

September 19, 2020

DELIVERED BY E-MAIL (clerks@vaughan.ca)

City of Vaughan
Office of the City Clerk
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario
L6A 1T1

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Re: 8001 Bathurst Street, Vaughan (the "Property")
Zoning By-Law Amendment File: Z.19.040
Official Plan Amendment File: OP.19.016
(collectively, the "Applications")

Thank you for providing us with an opportunity to express our perspective on the Applications. We have lived at [REDACTED] Highcliffe Drive since September 1992. Our home is approximately 250 to 300 metres south of the Property.

During our almost 30 years of living in the City of Vaughan, we have witnessed the exceptional growth of our immediate community and the City of Vaughan as a whole. Our family has benefited from much of the development that has occurred and we regularly use the amenities available to us as Vaughan residents.

The development that has occurred has also resulted in numerous opportunities for us to express our support and/or objection to the various projects that have been instituted over the many years we have lived in Vaughan. These include the development of high rise apartments, condos and commercial projects located in the area bounded by New Westminster Drive, Centre Street and Bathurst (the "Existing Projects").

Our decision not participate in the public debates regarding the Existing Developments was not motivated by the fact that they were not in our "backyard", but by the fact that the proposals made sense to us from the perspective of a variety of factors such as:

1. Distance from residential neighbourhoods,
2. Access to and from main thoroughfares,
3. Construction impacts,
4. Parking concerns,
5. Whether the project was in harmony with the existing infrastructure, and
6. The fact that most of the development took place on fair sized parcels of vacant land allowing for latitude in terms of how the project was developed and implemented.

We want to be clear that our concern about the impacts of the Applications if they are approved are also based on the factors outlined above and not the so-called "not in my backyard" syndrome.

If we apply each of the criteria referenced above, it strikes us that this is an attempt to fit a square peg in a round hole:

1. Distance from residential neighbourhoods: The Property is directly adjacent to a residential neighbourhood. The southern and eastern boundaries of the Property are the

most extreme most examples of this problem. This is to be contrasted with the Existing Developments. We have seen studies on shadow impacts and recognize that the project is "staggered" so that the highest portion of the project is adjacent to the synagogue at the north end of the Property. We believe this is cold comfort to the people most affected by the project. You might ask the technical people who prepared the studies whether they would like to live at the southern boundary of the Property to test whether empirical data suffices when it comes to the realities of life.

2. Access to and from main thoroughfares: Due to the somewhat pristine nature of the properties where the Existing Projects occurred, there was more latitude to design internal roads and accesses so that ingress and egress to Bathurst, Centre and New Westminster could be accommodated. This is not the case with the Property. The only way in and out of the Property to Bathurst is through Flamingo. Given the proposed scope of the project provided for in the Applications, we believe that there is significant potential for increased traffic flow not only along Flamingo, but on Highcliffe as people seek to avoid Bathurst traffic which, as we are sure you aware, has increased exponentially over the years. It can take as much as 10 minutes to get from Centre Street to Flamingo during rush hour, let alone when there is an accident. The situation has only been exacerbated with the new bus routes along Bathurst. We would also want to consider how the constrained accesses affect emergency vehicles.
3. Construction impacts: Absent on-site staging, which given the size of the site may be challenging, the only streets that can be used to store construction materials are Highcliffe and Flamingo. This will force parking that was accommodated on the Property before construction to be pushed onto Flamingo and/or Highcliffe. In addition, the debris, noise and associated construction generated by-products will impact homes in the neighbourhood.
4. Parking concerns: We understand that the project design contemplates parking on 2 levels with one level restricted to residents and the other to visitors. While we appreciate the attempt to create off-street parking, we believe that as a practical matter, many people will prefer not to negotiate the restricted site ingress and egress and choose instead to parking on Highcliffe and Flamingo. This will create increased traffic on both streets which for the most part is used by local residents. We have seen the synagogue grow its membership base over the years and applaud them for their success. Our children attended a very popular program there that helped cement their historical identity. We would anticipate that growth to be actively pursued in the future creating additional long-term parking impacts that we do not believe can be accommodated on the site, forcing the growth of additional on-street parking.
5. Whether the project was in harmony with the existing infrastructure: The northeast and northwest corners of Bathurst and Flamingo/Worth are developed with single family homes. The southwest corner of Bathurst and Worth is a woodlot. This is to be contrasted with Existing Projects which are situated approximately 2-3 kilometres from the Property in highly developed areas with few if any woodlots and numerous other commercial developments and high-rise buildings. The proposed project would be a pariah in terms of its compatibility with the surrounding area. To be honest, the current state of development is a pleasant break from the continuous growth that has occurred along Bathurst.
6. Current State of the Property: As noted above, the Existing Projects were for the most part developed on vacant land. This is not the case with the project provided for in the Applications. While we do acknowledge that the architects have done their best to maximize the use of the available land however, we believe that a 12-story apartment building with 125 units with a synagogue adjacent to it is intensification gone somewhat overboard. It should be remembered that the synagogue provides not only religious services, but social events for its congregants. We note that on Attachment 3 to the Notice

we received regarding the Committee of the Whole meeting that there is a dining room indicated with 25 tables of 8 people each. This indicates that some 200 people could be in attendance at an event in the dining room in addition to whatever other activities are occurring in the synagogue and in the high-rise. As we noted in section 5, we would expect the synagogue to continue pursuing its growth strategy leading us to question how any further growth can be accommodated. In essence, the site is "spent" with the proposed project.

In summary, we believe this is a situation which brings to mind the phrase "having one's cake and eating it too". The Property is not sufficiently large enough or appropriately situated to accommodate the current plan and what we anticipate will be future growth. We have no objections to an expanded synagogue providing the spiritual support and growth it has offered in the past. To add a 12-story high-rise is not only inappropriate, it is excessive.

We have participated in several meetings organized by the local resident association and have listened attentively to the presentations by the proponent's experts. We do not have the benefit of expert reports and studies to contradict those presented by the proponent. We do however have a history of some 30 years living in our current home and seeing how the development along the Bathurst corridor has evolved. We live with that development daily. Experts and expert reports do not. We sincerely believe that this is the wrong project for the wrong property.

We hope the Committee of the Whole will consider our submission and respectfully ask the Committee to reject the Applications.

Finally, we would appreciate receiving notice and a copy of the decision of the Committee once issued.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Laura and Stuart Shamis
[REDACTED] Highcliffe Drive
Vaughan, ON [REDACTED]