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May 27, 2021

Communication : C 55
Committee of the Whole (2)
June 8, 2021
Item : Presentation 4

For the attention of:
City of Vaughan Clerk's Office
York Region Clerk's Office

I wish to bring the following to the attention of the Mayor, Members of Council, the three Regional Councillors and the appropriate York Region representatives. I request the issues identified in this letter be recognized at the next Vaughan and York Region Council Meetings and that a plan to address the issues be put into play.

I am a resident at [REDACTED] Maison Parc Condominium YRSCC 1109 and a director on its board. There are two other condominiums, [REDACTED] on Maison Parc CRT. The Four Elms Retirement Residence fronts on Steeles Ave. W and together we occupy the northeast corner of the Dufferin Steeles intersection.

I was made aware of two proposals earlier this year: the first from Tenblock Development and the second from First Capital Realty. They are identified by Toronto Zoning Amendment Application Numbers: 20 213392 NNY 06 OZ & 19 262484 NNY 06 OZ. Together they propose to redevelop the southeast corner of Dufferin and Steeles along the south side of Steeles to the West Don River Ravine pathway leading to the Lord G Ross Park in Toronto.

The struggle to get a response from representatives from the City of Vaughan and York Region regarding their position on development proposals on our border was unacceptable. It was eventually confirmed that comments if submitted do not include the impact they have on existing communities.

*I am seeking the City of Vaughan and York Region's support raising issue with the proposed construction. The proposed seven high-rise buildings would tower over the intersection and introduce a four-fold increase in the density of the area. **The City of Vaughan and York Region must formally advise Toronto of our concerns.***

*Furthermore, I request the departments in both the City of Vaughan and York Region responsible for inquiries/comments be better coordinated. **Comments returned should contain feedback from neighbourhoods that may be impacted.***

Developments should ensure the character and atmosphere of the existing neighbourhoods are enriched and not diminished. Both proposals miss the mark in that they will only affect the residents of Toronto, Vaughan and ultimately York Region in a negative way.

Background

The magnitude of changes proposed for the area disrespect the surrounding neighbourhoods. The impact on green spaces, the environment and thousands of citizens from Toronto and Vaughan/York Region who travel through the Dufferin and Steeles intersection will only be negative. While not technically in Vaughan, these developments are on the border between Vaughan's Ward 5 and Toronto's York Centre. Issues on either side of Steeles do not disappear at the Boarder but crossover and overlap. The flow of pedestrians, cyclists, transit, traffic, sun, shadows, water, sewage, and density are all intertwined. An important fact learned from the pandemic is that people are moving out of high-density areas. Cramming people into towers is not conducive to the quality of life that we should seek.

I have been in contact with the executive of the Toronto Ridgeway Ratepayers Association, York Centre's Councillor James Pasternak and Stephen Gardiner, the Senior Planner for the North York (Central Section) in the City of Toronto. In Vaughan, I have contacted and discussed the situation with the Brownridge, Lakeview Estates, Beverly Glen, Concord West and Glen Shields Ratepayer Associations, the management of the Four Elm Retirement Residence, the executive on the 1,2 and 8 Maison Parc Condo boards and many others in the City of Vaughan and York Region. For the record, I sought support from our Ward 5 Councillor, Alan Shefman. I understand others have approached him on these matters as well. While he replied to me in an email asking to be kept informed, he and his office have not responded or shown any further concern.

We are not opposed to development, but it must be efficiently managed and benefit the existing neighbourhoods. Clearly discussions on how our communities can successfully grow and welcome new residents without overwhelming emergency services, hospital facilities and the green space available are necessary. We cannot increase the traffic problems exponentially without severe consequences. Driving times north and south on Dufferin and east and west across Steeles must be improved. Imagine the traffic bottlenecks caused by these developments without proper coordination? The limited coordination between TTC and YRT services (as well as their lack of funding) adversely affects transit routes servicing this intersection right now.

Developers must be made aware that there is an expectation of a cooperative approach and exchange of ideas. What might be the proper formula to add density to this area? It must be more complete and collaborative. And if they are on our border the surrounding neighbourhoods must be involved start to finish.

Please review and advise me of the actions taken to respond to the items listed above.

Joseph Brunaccioni
Director YRSCC 109

This letter was attached to an email sent for the attention of the City and Region.

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