

**Communication: C41
Committee of the Whole (PM)
February 7, 2023
Item #2**

From: Clerks@vaughan.ca
To: [Jacquelyn Gillis](mailto:Jacquelyn.Gillis)
Subject: FW: [External] Z.22.036/OP.22.016 – Public Hearing of February 7TH, 2023 Communication: C10 Committee of the Whole (PM) February 7, 2023 Item #2 10, 20, 24 Wigwoss Drive Woodbridge, Ontario
Date: Monday, February 6, 2023 11:56:01 AM

From: Lisa Johnson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2023 11:55 AM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
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10, 20, 24 Wigwoss Drive Woodbridge, Ontario

Members of Council; thank you for allowing me to voice my concerns regarding the proposed condo development at Wigwoss and Hwy #7 in Woodbridge.

I am sensitive to the fact that Vaughan Council is concerned about traffic safety and was relieved to hear our new Mayor's promises to make traffic improvement a key mission of his tenure. This is why I would urge you to stand against the proposed 12 storey condominium at the corner of Wigwoss and Hwy 7. In addition to this however, I would urge Council to reject **all** amendments to the Official Plan for developments along the particularly congested area of Hwy 7 between Kipling and Pine Valley, until such time as the infrastructural issues have been properly planned and effectively resolved.

I've lived in Seneca Heights for 30 years and my husband for over 60 and we've never seen the traffic situation on Hwy 7 so desperate. Too often rush hour looks like the Don Valley Parkway on a Friday night of a holiday weekend. Even during the weekday traffic congestion can be unbearable.

The intersection of Hwy 7 and Islington has always been a naturally dangerous intersection, given that it is at the bottom of 2 steep hills. Hwy 7 is also a major truck transportation corridor from Concord to Brampton adding further to the gridlock. When you add in even greater levels of traffic due to intensification, plus the bottleneck on Hwy 7 as 6 lanes narrow to 4 to pass under the railway bridge, traffic has become an utter nightmare from the top of the hill west of Bruce to Kipling. In addition, the proximity of intersections with ill-timed traffic lights causes even greater traffic constriction at the intersection of Wigwoss and Highway 7 in particular.

This is reducing the quality of life of all Woodbridge residents who must pass this way, not just those living in our subdivision. Anyone who needs to drive to work or even the grocery store must daily face the consequences of short-term decisions that have a lasting negative impact on the community.

And for our subdivision in particular, the dangerous spin off of all this is that ever more cars are seen speeding through our neighbourhood from Wigwoss to Monsheen to get around the traffic on Hwy 7. In

desperation, residents in our neighbourhood have resorted to putting up Slow Down signs to deal with this problem; a problem that has been directly caused by excessive development along an ill-equipped arterial roadway. Will Council make a decision to put an end to runaway Condo development on this specific stretch before tragedy strikes?

Furthermore, the traffic caused by excess intensification is not just causing pain to those who reside here. How much is added to the costs of doing business in Vaughan, due to delays and the excessively high traffic levels on Hwy 7? Last but not least, how does runaway sprawl and this dramatic increase in stop and start traffic affect air quality in surrounding neighbourhoods, particularly in light of the City of Vaughan's stated aims to curb climate change? But Vaughan transit you might say is there to save the day? However, there's no proof that people will give up their cars in order to take a bus to Fortinos or the Home Depot. Vaughan needs a master plan for Hwy 7, considering intensification on traffic, the environment and quality of life of all of its residents.

It is clear that the recent passing of Bill 23, otherwise known as More Homes Built Faster, has triggered an unprecedented avalanche of new development proposals and in particular amendments to existing condominium plans to dramatically increase their number of stories beyond the Official Plan. Cases in point, Arrowhead and 4906 Hwy 7 west —to be built on the steepest part of the hill approaching Islington — with applications to double the Official Plan's limit on the number of stories. My question is whether council will be able to stand with its citizens and defend its case if and when applicants take their cases to the newly empowered Ontario Land Tribunal?

Adding yet another condominium at Wigwoss and Hwy7, and/or amending the OP to allow for the alteration of current height restrictions would be counter to the mayor's aim of improving Vaughan's traffic, and indeed would make the situation far worse. Taking a look at the Transportation study that was submitted by the applicant, the study counted traffic volume only at the the intersections of Wigwoss, and Hwy 7, Benjamin and Helen. They were not asked to examine the impact of 136 new vehicles (plus condo visitors?) on the associated intersections of Pine Valley, Islington and Kipling. In addition, this traffic study used an assumed corridor growth rate of only 1% between 2022 and 2027, in contrast to over 14% growth rate in 2016 alone.

That is why I am respectfully requesting that you deny this inappropriate condo development at the corner of Wigwoss and Hwy 7. In fact I will go further and urge Council to put a hold on all new condo development and applications for height amendments on the difficult stretch between Pine Valley and Kipling unless a complete traffic study on this corridor has been made and realistic solutions to the bottleneck, truck traffic and other issues have been thoroughly planned and successfully implemented.

Unfortunately, the elephant in the room is Bill 23. While the province says Municipalities have the right to turn down developments; in the same breath it has taken away its powers to do just that. This is because of significant reductions to the powers of Conservation and Heritage as well as new powers for the Ontario Land Tribunal. To add insult to injury, as Vaughan's staff wrote in their November 2022 report on Bill 23, the Bill's elimination of Development Fees means the cost of developments will be born by residents, through massive property tax increases. Does this Bill in effect mean all our efforts to oppose inappropriate development will mean nothing? And even if Vaughan Council objects to new Condos along Hwy 7, will the OLT override their decision, and will taxpayers be saddled with the extra costs to service this condo and fix our transportation problems due to the elimination of Development fees?

Big picture, I hope that City of Vaughan will also align with other Municipalities in the GTA, such as Aurora, and Mississauga and informing its citizens about the dire repercussions of Bill 23 and to make its objections loudly known to the Provincial Government. Otherwise the rights of citizens and Municipalities to object to developments like the Condo at Wigwoss and Hwy 7 will mean nothing.

I ask that the City of Vaughan turn down the application for the Condo at 10, 20 and 24 Wigwoss and all

developments requesting amendments to the OP along Hwy 7 between Pine Valley and Kipling? We are counting on the city of Vaughan to fight for our quality of life, healthy environment and safe future of the people it represents against those favouring sprawl at all costs.

Thank you for your time,
Lisa Johnson
Ward 2 Resident