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**Communication : C 9
VMC Sub-committee
June 21, 2022
Agenda Item # 1 and 2**

June 20, 2022
File 9220

Attn: Christina Bruce, Director, VMC Program

**RE: Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan Update &
Parks and Wayfinding Master Plan
Submission of Comments for 99 Peelar Road, City of Vaughan**

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for the 2752179 Ontario Inc. and L.K. Trustco Inc., the owners of the property municipally addressed as 99 Peelar Road, in the City of Vaughan (herein referred to as the 'subject lands'). We are actively monitoring and participating in the current Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan Update (the 'Secondary Plan Update') process on behalf of our clients with respect to the subject property and respectfully submit the enclosed comments on their behalf.

In our view, the proposed Environmental Open Space designation identified in the two land use options of the draft Secondary Plan Update are not appropriate for the subject lands in light of their existing use or the existing and planned context. Further, the subject lands are not necessary from an environmental perspective according to City-led environmental assessment work and environmental analysis undertaken on behalf of the landowners. On this basis, a land use designation that permits commercial and residential uses, consistent with the existing and planned context, would be more appropriate and better implement applicable policy direction. We would appreciate an opportunity to directly discuss these matters with City Staff and the City's consultant team as the Secondary Plan Update advances.

Description of the Subject Lands

The subject lands are located west of the corner of Peelar Road and Maplecrete Road in the Concord Planning area of the City of Vaughan (Figure 1). The property is rectangular in shape and abuts a Highway 407 off-ramp along the southern lot line. The parcel has a total lot area of approximately 1.42 hectares (3.51 acres) and has an approximate frontage on Peelar Road of 167.83 metres. The subject lands are currently occupied by a two-storey banquet hall and event venue known as the Hazelton Manor, with at grade parking and two vehicular access points from Peelar Road. The lands are fully developed save and except for a strip of landscaped area along the western property boundary and some sparse vegetation along the southern property boundary.

The subject lands are located within the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Secondary Plan ("VMCSP") area. In accordance with Schedule F, the subject lands are within the "Major Parks and Open Spaces" precinct. The subject lands are zoned 'C10 – Corporate District Zone' by Zoning By-law 1-88. This zone permits a range of commercial uses. The City's new Comprehensive Zoning By-

law 001-2021 zones the subject lands as 'OS1(H)-1118 – Public Open Space Zone, Exception 1118'. This zone permits a range of park uses.

Consistent with their location immediately adjacent to Highway 407, the subject lands are situated within an area of the City that consists predominantly of industrial and employment land uses. To the west of the subject lands are existing woodlands, and to the north and east are employment uses.



Figure 1 - Air Photograph of Subject Property

The Region of York is currently undertaking its Municipal Comprehensive Review ('MCR') process where employment land conversions have been reviewed. The Draft Regional Official Plan ('ROP') proposes the designation of the subject property as 'Community Area' by Map 1A – Land Use Designations in the draft ROP. Residential, employment and community service uses are directed Community Areas to accommodate future population and employment growth.

Proposed Land Use Designations

At the May 25, 2022 VMCSPP Landowner's Meeting, the City presented two land-use options for the VMCSPP area, as outlined below. Both options propose to designate the subject lands as "Environmental Open Space". In addition, both options show some form of water feature akin to a stormwater management pond on the subject lands.

The Environmental Open Space Designation is Inappropriate for the Vast Majority of the Subject Lands

In our view, the proposed Environmental Open Space designation identified in the two land use options is not appropriate for the subject lands in light of their existing use or the existing and planned context. Further, the subject lands are not necessary from an environmental perspective according to City-led environmental assessment work and environmental analysis undertaken on behalf of the landowners.

First, the proposed land use options do not reflect the existing use of the subject lands. As noted above, the subject lands are the site of a long-standing event venue. Originally developed in the late 1960s, the subject lands have functioned as various employment uses since that time and have currently been operating as an event venue since 2010. The subject lands are fully serviced and fully functional to accommodate this existing use. It is inappropriate to contemplate uprooting an established use and effectively eliminating fully serviced and developed lands from the City's land supply given applicable policy direction to use existing infrastructure efficiently, especially within urban growth centres, to avoid the need for urban sprawl and the associated need to construct new infrastructure.

Second, there appears to be no technical basis for designating the subject lands Environmental Open Space. The preferred alternative for the reconstruction and renewal of Black Creek within the VMC, as determined through the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre Black Creek Renewal Class EA (the "Black Creek EA"), shows that the subject lands are located well outside the area required for the creek reconstruction, outside the associated naturalized buffer area, and also outside the planned future park area. In other words, the subject lands are not intended to serve any environmental purpose related to the reconstructed Black Creek that will address flooding matters within the VMC.

To further investigate the environmental condition of the subject lands, our client retained Pinchin Ltd. to undertake a Natural Heritage Assessment (NHA). The NHA confirms that the vast majority of the subject lands has no environmental significance and no potential contribution toward natural heritage. The NHA identifies only a small strip of land on the western portion of the site, immediately adjacent to Black Creek, as having some potential for environmental significance that warrants additional study in order to confirm its contribution to the surrounding environmental lands. This area is generally identified in orange in Figure 2 for reference (the "Western Strip"). Since the NHA and the Black Creek EA together indicate the portion of the subject lands beyond the Western Strip do not currently serve and are not planned to serve any environmental purpose, at minimum, the portion the subject lands located east of the Western Strip should not be designated as Environmental Open Space.



Figure 2: Ecological Land Classification Mapping prepared by Pinchin Ltd.

We recognize that additional study is required in order to fully understand the nature of the Western Strip. We would appreciate an opportunity to provide additional background information to the City of review and consideration of an appropriate land use designation for the lands given these findings.

In light of the existing use of the subject lands and the absence of a technical basis for designating the lands Environmental Open Space, in our opinion, the land use designation for the subject lands should permit commercial and residential uses. This approach would more closely align with the existing and planned uses in the immediate context, and better support the overall objectives for the VMC.

Conclusion

As outlined above, it is our opinion that the proposed Environmental Open Space designation does not appropriately reflect the existing use and condition of the lands, nor does it accurately reflect the environmental conditions of the site. We request that additional consideration be given to the existing use of the lands, and that the subject lands be designated in a manner that would permit commercial and residential uses in line with the designations for the lands immediately north. Additionally, we request the opportunity to meet with City Staff or the appropriate VMCSPP team consultant to review the above land use and environmental information in more detail through the public consultation process.

Weston Consulting will continue to monitor the Secondary Plan Update process on behalf of our Clients and reserves the right to provide further comments on this matter. We request to be notified of any future reports and/or meetings regarding the VMC Secondary Plan Update, as well as any discussion or decision pertaining to the boundary expansion and secondary plan policies for the subject property, including land use options. We further request an opportunity to meet with City Staff and their consultant team to further engage in the Secondary Plan Update.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Please contact the undersigned at extension 236 should you have any questions regarding this submission.

Yours truly,

Weston Consulting

Per:



Sabrina Sgotto, HBA, MCIP, RPP
Vice President

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