

Christopher J. Tanzola
Partner
Direct 416-730-0645
Cell 416-428-7493
ctanzola@overlandllp.ca

Overland LLP
5255 Yonge St, Suite 1101
Toronto, ON M2N 6P4
Tel 416-730-0337
overlandllp.ca

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Communication
CW(WS) – June 5, 2024
Item No. 2 & 3

June 4, 2024

VIA EMAIL

Mayor and Members of City Council
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1

Attention: City Clerk

Your Worship and Members of City Council:

RE: Weston 7 Secondary Plan: File No. 26.2 (Item 5.2)
Weston 7 Transportation Master Plan (Item 5.3)
Committee of the Whole (Working Session) – June 5, 2024

We are the lawyers for N.H.D. Developments Limited (“**NHD**”), the registered owner of the property located at 7887 Weston Road (the “**property**”) in the proposed Weston 7 Secondary Plan area. We also represented Wedgewood Columbus Limited (“**Wedgewood**”), the predecessor in title to NHD. NHD took title to the property on February 1, 2023 via a name change application. NHD and Wedgewood are related companies.

NHD/Wedgewood has participated extensively in the Weston 7 Secondary Plan process and continues to do so. As part of this participation, our client’s planning consultants have made two written submissions to the City regarding the proposed Secondary Plan. These submissions were made on April 15, 2019 and February 23, 2021. Given the change in the registered owner’s name, we are submitting these letters again here on behalf of NHD out of an abundance of caution.

NHD intends to make further comments on the draft Weston 7 Secondary Plan in due course.

Our client has active development applications that are currently before the Ontario Land Tribunal (Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments) and the City of Vaughan (Site Plan Approval). The outcome of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan process should not prejudice the determination of those applications and should not implement policies that would otherwise restrict the optimization of the property for intensified forms of development that are consistent with provincial planning objectives.

Please include this correspondence on the Committee of the Whole’s agenda for June 5, 2024 and with any subsequent consideration of this matter by City Council.

Additionally, **please provide us with written notice** of City Council's decision in the matter of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan and the Weston 7 Transportation Master Plan. Our address for notice is provided herein.

Yours truly,

Overland LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. J. Tanzola', written over a horizontal line.

Per: Christopher J. Tanzola

Encl.

c. J. Bujak/N. Shurigina



April 15, 2019

Mr. Frank Marzo
Senior Planner, Policy
Planning and Environmental
Sustainability Department
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1

Dear Mr. Marzo,

**Re: *Weston Road and Highway 7
Secondary Plan***

We are planning consultants to Wedgewood Columbus Limited owners of lands located at southeast corner of Weston Road and Chrislea Road (the "Subject Lands"). The Subject Lands have a frontage of 156 metres along Weston Road, 53 metres along Chrislea Road and 66 metres along Northview Boulevard.

Our client has been closely monitoring and participating in the development of the Weston Road and Highway 7 Secondary Plan and has participated in several meetings with consultants retained on behalf of the City of Vaughan and has monitored public meetings that have occurred to date including a Landowners Workshop that was held on March 18, 2019 and the public open house held on March 25, 2019. The purpose of this letter is to provide feedback on what has been presented to date.

1. Planning Policy

Our client recognizes that the Secondary Plan study essentially assumes, as a point of departure, the underlying land use designations wholly contained within the Vaughan Official Plan (VOP) as summarized in Appendix 5 (Planning Policy Analysis) of the background materials for the Secondary Plan review. This point of departure, however, is of fundamental concern as it has been used to predetermine planning outcomes which should, as an intrinsic part of the planning analysis, be openly evaluated as an appropriate starting point.

The City of Vaughan land use designation for the subject lands is currently Mid-Rise Mixed Use which does not, in our view, allow for a contextual appropriate gradation of heights from the High-Rise Mixed-Use land use designation that applies south of Northview Boulevard.

The reliance on underlying land use designations does not, in our view, allow for the optimization of lands that are within a future Major Transit Station Area(s).

The presentation materials for the public open house held on March 25, 2019 recognizes that “the Scenarios will use the Official Plan land use designations as a basis for height throughout the study area”. It is our opinion that there should be more latitude given consideration noted above that there are opportunities to provide transition from what is recognized as the only area corner with “established height and density within the study area”, namely, the northeast quadrant of Weston Road and Highway 7.

