

Communication : C9
Committee of the Whole (2)
May 12, 2021
Agenda Item # 4

From: TONY PALUMBO [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 05, 2021 10:51 AM
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Subject: [External] 4101 Rutherford Road- Opposition Letter

Dear Mayor and members of Regional and City Council.

My name is Tony Palumbo and I live at [REDACTED] Siderno Crescent in the City of Vaughan. I'm writing this email in opposition to the proposed condo development at 4101 Rutherford Road.

In these difficult and challenging times that we are all facing during this Covid 19 Pandemic, we do not need the added burden of further challenging this issue that we have so clearly demonstrated our opposition in the past and presently to council, the applicant and all parties privy to this application of development.

I understand as all opposed to this project do that the city council has to demonstrate fairness to all parties concerned, however I would find it unethical, unfair and unjust should this motion to approve this project proceed during a time when most of the community is just trying to cope with all the challenges being faced with Covid 19.

I believe that council has an obligation and responsibility as elected officials to the residents of the community to make the right and just decision.

My family and I had the pleasure of becoming part of this community/neighbourhood in May 2001.

We have enjoyed the many amenities, tranquility, beauty and security this community has become.

I understand that planning and development aspects change throughout the years. However, these changes have to make the esthetic enhancements of a neighbourhood/community more pleasing and safer.

This proposed condo development will be neither pleasing nor safer for the community.

This community has been zoned single family residential (low density). The subject property has been zoned commercial C-3 since 1996. This property has served the people and children well for many years. Having a convenience store, dry cleaner or restaurant within walking distance to be able to enjoy are the points that tick the box to attract families to a community.

I'm sure the City of Vaughan is well aware of the traffic volume and noise pollution going through this neighbourhood already.

The mornings 7:00 am to 9:30- trying to leave the subdivision (home) and the evening 4:00 to 6:30 trying to get back home into the subdivision are absolutely intolerable.

Adding another 100+ units in a 1 acre property to an area with traffic issues is both irresponsible, unsafe and environmentally unwise.

As elected officials you are responsible and accountable to the people of the community.

It is your obligation to foresee and adhere the standards of a safe community and not the willingness to bend to the pressures of parties only interested in profit.

I oppose the plan because it is not designed in a manner that respects and promotes the physical character of the established neighbourhood of Weston Downs. The proposed built form is not compatible with the built form of the surrounding community of detached single-family homes. This proposal does not respect the building type, heights or scale of the nearby residential properties.

In addition, the proposed condo development is out of character with the neighborhood. In fact this community was built as a cohesive community with a minimum of 60 foot frontage lots and unique urban design guidelines. This apartment building will destroy the character of our community. Weston Downs was built with very specific urban design guidelines which are not being respected by this applicant. As an example and more specifically the proposed town homes along Velmar Drive do not fit in with the current urban design guidelines of large detached homes of the community.

Why would Council think to change the last VOP in 2010 to make such changes to its official plan which was considered good planning at the time. Large parts of the plan were not brought into effect until 2019 and parts of it are still not approved and before LPAT. Until the whole plan is approved there should be no further amendments to permit developments such as this one.

The City of Vaughan is already meeting the mandate of More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan. We already have increased densities to meet the mandate at the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre where we have the infrastructure to support the increased densities. With the proposed expansive high rise developments at Highway #7 and Weston Road (Sorbara Group et. al) and condo developments under construction to the east of Vaughan Mills mall along both sides of Jane Street (Greenpark Group et. al), the City Of Vaughan will well surpass the density

requirement targets set out by the province and therefore the development at 4101 Rutherford Road does not need to take place in its current form.

The same provincial action plan mentioned above states that high density developments should be placed along major transportation hubs which use multi-nodal modes of transportation and connect multiple Regional jurisdictions. This development does not do any of that. High density developments should also be placed in high employment opportunity areas which this is not. The development is not pedestrian friendly and does not factor into a walkable city design which would limit multi daily trip vehicle use.

Further, this tall and large condo development will overshadow the tennis courts and park which abut the proposed condo development. The tall and large building will cast shadows on the houses that surround the development and devalue them. The City should not allow this developer to leave insufficient space and distance from publicly held lands and not encroach closer onto Velmar Downs Park. The proposed condo development should not be allowed to have balconies which overhang the building further encroaching on minimum site set backs and that may be used as outdoor storage areas adding to the eye sore for adjacent neighbours. Furthermore, it should use a step back planning design to avoid casting shadows on the adjacent properties including the park.

Additionally, the site setbacks are also inadequate because they do not factor in the proposed future expansion of Rutherford Road by expropriation as noted in the submission. This developer must be required to factor in the widening of Rutherford Road and therefore the setbacks must be recalculated to allow for the widening of the Regional roads and to service the hydro and communication utility corridor. Therefore, the relationship of the building setbacks, height and design within the immediate area is inadequate. In fact the proposal is asking for heavy encroachment onto present site setbacks not to mention those of the future. Current residents of Weston Downs are being asked to factor in this land expropriation and future road widening when submitting present plans to do work on their properties. Why should this developer be any different and not have to be held to that same standard.

Furthermore, the proposed density is far too high. The current official plan permits densities of no greater than 1.5 FSI, and this applicant is proposing a density of double that. The height is 50% more than what has been approved in the 2010 VOP. This site has been designated as a low-rise mixed use property, not a medium-density or medium high-rise density site.

The proposal will compound the traffic issue that Weston Downs residents have been experiencing with traffic infiltration. Many residents who live in the surrounding communities use the local Weston Downs subdivision roads to bypass traffic along major regional roads.

Also, there are only three parking spaces on grade and the remaining parking space are located in three underground parking levels. It is clear from this parking situation that this will no longer serve as a community convenience plaza for our neighborhood. The residence of Weston Downs do not want to run in and out of our local stores by parking underground or forcing patrons to park along heavily congested Velmar Drive. The local Plaza stores will essentially will be unuseable for our Weston Downs Community.

Moreover, the access in and out of the condo building complex will not work properly for both vehicular and pedestrian safety. It is currently difficult to go in and out of the plaza during the morning and afternoon rush hours since there is a line of cars along Velmar Drive which use Weston Downs in order to bypass the gridlock on Weston Road and Rutherford Road.

I respectfully ask that Council turn down this application as presently submitted based on the excessive density, traffic issues, ingress and egress issues as well its unsuitable built form. This proposal is not compatible with the character of this vibrant Weston Downs Community. It will cast shadows and compound the traffic issues that will serve to reduce the current residence enjoyment of their homes and community. This proposal will take away the convenience of visiting our local stores both because of parking issues, traffic and the relocation of the stores.

I implore you to do the job you were sent there to do and be our voice. You have heard the dissent of our residents to this proposal in person at public consultations, in their attendance at a packed Council Chambers on September 17, 2019 where we even filled an overflow room and in the over one thousand signatures on a petition submitted to Council. I now ask that you act on behalf of the community of Weston Downs. Turn down this application and reject the proposed development at 4101 Rutherford Road in its present design and not set a dangerous precedent for Vaughan and our community. Be our voice and represent our vision for our community. Please do the right thing and support the Weston Downs community by turning down this proposal.

Please confirm receipt and/or reply to concerns.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Regards

TONY PALUMBO

█ Siderno Cres.

Vaughan, Ontario

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