

C7
COMMUNICATION
COUNCIL – May 16, 2023
CW (WS) - Report No. 22, Item 1 & 2

From: Clerks@vaughan.ca
To: [Adelina Bellisario](#)
Subject: FW: [External] Address boundary issues/transportation plan
Date: May-04-23 10:10:50 AM

From: patricia pedari [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 03, 2023 4:34 PM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
Subject: [External] Address boundary issues/transportation plan

was not able to attend meeting Wed May 3 2023 at 100
But concurred with all that is in the email

1. [DIRECTION FOR WARD BOUNDARY AND COUNCIL COMPOSITION REVIEW 2023](#)
2. [2023 VAUGHAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN](#)

Item 1 - Ward Boundary Review And Council Composition Review

Summary of suggested items/scope that should be included in a future study as directed by Vaughan Council include:

- ***a council composition review to enhance fair and equal representation of:***
 - ***Vaughan Council (lower tier) that includes all voting Council members - local and regional***
 - ***York Region Council (upper tier) that includes all voting Vaughan Regional Council members - regional councillors & Mayor and representation of their distinct and different responsibilities from lower tier Council members***
- ***contemplates and reviews for the first time since the 70's how local and regional councillors are elected by ward or at-large and specifically if Regional Councillors should be elected at large or by ward/area to enhance fair and equal representation; and***
- ***how provincial legislation has and/or may change to affect municipal representation of lower and upper tier municipalities as per Bill 23 (which removes regional planning responsibilities at a future date), Bill 39 which gave strong mayor powers to Regional Chairs, could give Strong Mayor powers to Vaughan in the future and how the impending provincial regional government review could impact local representation.***

Background

When I learned of the ward boundary review in the midst of the pandemic late 2020 I was surprised and frustrated. The review was structured to be futile, regional representation was excluded (even though a new regional councillor was being added) and it was a costly exercise solely focused on moving ward boundary lines on a map as per Council direction. Vaughan has not had a new local/ward councillor added since 1970, but as of the last election we've had 3 Regional Councillors added. I argued that Vaughan doesn't have fair or equal representation because local issues are underrepresented due to the imbalance of having 5 Council members represent the City as a whole and York Region (4 Regional Councillors + Mayor) vs. only 1 local Councillor who represents each of our five wards. When I compared York Region representation by municipality based on 2020 population what I found was that Vaughan is the most locally underrepresented municipality in York Region yet has the highest regional representation.

Municipality	Population	Council Composition			Local / Regional
		Total	Local	Regional & Mayor	
Vaughan	335,000	10	5	5	50% / 50%
Markham	353,000	13	8	5	62% / 38%
Richmond Hill	207,000	9	6	3	66% / 33%
Newmarket	84,200	9	7	2	78% / 22%
Aurora	62,000	7	6	1	86% / 14%
Whithchurch-Soufville	50,200	7	6	1	86% / 14%
East Gwillimbury	31,100	7	6	1	86% / 14%
Georgina	46,000	7	5	2	71% / 29%

It took me 5 months and the involvement of the Ontario Ombudsman to get a straight answer from the Clerk on a two part question:

- 1) Do any by-laws have to be updated to confirm the addition of a new Regional Councillor and how they are elected at-large or byward?
- 2) Who has the authority to decide how we elect our Councillors and add a new local Councillor?

It turns out our by-law for how we elect our councillors has not been updated since 1970 and the authority to decide if Vaughan's Council members can be elected at-large or by ward is within the authority of Vaughan Council.

In the end it was never clearly articulated in Council chambers that the authority to change Council composition and how our Council members are elected at-large/by ward is within the authority of Vaughan Council, that it hasn't been reaffirmed by any Vaughan Council in over fifty years in any updated by-law or otherwise (astounding to me). I think it's important that the public and Council supports a study with this understanding front and center. My efforts did not change much other than perhaps documenting Vaughan residents frustration with Regional representation; who call themselves local and regional councillors b/c they vote at both the local council (Vaughan) and regional council (York Region). In the end there were a few [stories](#) in the media and my [letter written](#) for background is here if of interest.

I did not, nor do I necessarily want a 6th local Councillor, what I would like is better representation from our regional council members. I fundamentally believe that Vaughan residents would have more fair and equal representatives if our Regional Councillors were elected by ward/area and accountable to that part of the City. At present it's like we have 1 Mayor, 4 Mini-Mayors and 5 local Councillors.

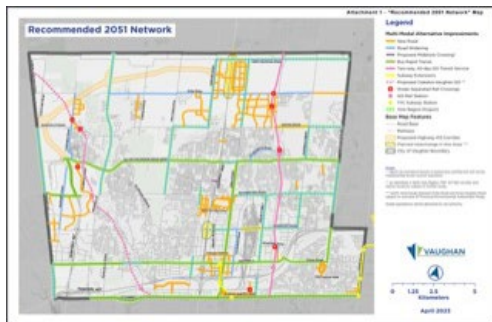
Since this time provincial [Bill 23, More Homes Built Faster Act](#) and [Bill 39, Better Municipal Government Act](#) have added additional uncertainty surrounding Mayoral and regional representation. Bill 23 proposes to remove Regional Planning responsibilities. Of the multitude of undemocratic things about Bill 23 the timing with the municipal election and permitting Vaughan to elect a new Regional Councillor when the province clearly knew that the roles and responsibilities of Regional Council members really takes the cake. On top of this Bill 39 appointed Regional Chairs, intends to give strong mayor (chair) powers to these same provincially appointed regional Chairs and announced the province's intention to conduct a second review of regional governments. On the lines of undemocratic representation the Province released Bill 39 the day before York Region's inaugural meeting in which they were to vote in a new Chair. Minister Clark sent a letter basically saying this legislation will be applied retroactively if you don't vote for the Chair of my choosing; Wayne Emmerson. An article by the [G&M](#) as well as [York Region News](#). This is the second time the province intervened to ensure that Wayne Emerson would get the job, in 2018 we were supposed to publicly elect the Chair but the province change the legislation at the 11th house, Emmerson wasn't going to run but then changed his mind when the role reverted back to being appointed (voted-in) by York Region publicly elected Council.

I will be honest and say that I am concerned that Vaughan will undertake this study and the province will change the legislation, again, and it will all be for naught. Nonetheless, I still think staff should proceed to conduct the study in a more wholesome way than in the past.

Item 2: Vaughan Transportation Master Plan

The below diagram is for the Vaughan Transportation Master Plan. It appears there will be a 30 day public review period so those interested may want to watch this meeting and consider if they wish to send comments. I see far too much road widening and not nearly enough focus on functional, accessible transit. Of course Highway 413 is there and even though Vaughan Council passed a motion not supporting the highway, staff still have to include this because it is a provincial project being planned.

Patricia



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