2. Commentary on Draft Land Use Scenarios

We have reviewed the draft land use scenarios presented at the public open house on March 25, 2019 and offer the following commentary:

- (a) One of the base assumptions used in the creation of the three scenarios appears to be strongly influenced by the existing development south of our client’s lands (known as Centro). Specifically, the height of development incorporated into the base assumptions is clearly linked to the existing Centro development. In this regard, we think it is appropriate to recognize the time and context used to justify the height and density of the Centro development and consider whether or not it is truly reflective of the current planning framework;
- (b) Another base assumption used in the study appears to include an observation that the Active Together Master Plan establishes a target provision rate of 2.0 ha/1,000 residents and point to the possibility that “the City may consider applying a unique parkland provision target for intensification areas to reflect the challenges of land assembly and economic realities of development.” Our client is fully supportive of this latter approach and would welcome additional opportunities for input and consultation on this very important subject;
- (c) The location of parks and schools and required community facilities is noted in the presentation materials as to be “refined through detailed analysis in Phase 2.” We would appreciate being provided with the input received to date from the School Boards and relevant community service providers in this regard;
- (d) Land Use Scenario 2 provides for a Community Hub/School and Parkland in the northwest quadrant of the study area. This potential location would represent the location closest to the existing concentration of low-density single-family residential development and, in our view, the logical location for such facilities. The placement of the Community Hub/School and Parkland

adjacent to the established neighbourhood would contribute a logical buffer and transitional area to the existing low-rise residential area further north and west while maintaining appropriate walking distances to planned higher density residential uses;

- (e) None of the three scenarios identifies our client's lands as a potential location for "Neighbourhood Transition" which, in our view, reinforces the fact that there are distinguishing circumstances that apply and would support further consideration for re-visiting the underlying land use designations and the achievement of an appropriate level of intensification. The fundamental recognition that our client's lands fall outside of the 70-metre zone from designated low rise residential reinforces this fundamental distinguishing characteristic of our client's lands; and
- (f) There needs to be a mechanism that allows for further scenarios to be studied. The level of existing development on all four quadrants would make the achievement of any of the identified scenarios difficult to achieve in the medium to long term. Without wholesale re-consideration of the existing underlying land use designations the identified three scenarios may not represent the optimization of lands within planned major transit areas.

These comments represent our initial thoughts on the land use scenarios advanced to date. Our client looks forward to further participating in future stakeholder meetings.

Yours truly,

Bousfields Inc.



Tony Volpentesta, MCIP, RPP

TJV/kah:jobs

cc: *Bill Kiru*
James Bujak - Wedgewood Columbus Limit



February 23, 2021

Ms. Michelle Moretti
Senior Planner, Policy
Planning and Environmental
Sustainability Department
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1

Dear Ms. Moretti,

**Re: 7887 Weston Road
Weston Road and Highway 7
Secondary Plan Phase 2 – Demonstration Plan**

We are planning consultants to Wedgewood Columbus Limited owners of lands located on the east side of Weston Road between Northview Boulevard and Chrislea Road on the vicinity of Weston Road and Highway 7 (the "Subject Lands"). The Subject Lands have a frontage of 156 metres along Weston Road, 53 metres along Chrislea Road and 66 metres along Northview Boulevard.

Bousfields Inc. and our client have been closely monitoring and participating in the development of the Weston Road and Highway 7 Secondary Plan. We have participated in several meetings with The Planning Partnership, retained on behalf of the City of Vaughan, to complete the 'Weston 7' Secondary Plan. We have also continued to monitor and attend public meetings and consultations, including most recently a Landowners Meeting that was held on January 28, 2021. The purpose of this letter is to provide feedback on what was presented at that meeting, including the Planning Partnership's Weston 7 Draft Demonstration Plan.

APPLICATION HISTORY

Following a PAC meeting with City staff on July 11, 2019, development applications for an Official Plan Amendment (OP.19.015) and Zoning By-law Amendment (Z.19.039) were submitted on December 23, 2019. The applications were deemed incomplete on January 22, 2020. The applications were subsequently deemed complete on July 27, 2020.

The proposal includes 4 high-rise mixed-use buildings atop two podiums with tower heights ranging from 40 to 49-storeys. The proposal features 2,003 dwelling units and a floor space index of 9.61 times the area of the lot and retail spaces.

On September 15, 2020 a staff report was presented to the Committee of the Whole (Public Hearing). Council approval was required for City staff to continue to process the applications in advance of the completion of the Weston Road and Highway 7 Secondary Plan, however, Council approval was not granted. A final recommendation was given that indicated no development applications are to proceed in advance of the Weston 7 Secondary Plan being completed.

