

May 11, 2021

RESPONSE TO May 12, 2021, 1:00PM Committee of the Whole Meeting:

ITEM 4: VELMAR CENTRE PROPERTY LIMITED OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FILE OP.19.003 ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FILE Z.19.008 SITE DEVELOPMENT FILE DA.19.042 4101 RUTHERFORD ROAD VICINTY OF RUTHERFORD ROAD AND VELMAR DRIVE

Good afternoon Mayor Bevilacqua, Council, and Staff,

My name is Victor Lacaria, Co-President of the Weston Downs Ratepayers Association. City Staff has presented Council with a “positive” report that recommends approving this development and cites how Vaughan must continue to increase its intensification targets within our established community. This application, as re-submitted, shows all of us that this developer cares very little about the community that has provided years of profits and success for himself and his tenants. He now seeks to squeeze even more profit from this land, intensifying beyond what has been deemed appropriate by City Planning. The developer wishes to develop intensively on this small parcel of land without considering the significant impacts on nearby residents’ quality of life. This application reveals how incompatible, inappropriate, inaccessible, and unaffordable this development will be for current and future residents of Weston Downs.

Weston Downs cannot accept the intensification proposed by this application. Our community was built in a homogenous manner with single detached homes; homes with 60’ lots and frontages, and restricted building materials and architectural designs. Homeowners bought into this concept of larger lot sizes and privacy, and in exchange, we gave up community amenities like a library, fire hall, community centre, and district park. Our road systems were designed to internalize traffic and were not built to handle the traffic that grid pattern “collector” road systems could. The corner of Rutherford Rd. and Velmar Dr. has posed serious accessibility and safety concerns in the past, concerns that have been verified through Council approved traffic studies. So why must the community be punished for what Council and Staff wanted decades ago?

The Provincial policy statements are general policies that govern the Province of Ontario. The policies are to guide planning, zoning, and development throughout the entire Province to ensure intensification and development can keep up with the demand of a growing population. This provincial policy statement which states that intensification must occur does not mean that every application that a municipality receives must be approved off this basis alone. That is why respecting and maintaining the character of Weston Downs is paramount when deciding on new developments.

“...it is the Vaughan Official Plan of 2010, not the Province, that provides direction for new development under the Housing Supply Action Plan. The Vaughan Official Plan maintains that in Community Areas with established development, new development must "be designed to

respect and reinforce the existing physical character and uses of the surrounding area..." – Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Hon. Steven Clarke. September 17, 2019.

Weston Downs was never planned to receive further intensification. The City of Vaughan, through the entire planning process, decided to make our community a fully planned and developed community. We intensified by design. City Staff cannot recommend to approve an application like this without critique, this is concerning to say the least. Why does our planning staff bend to the will of this applicant? Developers, city builders, and homeowners do not have the right of amendments to land use. They are not guaranteed or automatic.

This current application before Council must be turned down and dismissed, as it is abusing the principles and policies of the *Provincial Policy Statement 2020, Greater Golden Horseshoe Growth Plan, Places to Grow: Housing Supply Action Plan, York Region Intensification Policy*, and *Vaughan Official Plan 2010*, without taking into consideration the character of Weston Downs' Master Plan. I also request a motion to have the City Clerk record Council's vote on this item.

Yours truly,

Victor Lacaria

Weston Downs Ratepayers Association Co-President



Polo Crescent

Weston Downs Ratepayers' Assoc

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**PUBLIC HEARING
COMMUNICATION**

Date: Sept 17/19 ITEM NO. 5

C15

Your worship, Members of Council, Staff, my name is Victor Lacaria, Co-President of the Weston Downs Ratepayers Association ("WDRA").

On August 16, the WDRA convened a community meeting attended by 550 residents, and graciously attended by Regional Councillor Ferri, Councillor De Francesca, MPP Tibollo, and MP Sorbara, to address a proposed redevelopment of an existing C3 zoned neighbourhood commercial plaza, less than 1 acre, with an allowance of 20,000 sq. ft. coverage with limited retail and commercial uses, to a 7+ storey apartment building containing 139 residential condominium units, with an additional rooftop floor, ground floor commercial uses, requiring 3 levels of underground parking providing 257 parking spaces, and we cannot forget 3 parking spaces at grade, inadequate for the commercial tenants let alone for any of the 139 residential units.

