

**Communication : C8
Committee of the Whole (2)
June 8, 2021
Presentation # 1**

Supporting Documents
plus Written Deputations

for the June 8th, 2021

Committee of the Whole
Council Meeting

Oral Presentation by:

Beverley Golden
[REDACTED] York Hill Blvd.
Thornhill, Ontario



Written Deputation for the June 8th Committee Meeting
Re- The proposed crossover for Yorkhill Boulevard south of Gailcrest Circle

Since May 20, 2020 we have been in communication with Vaughan City Staff about the proposed crossover. None of our concerns have resulted in any significant change to the original design plans.

Our two main issues are the location site and the locator tone.

This location is less than desirable (According to a AODA guidelines), as the slope is too steep and there are existing storm drains (barriers/obstacles), which cannot be moved. City staff will not consider the intersection just north at Gailcrest which requires no modification to the existing landscape, while this location requires reconstruction. The crossover is set to be installed in June and I am hoping the concerns of local residents will be considered by council.

My mother is in a wheelchair and I personally will not cross at this location with her as the incline and especially the storm drains, present a dangerous obstacle for us. In a conversation with CNIB, they also advised that they do not recommend a location with barriers like this location has, as some visually impaired people use a cane and cannot safely maneuver this type of obstacle.

At this point I hope council agrees that the 24/7 locator tone be turned off. Our home is close enough to the locator button to be negatively affected by the sound. Neither the Ontario Ministry of Transportation nor the Transportation Association of Canada recommend the locator tone be used 24/7 in a residential location. The choice is left up to the municipality and in our case, Vaughan council has decided to have the locator tone activated to always be on.

AODA requires that the tone not be heard further than a 12-foot (3.7m) radius from the locator button. According to the CNIB anything heard further than 12-feet is confusing to visually impaired people and creates a liability for the city.

When the manufacturer demonstrated the unit, the level was turned lower than 30Db. The beeping could still be heard 40 feet away. Our quiet residential street will be negatively impacted by this constant beeping sound. At any point if an impaired person requests the tone to be turned on then I would have no problem with that.

Please consider our concerns as if this crossover was being installed in front of your home.

Sincerely,

Gayle Lawrence
[REDACTED] York Hill Blvd,
Thornhill, Ontario. L4J 2P6

Written Deputation for the June 8th Committee Meeting re the proposed crossover for York Hill Blvd., south of Gailcrest.

Cars expect crossover lights to be activated. If the lights are not activated, then that creates confusion, which can lead to an accident G-d forbid, for which the City of Vaughan government could be liable. This is a religious Jewish area, where many people won't push the button to activate lights on Jewish Sabbaths and certain holidays. Also, motion detectors that would activate lights are not acceptable to many of these people.

We were told that the city asked a Rabbi, who said he didn't object to the crosswalk. But why would the city ask a Rabbi if something of this nature is safe or if there is liability? I would think that this is a question for a traffic expert and for lawyers.

The proposed crossover is also slated to have a locator tone with a beeping sound 24/7, which concerns me because of the increased noise it will add to our neighbourhood.

There are other ways to make things safer, such as better signage, as well as a crosswalk sign in the middle of the road, which shows a picture of a person walking, with a symbol that says "yield," which cars can see right away, and which has been useful in other places.

Another option is a slower speed limit of maybe 30 km, especially since this is a school zone, and to have electronic signs telling people what their speed is, which seems to be effective in other areas.

I appreciate council considering other options that will be less disruptive to our neighbourhood.

Thank you,

Eli Janowski
■ York Hill Blvd.
Thornhill, On. L4J 2P6

Written Deputation for the June 8th Committee Meeting re the proposed crossover for York Hill Blvd., south of Gailcrest.

Greeting and Blessing:

Regarding your proposal to put a crosswalk on Yorkhill Boulevard, I would point out the following:

1. As I understand it, the original study was done before certain demographics changed regarding the number of students attending the adjacent school.
2. According to Jewish law, Jews are not allowed to push the button to activate the crosswalk lights during the following times: Every Friday from sunset until after Saturday night, and certain Jewish holidays.