The following represents our understanding of the planning policy framework as it applies to the subject lands. The points below set the framework and basis for our commentary on the Weston 7 Secondary Plan Phase 2 – Draft Demonstration Plan as provided by The Planning Partnership on January 28, 2021.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Region of York Official Plan

The subject lands are designated “Urban Area” in the York Region Official Plan 2010 (“YROP”) but as importantly they are located one block north of Highway 7 which is identified as a Regional Rapid Transit Corridor. In support of transit-infrastructure, the YROP establishes a policy framework that encourages intensification within efficient and compact communities at an overall transit supportive density.

Section 5.3 of the YROP outlines policies that guide intensification throughout the Region and provides that by the year 2015 and each year after, a minimum target of 40% of all residential development should occur within the built-up area (5.3.1). The YROP provides that transit stops in the Urban Area be located so that 90 percent of residents are within 500 metres of a stop and 50 percent of residents are within 200 metres of a stop. With respect to built form in intensification areas, Policy 5.3.10 indicates that retail, commercial, office and institutional structures shall be well designed, pedestrian and street orientated, including, where appropriate, mixed-use multi-storey buildings.

Map 1 of the YROP identifies Highway 7 as a Regional Corridor while Map 11 – Transit Network, identifies Highway 7 as a Regional Rapid Transit Corridor. Section 5.4 of the York Region Official Plan (Regional Centres and Corridors) identifies that Regional Corridors as an appropriate area for intensification. Furthermore, Policy 5.4.1 of the YROP directs Regional Corridors to be the location for the most intensive and greatest mix of development in the Region.

In addition, Weston Road is identified as part of the Regional Transit Priority Network on Map 11 of the YROP. According to Policy 7.2.24, Regional streets identified as part of the Regional Transit Priority Network will be planned for high-occupancy-vehicle lanes, dedicated transit lines, transit signal priority and other transit priority measures. Policy

7.2.35 provides that local municipalities will include policies in the local OP to implement the Transit Network.

Policy 5.4.28 further provides that Regional Corridors function as urban main streets (our emphasis), containing compact, mixed-use, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly, and transit-orientated built form.

Section 7.1 sets out policies for reducing demand for services through maximizing the use of existing infrastructure and reducing automobile dependence through providing more compact, mixed-use urban forms of development. Policy 7.1.7 requires development applications to demonstrate how the proposed development is transit-oriented, taking direction from the York Region Transit Oriented Design Guidelines document. Policies 7.2.23 and 7.2.25 provide that communities should be planned with early integration of transit and that high-density development should be directed to rapid transit corridors.

York Region Municipal Comprehensive Review

The Region of York has initiated a Municipal Comprehensive Review (the “MCR”) in order to review and update its Official Plan to ensure that its policies conform with updated Provincial Plans. The MCR also includes the identification and delineation of Major Transit Station Areas (“MTSAs”) within the Region.

The definition of a *Major Transit Station Area* in the Growth Plan (amended in 2017 to include a reference to 800 m radius) generally defines it as “the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station representing about a 10-minute walk”.

In this case, the subject site falls within the delineated MTSA area as defined for the Weston BRT (MTSA 11) Station. The MTSA includes a proposed density target of 250 people and jobs per hectare compared to the current density of 11 jobs and people per hectare. This proposed density is also greater than the 160 residents and jobs per hectare that the Growth Plan provides as a minimum target. The proposed MTSA and density targets provide an opportunity for new mixed-use developments that will contribute to the proposed increase in density within the area. The subject site is located within approximately 175 metres (representing a 2 – 3 minute walk) of the Weston BRT and provides a unique opportunity for high-rise mixed-use development in proximity to this MTSA.

Vaughan Planning Policy

Weston 7 Secondary Plan

The City of Vaughan’s Urban Structure is comprised of both Stable Areas and Intensification Areas. The subject site is located within an Intensification Area and is

identified as within a Primary Centre on Schedule -1 Urban Structure and is designated *Mid-Rise Mixed Use* on Schedule 13 Land Use within the City of Vaughan Official Plan (the “VOP 2010”). The subject site is also identified to be within the required Secondary Plan Area of Weston Road and Highway 7 (Weston 7), as shown on Schedule 14-A of VOP 2010.

