
From: Anne Lacaria [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, May 12, 2021 2:13 PM
To: Antoine, Mark <Mark.Antoine@vaughan.ca>; Clerks@vaughan.ca
Subject: [External] Velmar Centre Property Limited - 4101 Rutherford Road - OP.19.003, Z.19.008, and DA.19.042

Dear City of Vaughan Representatives and Development Planning Department,

My name is Anna Selvaggi, resident of [REDACTED] Velmar Dr (Weston Downs), Vaughan, Ontario. I am emailing you today with regards to the proposed development at 4101 Rutherford Road. I have been a resident of Weston Downs for 28 years and this email is coming purely from a personal resident opinion. My residence is home to three other adults who agree with the viewpoint herein.

I first want to say thank you to the City of Vaughan and the Development Planning Department for the public consultation meetings you have held regarding this development. I attended the in-person meeting on September 17, 2019 and remember the massive number of Ward 3 residents and concerned public members who attended. Attending that Committee of the Whole meeting visualized to me the vast number of residents who are opposed to the development.

I strongly believe that a proposed development at this site may be possible. However, the current iteration of the proposed development and the sheer number of added vehicular density to the Weston Downs community **does not represent good city planning and good decision making**. My opinion on this matter does not rely on a NIMBY (not in my backyard) argument or claim that the development does not mesh well with the character of the neighbourhood. My objection is with the added traffic this development will have on the Weston Downs community, especially since my household lives on Velmar Dr. and we experience firsthand the crazy amount of traffic.

I will reference the 2016 Weston Downs Community Traffic Study, which the City of Vaughan retained Hatch to complete. In the report (Executive Summary), Hatch recognized that the study was requested by the city in response to the concerns expressed by **Weston Downs Residents over the previous years (previous to 2016)**. These concerns related to the local roads of Weston Downs being used as a by-pass because of the congested regional roads around the Weston Downs community. "The traffic study revealed that local community roads such as Velmar Boulevard, Valeria Boulevard and Santa Barbara Place carry **high volumes of cut-through and local traffic and contribute to the residents' concerns**

for safety, non-compliance of traffic control devices and speeding in the Weston Downs Community” (Hatch, 2016, b). The recommendations that were made included turn restrictions, turn restrictions during peak hours, and one-way street proposals (Hatch, 2016, b-c). Although none of these proposed solutions were implemented, the 2016 report recognized that the traffic by-pass in the Weston Downs is horrendous.

If we only consider the population of the City of Vaughan in 2016, the population would be 306,000. This does not include the people who travel through Vaughan to reach neighbouring municipalities. In 2016 the Weston Downs community expressed their frustrations with the increasing amount of traffic. In 2021, according to the City of Vaughan’s own website, the population is nearing 335,000. With such wonderful growth emerging in this City, the number speaks volumes on visualizing this impact on the streets of Weston Downs. The reason why I refer to these numbers is because the recent Traffic Impact Study by GHD Limited in July 10, 2020 says otherwise. With the current population of the City of Vaughan in mind, and the additional added residents this proposal would have, the report indicated that “The operational impact of the added site traffic is considered minimal with the forecasted increases in delays due to the increased through traffic along Weston Road and Rutherford and not site traffic from the subject site” (GHD, 2020, ii). This statement does not put enough emphasis on the current traffic conditions of the Weston Downs Community.

(1)

The statement from GHD Limited is specific to the added traffic the site is projected to have on the community of Weston Downs. The statement does not, or at least fails to, accurately incorporate what the added vehicular movement would be when the cut-through traffic is accounted for. The proposed development based on the City of Vaughan's Zoning By-laws require 267 vehicular parking spaces (GHD, 2020, ii). This would add to the horrendous vehicular traffic that Weston Downs is known for pre COVID-19 pandemic. The statement from GHD was, in my opinion, vague and deceptive because the word 'minimal' undermines the reality. If vehicular movement pre pandemic was already terrible for the residents of the community, wouldn't the addition of 267 vehicles **add to such issues and be counterintuitive?**

(2)

Reflecting on the GHD report raises a massive issue with the projections. The document frequently refers to “existing conditions”. However, when/what was the parameters of "existing conditions"? If the existing conditions is in reference to March 2020 or after, then this is a major flaw of this Traffic Impact Study because the **vehicular traffic in the Weston Downs community was greatly reduced due to the COVID-19 Pandemic & subsequent shut-downs & restrictions.**

(3)

The current site plan of the proposed development maintains the primary and only vehicular access to Velmar Drive. That means that all the vehicular movement this proposed development would cause would be unloaded on a local residential road. I am not sure of the regulations/parameters of having the proposed vehicular access on Rutherford Road (a Regional Road), but the current iteration of the proposed development will unequivocally **contribute to unbearable conditions for the residents of Weston Downs, and particularly Velmar Dr.**

I want to once again state that I am not wholeheartedly against a proposed development coming to 4101 Rutherford Road. I recognize that the City of Vaughan has growth projections and wants to support sustainable development, such as encouraging cycling activity. However, the amount of density and number of estimated vehicular movement this current proposed development will have on the already struggling streets of Weston Downs is **not good planning**. I vividly remember as a resident of this community the challenges I have had with traffic congestion. Whether the form of transportation is through the use of my car and I am forced to wait 20-25 minutes for a trip that is estimated to take 3 minutes (see attached photo), or biking in my neighbourhood and fearing the countless of vehicles that speed through the several stop signs in my community, the proposed development will only increase

these issues. What the City of Vaughan and relevant departments need to prioritize is how to reduce the traffic congestion in the Weston Downs community. This community should not have similar difficulties as a regional road, but it does. I should not fear cycling in my local community, but I do. The City of Vaughan needs to stop neglecting Weston Down's residents and support sustainable solutions that benefit everyone. First address the traffic congestion issue. Then we can address what details a mixed use condominium will have at 4101 Rutherford Road. This issue of traffic has been a well documented issue traversing several years. Adding more vehicles to this community will not help this longstanding issue. I urge the Mayor, the Local and Regional Councillors, and the Councillor of Wards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5, to all vote against this proposed development.

Sincerely,

Anna Selvaggi

Velmar Dr. Woodbridge ON