

C2
COMMUNICATION
COUNCIL – October 20, 2021
CW (1)- Report No. 43, Item 2

From: [Al Forester](#)
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca
Cc: [Maurizio Bevilacqua](#); [Sandra Yeung Racco](#); [Alan Shefman](#); [Rosanna DeFrancesca](#); [Tony Carella](#); [Marilyn Iafrate](#); [Linda Jackson](#); [Mario Ferri](#); [Gino Rosati](#); [Joy Ciafardoni](#)
Subject: [External] Re: Zoning By-Law amendment File Z.20.001 & DA.20.002
Date: October-04-21 3:12:06 PM
Attachments: [Letter To Council \(9630 Islington\) 2021-compressed.pdf](#)

Please see the attached pdf for my written submission regarding this application which will be heard by the Committee of The Whole tomorrow. Please acknowledge receipt of the attachment by e-mail response.

Thank you,

Al D'Silva

■ Chalone Crescent (Ward 2)

Vaughan, Ontario



October 4, 2021

To: City of Vaughan
Office of the City Clerk
City Council
Committee Of The Whole

RE: Zoning By-Law Amendment File Z.20.001 for 9630 Islington Avenue, Hearing October 5, 2021

I wrote to you prior to last year's meeting (July 7, 2020) regarding this amendment application. At that meeting, Council agreed with residents that this application was unreasonable. If this, my 2nd letter, looks familiar, it should. This is because the application is the same unreasonable one as last year's, with no meaningful changes.

I hope that Council will be consistent in their response this year by firmly rejecting this application. I will reiterate my previous letter with the reasons why.

I write to you with great concern about the proposed development at this site, which will have a huge negative impact not only on adjacent residents, but also on a much larger number of people who live, work, play and transit through the area.

The most troublesome aspects are:

- the building height,
- the number of units, and
- the lack of sufficient parking.

Here is an extract from page 29 of the applicant's Planning Justification Report (File 217149):

Zoning By-Law 1-88

RM2 Zone + Exception 9(988)-Schedule E-1184

By-Law 1-88 (RM2)			
	By-Law Requirement RM2 Zone + Exception 9(988)	Proposed	Complies (Yes) or (No)
Lot Frontage (min)	30m	39.1m	Yes
Lot Area (min)	230m ² /unit	3925.45m ²	
Front Yard (min)	4.5m (Note 2)	3.28m	No
Rear Yard (min)	4.5m	14.38m	Yes
Interior Side Yard (min)	1.5m	13.3m	Yes
Exterior Side Yard (min)	4.5m (Note 2)	2.296m	No
Lot Coverage (max)	50%	35.3%	Yes
Maximum Building Height	12m	17.4m	No
Vehicle Parking IBI Standards	104 Spaces	104 Spaces	Yes
(3.13) Landscaped Area (lot line which abuts a street line)	Islington Ave 6m Napa Valley Ave 6m	Islington Ave 5.28m Napa Valley Ave 2.2m	No
(3.14) Permitted Yard Encroachments	1.8	1.8	Yes * (with new proposed setbacks)
(4.1.4.b) Landscape buffer around parking	2.4	0.63m	No
Number of Units (max)	28 units	89 units	No
(4.1.6) Minimum Amenity Area	2760m ²	2456.63m ²	No
	45 Degree	45 Degree	Yes

The current zoning allows for a maximum building height of 12m (39.4 feet), which is already considerably taller than the existing single-family dwellings all around the site. The applicant is seeking to build to a height of 17.4m (57.1 feet), which is 17.7 feet more than currently permitted. That's a whopping 45% more than what is allowed.

The current zoning allows for a maximum of only 28 units. Yet, the applicant is seeking to cram **89 units** onto this small piece of land. That's more than three times the number of units allowed.

Why is the City Planner even accepting such ridiculous applications that are so far beyond the realm of what is reasonable under the current zoning?

On page 21 of the Planning Justification Report, the applicant quotes applicable YROP Healthy Communities policies including:

(Section 5.2.8) To employ the highest standard of urban design, which:

- a. provides pedestrian scale, safety, comfort, accessibility and connectivity;
- b. complements the character of existing areas and fosters each community's unique sense of place;

On page 22, the applicant then claims: "The proposed development involves a modern low-rise apartment building that respects the scale and design of surrounding structures." I dispute this claim. How does exceeding the allowable maximum height by **45%** "respect the scale of surrounding structures"?