The proposal is a complete redevelopment including substantial intensification within the fully built out and existing Weston Downs community effectively amending the VOP 2010, By-law 1-88 and the Weston Downs North Secondary Plan. Our community has been planning approved to be a unique, and differentiated homogeneous community meeting the pillars of good planning: appropriateness, accessibility, affordability and compatibility.

This is supported from OP 240, zoning standards, Urban Design Guidelines and the Weston Downs Master Plan North.

- **Walled or gated community.** Weston Downs was introduced as a unique, rare and differentiated planned community as found in gated communities throughout the southern United States of America. In fact, we have been characterized as "living behind the wall".
- **Homogeneous community of single detached homes by lot size, character, features, and urban design.** The single detached lots range from 21 metres and reduce to 18 metres to provide intensification within the planned community. The community has already been intensified, and if you reflect upon it carefully you will note that the range in lot sizes is consistent with the zoning standards intensification within Vaughan, i.e. R1 and R2 and R3 all have intensification within the same range.
- **Unique and differentiated Urban Design or architectural control exists with home style, elevation, grading, color, and features.** Restriction with exterior design, duplication, color of door, no asphalt driveway, fencing prohibitions, and accessibility differentiation as homes have 3 car garage and not subject to the same access.

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- **Road Pattern.** The community was designed to internalize the traffic and provide restricted access to regional arterial roads. While this internalization was designed to do so, the existing road layout has resulted in one street feeding into another street, which would not be approved today, as it has resulted in substantial road safety issues with traffic infiltration. The roads were never intended or designed for traffic infiltration, which has caused major problems, and any proposed development, which would itself constitute over a 7% increase in the total Weston Downs community would be devastating.
- **Accessibility.** We tend to forget the master plan of our community was not unlike a gated community in which accessibility would be lowered and restricted. The proposed plaza currently is located on Rutherford Road and Velmar Drive and currently provides significant accessibility problem with traffic infiltration as supported by Council's own studies they have approved. Council has approved of studies to examine infiltration and for the same corner there will be 7 times the intensification and further road traffic delays and issues.
- **Park dedication.** Weston Downs is a walled community to be self-sufficient and serve the residents with schools and parks. Weston Downs south has 1 school and 1 park attached to the school. Weston Downs north has 1 school and 1 park attached to it, and a second park abutting the proposed development for a community of over 1876 households. The Weston Downs master plan provided reduced parklands in exchange for the larger lots. Now it would appear we are being penalized with intensification, as we are an existing community of low-density housing.
- **Good planning is to take into consideration infrastructure and community amenities.** Weston Downs, unlike most other communities throughout Vaughan, does not have a single community service or amenity. We effectively gave up community services in exchange for having a single detached house within the context we gave up park space as well. We intensified by design. We have no library, no community center, no fire hall, and no district park.
WDRA reached out to the residents at the community meeting and obtained surveys, and continue to do so by providing the survey on-line.

Weston Downs want Vaughan Council to understand we are an existing and mature community in which the proposal fails each of the pillars of good land use planning: appropriateness, accessibility, affordability, and compatibility. The Weston Downs Master Plan was approved, promised, delivered to us. Council is being requested to honor your own long approved decision having created Weston Downs. We ask you to respect Weston Downs by leaving our community alone so we can meet the challenges we face. By rejecting the proposal, your message will demonstrate existing communities

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have to be respected and the proposed intensification application is not appropriate, compatible, affordable or accessible.

The Provincial Policy Statement, PPS, defines the "Vision for Ontario's Land Use Planning System" as:

"The long term prosperity and social well-being of Ontario depends upon planning for strong, sustainable, and resilient communities for people of ages, a clean and healthy environment, and a strong and competitive economy."

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Victor Lacaria", with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Victor Lacaria

Co-President of the Weston Downs Ratepayer' Association

COUNCIL COMMITTEE AGENDA 27 JUNE 1988

In the interim, Council, on May 19, 1987, recommended the approval of the Blue Coin Investments Inc. (File 19T-85028) draft plan of subdivision to the Region of York. It was found that the Blue Coin plan could be integrated into the lands to the north, it being under single ownership. Therefore, this Plan will primarily concern itself with those lands in Lot 15, Concession 6, being the last component to be finalized in the greater neighbourhood.