As noted above, the subject site is located within the Weston 7 Secondary Plan boundary as shown on Schedule 14-A. On June 5, 2019, the Weston 7 Secondary Plan Phase 1 Report was completed and received at the Committee of the Whole Working Session. The vision statement for the Weston 7 Secondary Plan, as developed through Phase 1, states:

“As one of the city’s primary growth centres, it will be a distinct urban place with a variety of commercial, cultural, and entertainment destinations providing housing options and jobs within a walking distance to the Highway 7 rapidway. The area will evolve into a place that is universally accessible; providing convenient options for everyone to comfortably and safely get around by walking, biking, taking transit or driving. Weston 7 will strive to be a low-carbon, healthy community defined by a network of pedestrian-oriented, well-connected streets, parks and gathering places that becomes a distinguished, landmark destination of choice in Vaughan.”

Primary Centres, as per VOP 2010, *are to be developed as transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly places that support residents of the Primary Centre while facilitating an appropriate transition to the neighbouring community areas.* They are intended to provide uses that will serve the Community Areas of the City, including retail, institutional, office and human service uses.

Policy 2.2.5 within VOP 2010 provides that that Intensification Areas will accommodate the intensification target of 45%, with Primary Centres providing a wide range of uses and building types, including tall buildings, with appropriate transition to neighbouring areas. Policy 2.2.5 further states that Intensification Areas are to make efficient use of underutilized sites served with a high-level of existing or planned transit and be developed with a mix of uses and appropriate densities to support transit use, walking and cycling.

Commentary on Draft Demonstration Plan

We have reviewed the draft land use scenarios presented to the landowner group on January 28, 2021 and offer the following commentary:

General Comments

- (a) **Site development-** We are of the opinion that the subject site can provide a mix of uses along Weston Road that reinforces the importance of the subject site as a key intensification within a Primary Centre and within the proposed Weston MTSA.

- (b) Existing Mixed-Use Context-** One of the base assumptions used in the creation of the demonstration plan appears to be strongly influenced by the existing development at 7777 Weston Road (known as Centro Square) and the existing Official Plan land use structure within the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area (VOP 2010 Schedule 13). Specifically, the height of development incorporated into the base assumptions is clearly linked to the existing Centro development. In this regard, we think it is appropriate to recognize the time and context used to justify the height and density of the Centro development and consider whether or not it is truly reflective of the current planning framework. It is worth noting that the Centro Square development was approved in a planning framework where MTSA's were required to be planned in a transit-supportive manner but prior to the 2017 Growth Plan assigning minimum density targets for MTSA's.

Accordingly, while the Centro Square development is a helpful benchmark in establishing the evolving mixed-use context of the area, the height and density afforded to that development reflects an older planning policy framework. Therefore, we are fully supportive of the draft land use approach that recognizes the potential for one land use within the secondary plan that provides flexibility for accommodating a range of residential, commercial, limited office, parks/open spaces and institutional uses at varying heights and densities that are considered transit-supportive and contributing to the complete community that will become Weston 7.

- (c) Weston 7 Structuring Elements-** With respect to the 7 structuring elements that frame the Weston 7 demonstration plan, we are in support of the overall themes of connectivity, buffers, bridges and seams, quadrant-based neighbourhood character, placemaking, flexible blocks and phasing. However, we do not agree with the Planning Partnership's emerging structure and building height transition elements. While we are supportive of taller buildings along both Weston Road and Highway 7 and specifically at the key intersection of Weston and Highway 7, the height schedule is heavily influenced by the existing built-form context which limits the growth of key sites along Weston Road, Highway 7 and within the Weston MTSA especially those sites closest to the station.
- (d) MTSA analysis-** Vaughan has identified a wide range of density targets for its MTSA's. There are a total of 23 MTSA's in Vaughan. There are six MTSA's designated Primary Centres of which only four – the Steeles MTSA (subway), the Pioneer Village MTSA (subway), the Weston MTSA (BRT) and the Disera MTSA (BRT) - are also MTSA's. Accordingly, we are supportive of densities higher than the minimum densities afforded in the Growth Plan, but it is unclear if the proposed heights provided in the demonstration plan can support the Region's proposed target of 250 people and jobs per hectare for the Weston MTSA and the City's

proposed target of 600 people and jobs per hectare for the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area.