In prior discussions, residents were told to be grateful that the proposal is only for 17m and not 27m (instead of the allowed 12m). In response, I ask you: If a Councillor loses an election, should they be grateful that they lost by only 170 votes, and not by 270 votes?

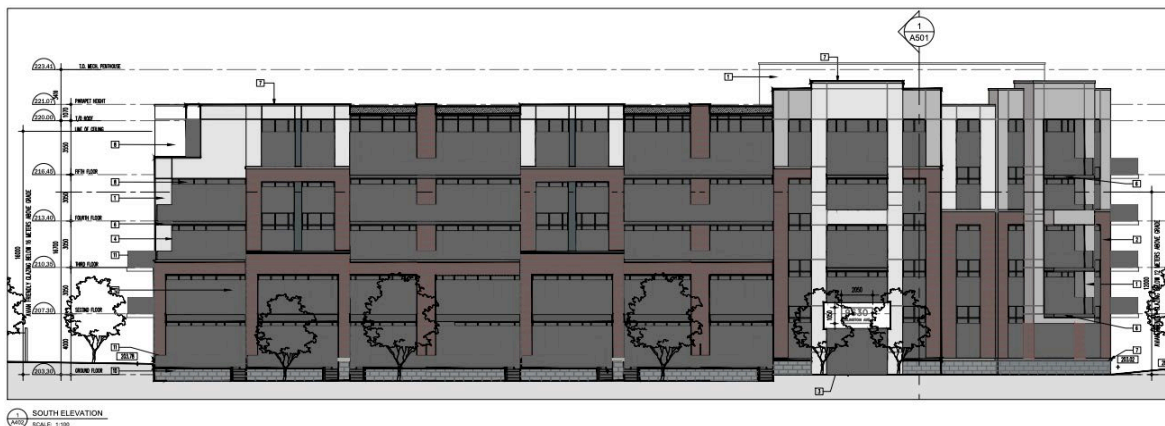


The above picture shows homes on Chalone Crescent which back directly onto the proposed development site. They are typical of homes throughout Sonoma Heights: brick &/or stone veneered, with peaked roofs.



City of Vaughan Fire Station 7-9 (above) located across the street at 9601 Islington Avenue is a prime example of a newer structure “that respects the scale and design of surrounding structures.” And it’s not even residential in function. If this aesthetic can be accomplished with an industrial/utility building, then why can’t the applicant achieve this with a residential structure?

Now consider the following extract from the applicant’s elevation dated September 1, 2021:



How can anyone claim that this dark, ominous glass megalith hovering over family homes and backyards “respects the scale and design of surrounding structures”?

Sonoma Heights is a highly attractive neighbourhood because of its safe, wholesome, small-town atmosphere despite its proximity to the city. It is a strong community where neighbours know each other both by face and by name. Its quiet, nurturing streets (like Chalone Crescent, pictured on page 2 of this document) are where adults jog, seniors stroll, youth play ball and kids ride their bikes. Sonoma Heights spells “quality of life”. It truly is a village environment.

The proposed development seeks to impose a drastic change to the nature of the neighbourhood by forcing in an apartment block with **67%** of its 89 units being “shoe-box” sized (557 sq.ft.) units. It is common knowledge that these types of units are not occupied by resident homeowners with their families. Rather, they are held by absentee landlords who have no roots or interest in the community. Units of this type get rented out to single occupants, most of them

being short-term rentals (e.g., AirBnB). One only has to follow the news in recent years to see proof of the kind of activity that this environment attracts, to which the police can attest:

- loud, wild parties,
- alcohol and drug abuse, broken bottles and needles,
- sex trafficking,
- street gangs and organized crime,
- robberies, muggings, shootings, stabbings, and similar violent crime.

I ask you to look again at the photograph of Chalone Crescent (on page 2 of this document), and ask yourself if it seems like a fitting environment for the proposed development.

The developer will make their profits and laugh all the way to the bank, while the families of Sonoma Heights will be left to suffer the aftermath for decades to come.