As required by the Official Plan, the majority of the owners in Lot 15, Concession 6, have undertaken the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan, dealing specifically with this area. Staff have reviewed the plan and are prepared to recommend approval of the version of the plan set out in Attachment #3 to this staff report.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

Official Plan

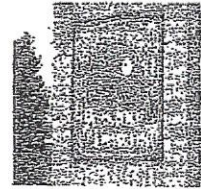
i) Land Use

The subject lands are primarily designated "Low Density Residential", "Open Space", "Elementary School" and "Drainage Tributary" by OPA #240 (Woodbridge Community Plan). OPA #240 was adopted by Council on June 22, 1987 but has not yet been approved. The Minister of Municipal Affairs has referred the amendment to the Ontario Municipal Board for a hearing.

It is noted that Staff are recommending that a .8 ha (2 acre) Neighbourhood Commercial site be provided at the Rutherford Road intersection of the most westerly feeder road. OPA #240 does not provide for such a designation. Staff can support the location of the commercial site in this area. In addition, the location of the feeder road as shown on Schedule "A" will be amended to reflect the feeder road location specified in this plan. The incorporation of these changes will be dealt with through a modification to OPA #240 in a related item prepared for this agenda. With the exception of this site, the distribution of land uses proposed by the Neighbourhood Plan conforms to OPA #240.

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ATTN: City of Vaughan Planning Department and City Clerks Department

I am addressing the City Clerk and the Planning Department on behalf of the residents of Weston Downs by stating that we wish our community be respected during the Vaughan Official Plan 2020 and recent notice of amendments to Bylaw 1-88. As the Co-President of the Weston Downs Ratepayers' Association, I speak for the residents who have been reaching out to the WDRA. They want the City of Vaughan to ensure that our community continues to be respected regarding the province's intensification policy updates.

The Weston Downs Ratepayers' Association does not want the current intensification policy to affect our existing community. The four planning principles set out by the Provincial Intensification Policy (Appropriateness, Affordability, Accessibility, and Compatibility) must be met in order to maintain good planning.

Intensification within Weston Downs does not satisfy any of the four planning principles set out by the province because of the current low-density homes located in the sub-division. Any style of intensification within the community would disrespect the existing community by allowing medium to high-density homes to be built. There is no room to fit developments in such nature due to the service roads not able to satisfy the current and future traffic infiltration issues plaguing our community as a whole.

By amending Bylaw 1-88 to allow any form of intensification into the community, it would disturb the equilibrium of Weston Downs. The community is already underserved; as it does not have the amenities like a community centre, fire hall, or library. This was the result of a promise made by the City and developers that we would enjoy bigger lot sizes and exclusivity that the other surrounding communities wouldn't have. That promise was maintained, is still being maintained, and will continue to be maintained by the WDRA.

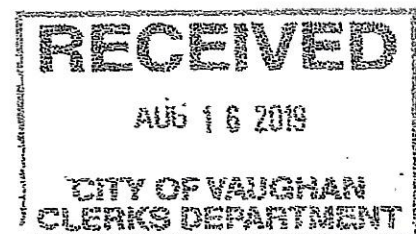
We would like City Staff and Council to respect the community of Weston Downs as the community the way it was intended to be. Please respect the current plans and by-laws that maintain R1 zoning for housing in Weston Downs; as well as maintaining the current C3 zoning for both of the commercial service areas us residents utilize everyday within the community. We would also like our community to be respected regarding the intensification corridor ending at Weston Rd, and Rutherford Rd. The VOP and York Region Official Plan do not call for any intensification west of Weston Rd and Rutherford Rd.

We hope you find this letter informative. We, the residents of Weston Downs, want to continue enjoying our community as it was promised decades ago.

With regards,

Victor Lacaria

Co-President of the Weston Downs Ratepayers Association



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Municipal Affairs
and Housing**

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19-4059

September 17, 2019

The Honourable Michael Tibollo, MPP
Vaughan – Woodbridge
michael.tibollo@pc.ola.org

Dear MPP Tibollo:

Thank you for your letter regarding the authority of local councils in making planning decisions. I am pleased to provide you with information regarding the work our government has done with respect to supporting local land-use planning decisions.

