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Communication
CW (WS) – May 5, 2021
Item(s) # - 2

From: [Tony Malfara](#)
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
Cc: Council@vaughan.ca
Subject: [External] Committee of the Whole (Working Session) Meeting - May 05, 2021 Letter for Submission re Agenda Item 5(2)
Date: May-04-21 7:40:11 AM
Attachments: [T Malfara City of Vaughan Boundry Review Letter V1.pdf](#)

Good morning, please find attached a letter I wish to submit for the Committee of the Whole Meeting on May 5, 2021 - Agenda Item 5(2) Ward Boundary Review, Interim Report.

Thank you

Tony Malfara

May 4, 2021

Mayor Bevilacqua, and Councillors,

**Re: May 5, 2020 Committee of the Whole Meeting Agenda Item 5(2)
Ward Boundary Review, Effective Local and Regional Representation**

Mayor and Councillors,

The purpose of this letter is to ask Vaughan Council to ask that the necessary review and public consultation is taken to ensure Vaughan citizens receive an effective balance between local and regional representation both today and as we add a new regional councillor after the next election.

With no communication or public input, we are concerned that the addition of an additional Regional Councillor will further erode local representation and decision making in Vaughan to the benefit of the Region.

The actions and representations of Vaughan's four Regional Councillors at Vaughan City Council and York Region meetings where the proposed Highway 413/GTA West Corridor (the Highway) was discussed and then voted highlights Vaughan's problematic regional representation. Although local Councillors voted to withdraw support, the Regional representatives from Vaughan voted against the wishes of the local councillors and the citizens they represent.

Even though it was clear that Vaughan's local councillors and the public did not support the Highway, Vaughan's Regional Council members maintained their support for the Highway, both locally and at the Region.

These actions confirmed that Vaughan has little representation of local interests at the Region. Our four regional members sit on Vaughan Council, vote on local issues, but are conflicted and continually think regional.

We, the citizens of Vaughan, need better clarity and understanding with respect to the accountabilities and responsibilities of Vaughan's elected Regional Councillors. Vaughan's regional councillors lack a clear understanding of the division of responsibility between their local and regional responsibilities. They are elected at large without accountability to any community in Vaughan. They often support controversial decisions in the presence of strong public opposition because it's difficult to hold them accountable as we do our local councillors.

Vaughan's Regional Council composition is always compared to Markham who has five Regional Council members. We each have roughly the same populations, however local interests are strongly maintained in Markham by the fact that Markham has eight local councilors (8 local to 5 regional), whereas Vaughan has only five local councilors (5 local vs. 4 Regional, soon to be 5). In Markham, a local vote to deal with a significant local issue will always favor

local interest by the fact that there are a significantly larger number of local councilors vs. regional.

Attention is needed in order to restore proper balance between local and regional representation. Clearly, there is frustration by the lack of attention our local needs are getting when weighed against the wishes or direction of the Region documented by consultants and just by listening to your voters.

The current structure needs improvement and simply adding a Regional representative without direct accountabilities to Vaughan will not improve things. In fact, given recent events it may make them worse.

Council needs to invest the time to find a solution that indeed gives us a more balanced and representative voice at the Regional table. More importantly we need a governance structure that ensures the decisions and requests coming from local council and Vaughan's community are not overwhelmed or discounted by the requirements of the region which in many cases conflict.

Does Vaughan Council look to increase the ratio of local seats to regional seats on council to ensure discussions and votes have a greater emphasis on the wards and the communities they serve or does the City look to clarify and enhance the accountabilities of our Regional Councillors to require them to be more accountable to the City of Vaughan.

Please take the time to consider what is best for the citizens of Vaughan. We need representation that is balanced, effective and holds our leaders accountable.

Thank you.

Tony Malfara
Kleinburg