Traffic is a major concern for the City of Vaughan, and Sonoma Heights is no exception. The applicant's Transportation Study And Parking Study document gives specific numerical data in regard to vehicular traffic. What it does *not* give is a perspective on those numbers and what it means to the people who transit through this area.

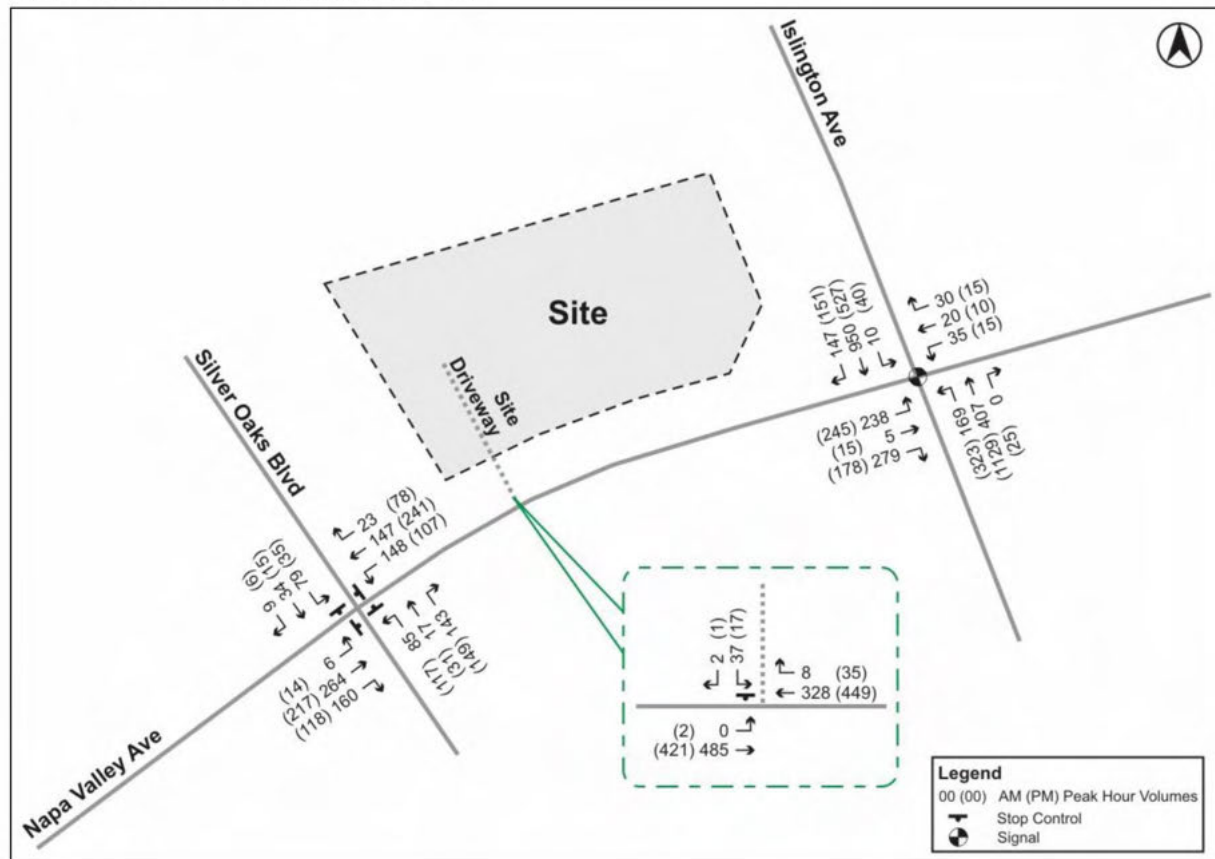
I can provide some perspective as an area resident for the last 18 years, who drives past the proposed site every day. With the existing structures and density, Islington Avenue just does not have enough capacity, and is gridlocked during the morning rush. It takes as much as 12 minutes just to get from Napa Valley Avenue to Rutherford Road, a distance of only about 1.3 km. In my 18 years here, it has only gotten worse, not better. This is the present-day condition of traffic, which does not factor in the additional traffic that will result from a new high-density twin-tower project already commencing construction at 9691 Islington Avenue, just across the street from this proposed site. It also does not factor in the additional traffic that will result from the townhouse complex already under construction at 9560 Islington Avenue, just south of the proposed site. With the addition of 106 vehicles due to this applicant's development, the situation will be untenable.