Additionally, based on the approved and proposed residential developments through mid-2020, close to 48,300 residents in almost 24,400 residential units are moving into the VMC, achieving 203% of the residential units and 193% of the population targets identified for the 2031 planning horizon. As these numbers have been achieved far earlier than expected and given that this growth trend is expected to continue, an update of the VMC Secondary Plan is being undertaken. As the Weston 7 'ultimate' build out condition to 2051 and beyond assumes an ultimate of 600 persons and jobs per hectare, we would like to better understand how that determination was arrived at and what will be done to ensure Weston 7 receives its fair share of growth and not at the expense of overdevelopment in the VMC.¹

Site Specific Comments

- a) **Height/Built Form** – The subject site is located approximately 160 metres from the intersection of Highway 7 and Weston Road but is assigned heights in the range of 8 to 34 storeys in the demonstration plan. As mentioned previously, this is based on the notion that Centro Square must function as a peak and that heights to the north must be lower to respect the proposed 'tent pole' planning structure shown on the demonstration plan. It should be noted that the height of the towers for the subject site in the demonstration plan and emerging height schedule suggests the highest heights at the southern limits of 7887 Weston Road of 19+ storeys, transitioning north to 18 storeys. The proposed height for the northerly towers need to consider the previously submitted studies for the subject site related to neighbourhood impact, shadow and wind, as well as urban design indicating that the site is appropriate for tall buildings. Furthermore, the subject site is not within immediate close proximity to the existing stable low-density neighbourhood to the northwest and therefore can accommodate heights and densities greater than 18 storeys.

As it relates to built form, the subject site is located 150 metres from a higher order transit line and within a major node (Weston 7 Primary Centre) 1 km west of the City's Vaughan Metropolitan Centre (VMC). Within the VMC, the tallest buildings are planned within the centre and include buildings of up to 55-storeys. Building

¹ In order to understand and fully comprehend how the initially proposed 600 person and jobs density target was established, we respectfully request a detailed methodology and accounting of the proposed Weston 7 Secondary Plan density target

heights are planned to tier down along Highway 7 as you move away from the city centre.

In our opinion, the subject site can contribute to a dynamic skyline within the Weston 7 Secondary Plan and the VMC. This would be in keeping with a range of taller, prominent buildings along , and within close proximity to Highway 7 within both the VMC and Weston 7, as contextually appropriate.

- b) Parkland-** Another base assumption used in the presentation is an equitable distribution of parkland within the 4 quadrants of the Weston 7 secondary Plan. It is our understanding that the City may consider applying a unique parkland provision target for intensification areas to reflect the challenges of land assembly and economic realities of development.

We support the need for parkland for current and future residents of the area. While access to the park and open space is an integral and critical part of a complete community, size, location and type of the open space should be fit into the context.

In that respect, the subject lands are located adjacent to a proposed 0.5 hectare park and include an east-west pedestrian connection between the proposed park and Weston Road. We are supportive of the proposed pedestrian realm plan and recognize that the proposed development on the subject lands will support the implementation of the plan through cash-in-lieu of parkland, the provision of on-site parkland through POPS and potentially through future community benefit contributions.

- c) Retail Foci-** The Weston 7 Planning Partnership Demonstration Plan highlights areas of 'Retail Foci' for the Weston 7 Secondary Plan, including along the north side of Northveiw Boulevard immediately east of Weston Road. We recommend there be flexibility within the subject site to provide retail focus elements in addition to those shown in the presentation, subject to the development application process moving forward. This would provide flexibility for retail spaces to complement the proposed residential development and adjacent uses, as appropriate. We look forward to future discussions with City staff as we work towards a resubmission of the active development application for 7887 Weston Road.

Conclusion

We want to stress that we have every intention of working with City on the Weston 7 Secondary Plan and aligning our active development application with the ongoing Secondary Plan. Our client intends to create a high-quality mixed-use development on this site for the Weston 7 Secondary Plan area that is along a priority intensification corridor and will complement the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. This will not only serve future

residents of this development, but also the surrounding community in creating a destination of choice for residents in Vaughan.

These comments represent our initial thoughts on the Weston 7 Demonstration Plan advanced to date. Our client looks forward to further participating in future stakeholder meetings. Should there be an opportunity for our client to meet with City staff to discuss the comments herein, we kindly request a meeting be set up at your earliest convenience.

Yours truly,

Bousfields Inc.



Tony Volpentesta, MCIP, RPP

Frank Marzo MCIP, RPP

TJV/kah:jobs

*cc: Tony Iacobelli, Acting Director, Policy Planning and Environmental Sustainability, City of Vaughan
Bill Kiru, Director, Development Planning, City of Vaughan
James Bujak - Wedgewood Columbus Limited*