

Communication : C97
Committee of the Whole (2)
May 12, 2021
Agenda Item # 8

Irene Ford
Woodbridge, ON
L4L 3W8

May 11, 2018

Vaughan Council,

Re: Agenda Item 6 (8) entitled: YORK REGION PRESENTATION ON PROPOSED 2051 FORECAST AND LAND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

I am very concerned about the current direction provided from the Province for Official Plan Updates. It is not typical to plan 30 years into the future and to rush this process during a pandemic when local councils are unable to engage with the public is irresponsible. There is so much uncertainty from Covid and we do not yet know how the pandemic may have changed our working and living habitats temporarily or permanently. On top of this there is a global Climate Crisis, Biodiversity Crisis and Vaughan has declared a Climate Emergency.

What is the Mayor and our Regional Councillors doing to raise awareness about York Region's ongoing Official Plan Updates? Vaughan will be committed and married to the urban boundary expansion approved in the Region's Official Plan. As Regional representatives have you promoted, told residents, included this in your news letters to let them know what the Region is planning or do you continue only to promote what the City of Vaughan is doing, the job of our local Councillors. What are you doing to rectify the fact that Vaughan Council no longer supports the proposed highway but York Region is still moving full steam ahead and planning for the highway.

The land in Vaughan proposed for the urban boundary expansion all surrounds the proposed GTA West Corridor/Highway 413. The Toronto Star's Recent "Friends with Benefit's" article identifies the ownership. Most if not all is owned by developers known for their powerful and at times inappropriate use of political influence. At York Region's Special Council Meeting on March 18 reports with the revised provincial direction for the Region's Official Plan update were added to an already controversial agenda. These reports are of paramount importance to the future of Vaughan and York Region and were added without announcement to an already highly controversial agenda that contained the GTA West Corridor/Highway 413. As a member of the public giving a deputation, it was like being ambushed. The narrative literally changed from the highway will not cause sprawl to we need the highway because we plan to build sprawl.

Vaughan will lose 100% of its remaining white belt lands if York Region's Official Plan is approved as currently recommended. White belt lands are not lands destined for growth or sprawl it is land that's fate has not yet been decided; it is neither within the urban boundary nor designated Greenbelt most if not all is prime farmland.

The level of greenfield development being recommended on Class 1 soil, the best in Canada is irresponsible, short sighted and does not adequately demonstrate the 'need' to permanently remove these lands from agricultural production. Soil is a non-renewable finite resource; local food production will be increasingly important in the face of Climate Change. The price of food has and is rising. Regardless of ownership, or how the current lands are being farmed or not farmed it is our elected official responsibilities at all levels of government to create plans and policies that support, preserve and enhance local agriculture.

If Vaughan Council supports what York Region has presented then Council will have succeeded in enabling every inch of Vaughan that is not protected by the Greenbelt, ORM or Conservation Authorities to be developed and paved. Recently the Mayor equated the wellbeing of the City with economic growth, this is a business indicator, perhaps even a development indicator it is not an indicator of community well-being or livability. What is before you if measured only by economic growth would be very positive but if environmental and public health externalities were included it would no longer be positive. Quite likely a liability to the long-term prosperity and future vitality of Vaughan. The research is clear sprawl amplifies climate and environmental impacts, results in poorer public health and other social determinant of health outcomes and in the long run infrastructure is subsidized by taxpayers.

Please be critical today as the Province has clearly demonstrated they have no regard for protecting the environment or acting on Climate Change. Local Councils must be strong, must advocate and they must act in the best interests of their communities and their citizens.

Thank you,
Irene Ford
Ward 3 - Resident, Citizen, Taxpayer and Voter

Municipal Motions Supporting Hard Urban Boundaries

Hamilton Request to delay submission of growth plan: <https://pub-hamilton.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=264330> unanimous

Hamilton survey: <https://pub-hamilton.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=264331> 13/2 with 2 abstentions

Halton motion to delay: [Extend Official Plan](#)