Therefore, the proposed crosswalk can, G-d forbid, create dangerous mixed messages, since drivers won't expect people to cross the street without activating the lights. (A leading Rabbi informed me that automatic sensors, where a person walks by and lights activate, would also not be permissible for the Sabbath.)

Hoping to hear good news in regards to the above.

With blessing

Yoseph Janowski

■ Lisa Crescent,
Thornhill, Ontario L4J 2N2

Written Deputation for the June 8th Committee Meeting re the proposed crossover for York Hill Blvd., south of Gailcrest.

The crosswalk on York Hill Blvd just south of Gailcrest Circle is designed in such a way that it could possibly cause injury to the pedestrian using it, making it an undesirable place to cross the street.

The catch basins on the west side of the road create a serious tripping hazard. The dip in the road made to accommodate the sewers, is very icy in the winter, sometimes snow covered (which makes pedestrians forget that it is there) and is slippery in the rain. I have stumbled numerous times in this area.

Consequently, I avoid using this crosswalk when walking my small dog. Slips and falls are very dangerous, especially for us senior citizens.

It would be helpful if the city considered another safer place for all of us to cross, one that didn't have the obstacles the current one has.

Thank you for considering the above.

Corinne Nightingale
■ Jenstar Way
Thornhill L4J 5V3

Written Deputation for the June 8th Committee Meeting re the proposed crossover for York Hill Blvd., south of Gailcrest.

The proposed crossover would be very close to our backyard. We like to spend as much time as we can in our backyard, and the noise (beeping) coming from the crossover would be very annoying, and would greatly disturb our ability to enjoy our backyard.

Furthermore, many religious pedestrians in this neighbourhood are not allowed to push the button to activate the lights of the crossover on the Jewish Sabbath. Pedestrians will cross without activating the lights, something that approaching drivers won't expect and they may not stop. This could present a real danger to these pedestrians.

Thank you for considering other alternatives that will be less intrusive and safer for all pedestrians.

Rabbi and Mrs. Moshe and Bassie Spalter
■ Gailcrest Circle
Thornhill, Ontario
L4J 5V2

From: HOMB Exec Office (MTO) HOMBExecOffice@ontario.ca
Subject: Pedestrian Crossover Regulations - Question
Date: November 25, 2020 at 4:07 PM
To: [REDACTED]

Dear Ms. Golden,

Regulation 413/12 of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) states that accessible pedestrian signals must have a locator tone that is distinct from the walk indicator tone. The regulation does not mention that the locator tone has to be repeated 24 hours a day, 7 days per week; however, Transportation Association of Canada guidelines recommend the locator tone to operate 24/7 to ensure guidance is provided to visually impaired pedestrians regardless of the time of day.

For provincial highways in Ontario, the Transportation Association of Canada guidelines are followed, while municipalities may vary in their approach based on specific local considerations and AODA policies.

Thank you,

Monique Gough | Branch Administrative Coordinator
Ministry of Transportation, Operations Division
Highway Operations Management Branch
659 Exeter Road, 4th Floor
London, ON N6E 1L3
T: (226) 448-5769 | monique.Gough@ontario.com

AODA guidelines re Obstacles and Locator Tone distance

AODA guidelines: 2.1.6 Designing for Accessibility

Pedestrian crossings shall provide a continuous, and clear path across the vehicular route. An accessible path must be barrier-free and designed to address a range of capabilities as exhibited by the individuals that might use them. Consideration shall be given to the expected number and type of users in determining the design parameters that will enable independent, safe, and efficient use of the crossings by individuals of all ages and abilities.

A barrier-free environment means the elimination of physical or information barriers. Physical barriers such as curbs, steep slopes or obstacles may restrict movements of pedestrians with mobility impairments; while information barriers such as the lack of tactile or audible cues will limit pedestrians with visual or hearing impairments in their ability to recognize the conditions of the environment.

AODA guideline re locating tone distance heard

The Transportation Association of Canada standards states "notwithstanding any other guidelines provided in this document the push button locating tone should be adjusted to be audible at no more than 3.7 M from the push button or at the closest building line which ever is closer."

This can be found in this AODA document:

<https://www.aodaalliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/3-E-TAC-EText.txt>