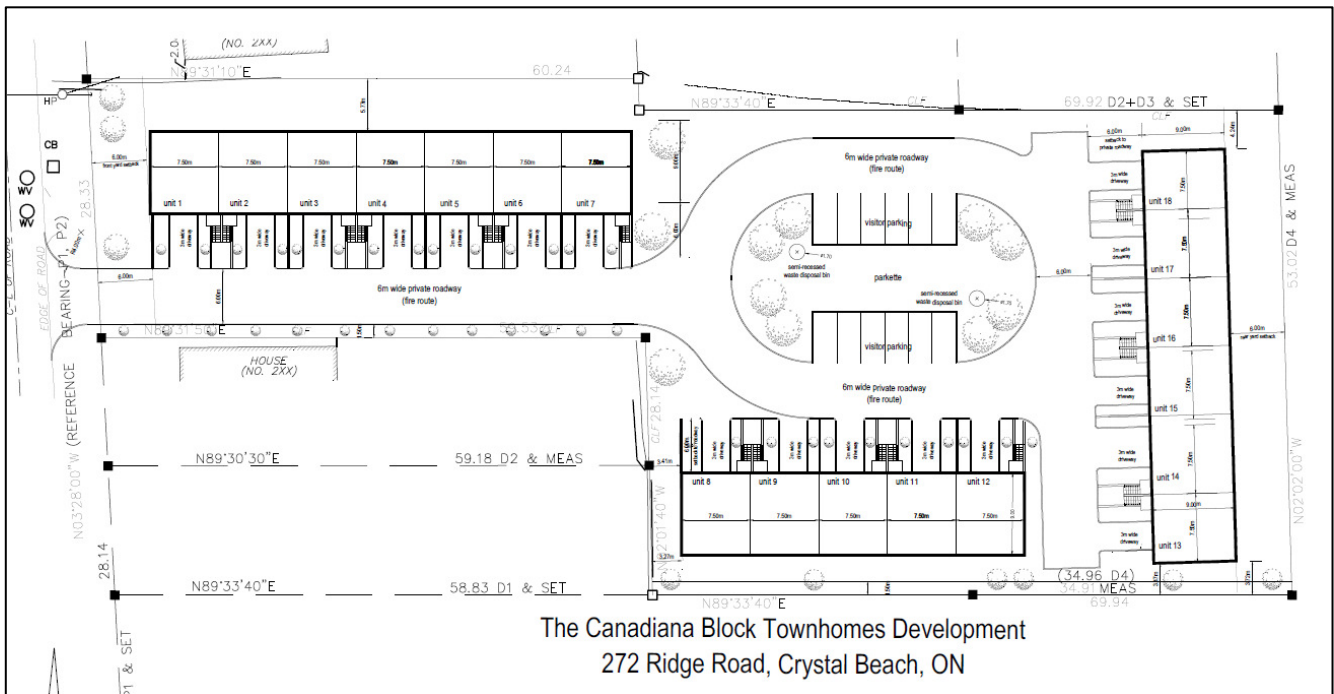
Attention: Craig DeVries

**RE: Natural Heritage Screening – 272 Ridge Rd. S., Crystal Beach (Fort Erie), Ontario.**

Myler Ecological Consulting (Myler) was retained by Culture Developments (Culture) to undertake a natural heritage screening of the residential property at 5824 Ridge Road South, Crystal Beach (Town of Fort Erie), Ontario (the Site)(location depicted on **Figure 1**, below). Culture proposes residential redevelopment of the large site (preliminary site plan on **Figure 2**, below).



**Figure 1:** Site location and extent (blue outline) of 272 Ridge Road South, Crystal Beach.



**Figure 2:** Excerpt of Culture’s preliminary Site Plan.

Myler conducted a desktop review of Fort Erie Official Plan (OP) and Crystal Beach Secondary Plan schedules, which show the treed area at and adjacent to the site as “Woodlot >2ha” and subject to the Town’s Environmental Conservation (EC) Overlay. It is noteworthy that the newer Secondary Plan schedule does not apply the EC Overlay to the unopened road allowance adjacent to the site.

The Fort Erie Natural Areas Inventory (NAI) identified the contiguous treed area at and adjacent to the site as Polygon 140, which the NAI found did not satisfy Locally Significant Natural Area (LSNA) criteria. As such, the NAI did not recommend LSNA designation.

Review of the current Niagara Region OP Schedule C shows the treed area corresponding to Polygon 140 as Environmental Conservation Area (ECA). However, the Region’s on-line Draft Natural Environment System mapping shows neither Significant Woodland nor Other Woodland on or adjacent to the site.

Recent aerial imagery shows a reduction in tree cover at and adjacent to the site, such that much of the EC Overlay / ECA area does not currently appear to be woodland.

Myler participated in a site visit with Culture on 13 May 2022, during which it was confirmed that the EC Overlay / ECA area on the site and adjacent lands, including the unopened road allowance east and south of the site, is not woodland. The site’s rear yard was observed to include manicured areas and patches of Common Buckthorn and Gray Dogwood shrub thicket, with only a few scattered trees, principally Silver Maples. The unopened road allowance south of the site was observed to be a shrubby hedgerow with few, widely spaced trees. The unopened road allowance east of the site was observed to be mowed and manicured lawn.

Myler and Culture confirmed in on-site discussion with the current resident owner that the treed portion of their lands was comprised almost entirely of Ash which had been killed by Emerald Ash Borer. A By-law Order imposed by the Town required the owners to fell and remove the dead Ash trees.

**Photos 1, 2 and 3, below, depict representative conditions observed by Myler and Culture at the site on 13 May 2022:**



**Photo 1:** View of the site's rear yard, facing west from the easterly unopened road allowance. Note the manicured lawn, patches of shrub thicket, and the few remaining live trees following the ordered removal of killed Ash trees.



**Photo 2:** A south facing view across the site's rear yard shows manicured lawn, shrub thicket and in the background beyond the garden shed a portion of the shrubby, sparsely treed hedgerow-like southerly unopened road allowance.



**Photo 3:** A north facing view of the unopened road allowance that is east of the site, showing its current condition as manicured turf.

Myler’s observations confirmed an absence of woodland at and adjacent to the site. The absence of woodland was confirmed to be the consequence of Emerald Ash Borer infestation that killed the dominant Ash trees and the subsequent Town By-law Order that required removal of the dead standing trees.

As such, with woodland clearly absent from the site and adjacent lands, the Town’s “Woodland >2ha” and EC Overlay and the Region’s ECA designation each appear to be no longer applicable as potential development constraints or as triggers for Environmental Impact Study (EIS). Therefore, it is recommended that these designations on the site and adjacent lands be removed from OP and Secondary Plan schedules.

**Sincerely,**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Barry Myler', with a large, stylized flourish extending to the right.

**Barry Myler  
Biologist**