As you are aware, our government is committed to building more housing and bringing down costs for the people of Ontario. To help fulfill this commitment, we have developed a broad-based action plan to address the barriers getting in the way of new ownership and rental housing. [**More Homes, More Choice: Ontario's Housing Supply Action Plan**](#) outlines our plan to tackle Ontario's housing crisis, while encouraging our partners to do their part.

I would like to share some details regarding initiatives led by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing which include amendments to the *Planning Act* in the *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019*; proposed changes to the **Provincial Policy Statement**; and a new provincial plan for the region, **A Place to Grow: Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe**.

The *More Homes, More Choice Act, 2019*, which received Royal Assent on June 6, 2019, is central to the **Housing Supply Action Plan** and is intended to eliminate unnecessary steps, duplication and barriers to creating the housing Ontarians need.

As a part of this work, we've made changes to the *Planning Act*, most of which took effect on September 3, 2019, that would:

- Streamline development approvals processes and facilitate faster decisions,
- Increase the certainty and predictability of the planning system,
- Support a range and mix of housing options, and boost housing supply,
- Make charges for community benefits more predictable, and
- Make other complementary amendments to implement the proposed reforms.

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On July 22, the Ministry launched a 90-day consultation on proposed policy changes to the **Provincial Policy Statement (PPS)**, as part of the **Housing Supply Action Plan**. The PPS sets out the province-wide direction on land use planning matters of provincial interest and municipalities are key implementers.

The proposed policy changes to the PPS focus on five key themes:

- Increasing housing supply and mix;
- Protecting the environment (including the Greenbelt) and public safety;
- Reducing barriers and costs;
- Supporting rural, northern and Indigenous communities; and,
- Supporting certainty and economic growth.

The ministry is holding meetings with key stakeholders, as well as regional technical sessions with municipal staff, and we look forward to receiving their input on the proposed policies. Vaughan has been invited to participate in this process. Additionally, the ministry is undertaking ongoing engagement on the PPS with Indigenous communities.

As you know, **A Place to Grow** supports the government's commitment to growth and prosperity. Through our priorities of increasing housing supply, creating more jobs, generating economic opportunities, attracting new investments, and better aligning infrastructure investments, we will ensure that people can live and work locally, all while maintaining protections for our environmentally sensitive areas, notably the Greenbelt, cultural heritage assets, employment areas and agricultural lands. A Place to Grow not only allows for greater autonomy for local decision-making that is responsive to local needs and opportunities, but also recognizes that one size does not fit all and as such provides for greater flexibility at the local level.

A Place to Grow, which came into effect in May 2019, introduces new policies that:

- Make it faster and easier for local governments to make modest changes to settlement area boundaries when they need them, helping them to be more responsive to market demands for new housing or economic development opportunities;
- Streamlines development near major transit station areas, like subway and GO stations, so that municipalities can begin their planning sooner;
- Promotes economic development and job creation by ensuring that provincially significant employment zones are identified;
- Cuts red tape, where it makes sense, to foster mixed-use development and increase housing supply, while ensuring that jobs are maintained; and
- Protects important environmental and agricultural assets.

We heard loud and clear from our planning partners that local decision-makers know their communities best and as such they would like greater flexibility to address the unique circumstances that they face.

It is the **Vaughan Official Plan of 2010**, not the Province, that provides direction for new development under the **Housing Supply Action Plan**. The Vaughan Official Plan maintains that in Community Areas with established development, new development must “be designed to respect and reinforce the existing physical character and uses of the surrounding area.”

Our planning changes in the **Housing Supply Action Plan** reflect our trust in the ability of local governments to make decisions about how their communities grow, while achieving the government’s commitment and priority to create the housing that Ontarians need. We remain committed to supporting our municipal partners in meeting this commitment as they are the frontline in responding to local needs and priorities.

Once again, thank you for your letter and for all the work you do on behalf of your constituents in your riding of Vaughan – Woodbridge. Please accept my best wishes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Clark". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Clark
Minister