Communication: C25
Committee of the Whole (PM)
January 17, 2023
Item #7

From: Clerks@vaughan.ca
To: Jacquelyn Gillis
Subject: FW: [External] RioCan - Jan 17 @ 7pm
Date: Monday, January 16, 2023 12:09:55 PM

From: IRENE FORD <[redacted]>
Sent: Monday, January 16, 2023 11:56 AM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
Cc: Brian Capitao <[redacted]>; Kim Zarzour <[redacted]>; Noor Javed <[redacted]; Emma McIntosh <[redacted]>
Subject: [External] RioCan - Jan 17 @ 7pm

Please attach the below for the RioCan development application at tomorrow's public meeting. I will be submitting a separate deputation request.

Vaughan Council and Planning Staff,

In addition to my comments below (for which I received no response or answers to my questions) I would l ke to add the following.

I continue to be deeply troubled at the ad-hoc planning process that is unfolding in Ontario whose legacy I fear will be profoundly negative for the people of Ontario.

While I have been frustrated that the Weston and Highway 7 Secondary Plan has not been finalized I am also somewhat sympathetic to staff. There have been so many provincial planning legislative changes that it seems impossible to finalize the document as it continually needs to be revised to reflect these changes. I don't even understand how Bill 23 impacts this proposed development, will they change the parkland and community services proposed because Bill 23 permits so much less than previous planning legislation. What does that mean for my community which has already witnessed an increase in enrollment at our schools, use of our parks, waterparks and green spaces from residents living at the Vaughan Metropolitan Center (VMC) who have no schools (that I'm aware of) or green spaces?

I am deeply concerned how a 'mail distr bution error' occurred for such a significant development with such an influential landowner. Why did the public notice only make it to some residents?

York Region's Official Plan approved the Weston Major BRT Major Transit Station Area (MTSA) with a density of 250 people and jobs/Ha whereas the 2019 Phase 1 Weston and Highway 7 Secondary Plan has referenced 160 persons and jobs/Ha (https://www.vaughan.ca/projects/policy_planning_projects/weston_hwy7/Pages/Status%20and%20Updates.aspx). **The staff report provides no density unit to understand what is being requested versus what is approved?**

RioCan is proposing 25 towers with heights 22 to 55 stories and one that is 68 stories. Comparatively across the street the built towers at 7777 Weston Rd are 30 and 33 stories tall with a 10 storey office building. ***Riocan is proposing a tower that is twice the height of anything in the immediate vicinity.***

I am disappointed in RIOCAN Canada's second largest Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) calling themselves socially, environmentally and corporately responsible when this development is nothing other than a means to facilitate return on investment. It is not about creating liveable, sustainable communities. If it was, they would be working with the City to approve the Weston and Highway 7 Secondary Plan instead of developing their own secondary plan, submitted pretty much immediately after the approval of Bill 23 and shortly after the approval of York Region's Official Plan by Minister Clark. I believe that many landowners and developers are planning significantly more residential development than what was forecasted in York Region's Official Plan. This enabled a low density projection in the urban boundary to justify extensive, expensive and unnecessary greenfield development. There is also no discussion about the sustainability or carbon footprint of so many high-rises buildings in Vaughan. The taller the building the more carbon it emits, if Vaughan is approving development above and beyond what's necessary at heights above what is necessary is the City actually undermining it's Climate Change Emergency Declaration and commitment to act immediately?

> The taller the building, the more carbon it emits at every stage of its life. A July study from npj Urban Sustainability found a 140 per cent increase in emissions from a neighbourhood full of skyscrapers compared to an area of low- and mid-rise buildings. The authors found increasing the number of medium-sized buildings could accommodate growing populations more sustainably than cities focused on single-family homes and skyscrapers because they emit less carbon.

The hidden carbon footprint of highrises

I ask Council to seriously consider if they are creating value for investors or communities for current and future

residents. Under the current provincial government land use is no longer about communities, our ability to participate has been eliminated, we are ignored and increasingly it appears that only landowners, developers and REIT's are heard.

This video link is the CEO of RioCan basically stating they create value by getting zoning approved for condo in mid-town Toronto then selling them which create value, in turn allowing RioCan to provide a dividend for their investors. **Value for investors by upzoning lands, development air rights**. We wanted to increase when we were sure it would be sustainable: RioCan CEO on raising dividend

It is impossible for Vaughan Council to deliver on their priority of Citizen's First if our input is ignored and not sought by the powerful interests who are shaping and building our communities. Riocan's commitment to climate change as well as responsible environmental, social and corporate governance are meaningless, only words, given the context surrounding this development and the lack of transparency as to the extent of density being planned versus what is actually necessary and required in this area. Further, they have shown no respect for the community, nor for the future residents that will be housed by this significant development. This is evident by the fact that they've ignored or don't even know that they are basically building on a major flight path of the busiest airport in Canada. There is no community building here only the building of investment return.