Page 27 of the applicant's Transportation Study And Parking Study document states that "Under all analysis scenarios, the study intersections are operating with acceptable delays and sufficient capacity." The people who deemed these delays to be "acceptable" certainly do not live in the area, and are not impacted by them in the least.

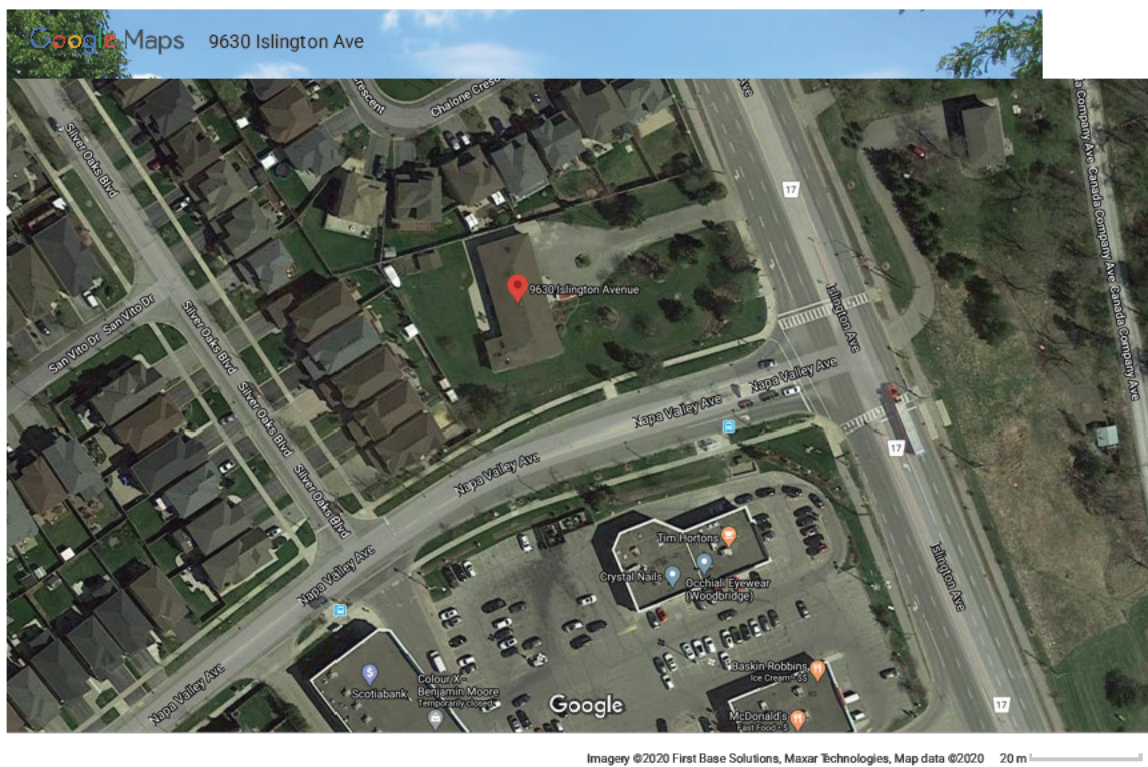
The applicant's Transportation Study And Parking Study document shows the following diagram on page 17:

Transportation Study – 9630 Islington Avenue

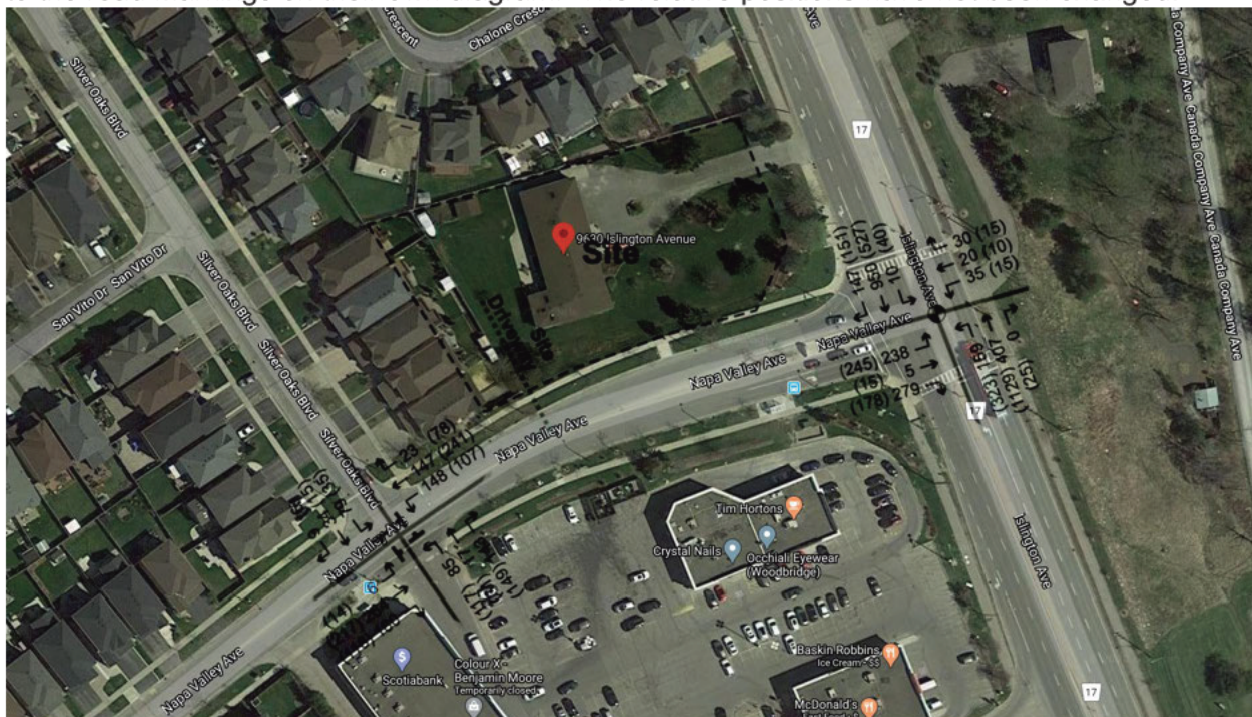
Figure 11 2026 Future Total Traffic Volumes



However, this can be misleading as it does not provide a scale for distance reference, and it shows the proposed driveway traffic markings as a call-out, rather than in their rightful place on Napa Valley Avenue, which is a small neighbourhood roadway with only one lane in each direction, as shown in the real-world image of the proposed site (below).



I have taken the traffic markings from the applicant's diagram and overlaid it on the satellite view. (The outline of the proposed site and its driveway is as indicated by the applicant, relative to the road markings on their own diagram. The relative positions have not been changed.



I have also placed the proposed driveway traffic markings in their rightful position (below).

should any taxpayer be expected to follow the law? Why go through the effort and expense of formulating and passing by-laws if they don't apply equally to everybody? If Council will not enforce the laws of the city, then why bother having a City Council at all? Let's just dissolve Council and refund taxpayers' money; let there be a free-for-all, and let the deepest pockets win.

The facts listed above illustrate how unreasonable this amendment application is. These facts justify Council's rejection of this application on July 7 *last* year. As outrageous as this application is, what is even more outrageous is the applicant's presumption that Council will approve the *same* unreasonable demands *this* year.

The biggest change I could find in the application from 2020 to 2021 is that the elevation changed from this:



to this:



Changing the colour of the façade from grey to brown and expecting this to fool residents and Council is an insult to our intelligence, and a waste of Council's time and taxpayers' money. However, if this is sufficient to change Council's opinion since last year, then it begs the question: *What else has changed between the developer and Council?*

I am not opposed to a land-owner's right to develop their property. However, the development needs to respect the rights of the existing community and be inclusive by design. A good example is the townhouse development currently under construction at 9560 Islington Avenue, which was approved with little to no resistance. If the applicant proposed an equivalent townhouse development at this site, I would have no objections.

I hope that Council will stand for the rule of law, for the environment, and for community rights, and that you will reject this application outright. I hope the applicant, in turn, will produce a more considerate plan for the site.

Al D'Silva
[REDACTED] Chalone Crescent
Vaughan, Ontario
[REDACTED]