Thank you,
Irene Ford
Comments submitted in response to planning meeting dated Dec 6th, 2022

Vaughan Council and Planning Staff,

Below are my comments and concerns with regard to the following development application: RIOCAN REAL ESTATE INV TRUST OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FILES OP.22.002 & OP.22.005 3555 HIGHWAY 7, 7501, 7575, 7601 & 7621 WESTON ROAD, 10, 11, 20, 21, 30, 31, 40, 41, 55 & 67 COLOSSUS DRIVE AND 16, 21, 30 & 31 FAMOUS ROAD VICINITY OF HIGHWAY 7 AND WESTON RD.

Planes & Airport Noise

I have lived in Vaughan since 2009 and there has been a steady increase in plane traffic over my community. Over the summer it was intolerable due to runway construction at Pearson. It has improved greatly in recent months but there are still occasions when planes departing to reach the required altitude literally fly over my house and turn. This creates roll back noise, which is why community members find the noise especially loud given the distance we are from the airport. Departures as I understand do not follow a specific flight path, they turn at a certain altitude based on the size of the plane. I fail to understand why these planes do not turn and fly over the CN McMillian railyard, the second largest in Canada.

Pearson recently implemented and consulted on a new arrival path. Staff specifically asked Perason to move the path further east to reduce the impacts on the VMC area.The RioCan development appears to be close, possibly affected by the changes that NavCan & Transport Canada approved. I am concerned based on the heights and density proposed that RioCan has not been considerate of these recent changes. Should the development proceed as proposed this has the potential to impact GTAA's operations. The new arrival flight path as well as departures. I am also very concerned that this development could result in impacts that result in more planes flying over existing low-rise developments. I ask that Vaughan Staff, NavCan, Transport Canada and RioCan are very, very, very transparent about consultation surrounding Pearson airport operations and that it be publicly documented in staff reports. Also that any noise studies include impacts from airport operations.

https://www.navcanada.ca/en/consulta ion-report---toronto-airport-rnp-ar-approaches.pdf

Greenspace & Parks

Where is the Greenspace and community centers for this development? At present my community is experiencing increased usage of our greenspace from residents living in the VMC. They have no access to greenspace and travel outside of the VMC to other areas of Vaughan to utilize their water parks and greenspace. There has to be greenspace and water parks where people actually live, it can't be compensated elsewhere for it to be a complete community.

What is the status of Central Park in Vaughan? Are you reviewing development applications that are no on top of what was initially proposed and sold to the public as Central Park? It is difficult to know as there have been so many changes.

Transit & Traffic

While I appreciate the new subway and do use it from time to time, traffic congestion has not improved, if anything it has gotten worse. That is because there is no transit that is convenient, reliable and accessible from the subway station. I live 4.0km from the VMC subway google tells me it would take 8min to drive there but 30m to take the bus, which includes a 15 minute walk to Weston Rd then transferring to a bus at Highway 7 that stops at the VMA subway.

I actually avoid the Jane and HIghway 7 intersection even more than I used to, the subway has not improved traffic congestion. How much more traffic congestion can Highway 7 and Weston Rd accommodate without first investing in significant transit improvements to make it affordable and access ble that is a viable alternative to the automobile.

The level of tractor trailer traffic on Highway 7, as well as Langstaff has increased significantly, why can't they use Highway 407?

Secondary Plan Delayed?

Why have Greenfield Secondary Plans in Blocks 41 and Blocks 27 been approved and prioritized ahead of the Weston & Secondary Plan? The result is that the actual density, population that developers clearly have planned for the City of Vaughan were never reflected during the Municipal Comprehensive Review. This thereby led to a false pretense that more greenfield, farmland land was needed to be brought into the urban boundary. Why did staff prioritize the preparation of the greenfield secondary plans, Block 41 was approved in early 21 and Block 27 in 2018 by the City of Vaughan and 2019 by York Region?

Development applications are still coming in for this area, we have no approved secondary plan. Has this inaction and lack of prioritization by the City of Vaughan resulted in landowners/developers being in a position to now appeal due to a lack of decision by the City of Vaughan? It seems far too convenient 'out for Council', we can't make a decision because we don't have a secondary plan as required by our Official Plan, so now the developer has appealed for no decisions.