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April 6, 2021

Delivered by email

Mr. Stephen Huycke
Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk
City of Richmond Hill
225 East Beaver Creek Road
Richmond Hill, Ontario
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Attention: His Worship Dave Barrow and Members of Council

Dear Mr. Huycke:

**Re: 8905 Bathurst Street – Item No. SRPI.21.036
Submission on Behalf of Elly Reisman (21 Pebblelane Court) and
1106897 Ontario Inc. (19 Pebblelane Court)**

We are counsel to Mr. Elly Reisman and 1106897 Ontario Inc., the owners of 21 Pebblelane Court and 19 Pebblelane Court, respectively. We are in receipt of a request for comments regarding a proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment (“the Applications”) to facilitate the redevelopment of the northerly portion of 8905 Bathurst Street (“the Subject Property”). The Applications propose a high-density residential development comprising 20-storey and 16-storey elements.

The purpose of this letter is to set out the Reisman family’s preliminary concerns with the proposal, for consideration at the Council meeting scheduled for April 7, 2021. My clients are in the process of retaining consultants to review the Applications, and will supplement this submission accordingly.

I will be in attendance at the meeting of April 7, 2021 to make a deputation on behalf of the Reisman family, and would request that this correspondence be provided to City Council for reference during the deputation.

The Reisman Family Properties

The Reisman family has owned and lived at 21 Pebblelane Court (previously known as 117 Westwood Drive) for almost 40 years. The existing dwelling on the property was constructed in the mid 1980s, and is Mr. Reisman’s principal family residence. 19 Pebblelane Court was purchased in 2020, and the Owner is in the process of building a family home on that property.

The following map shows the location of the Reisman family properties in heavy red outline. The existing residence on 21 Pebblelane Court is located approximately 180 m southeast of the Subject Property.



The existing home is located at the bottom of a valley. There is a change in grade of approximately 10 m from the existing dwelling site to the proposed building location. The increased elevation exacerbates the perception of the proposed building height from 21 Pebblelane Court.

Summary of Concerns

As noted above, we are in the process of undertaking a detailed review of the proposal, including the supporting technical studies. Based on our preliminary review, our clients' concerns can be summarized as follows:

- 1. Appropriateness of the site for high density residential development:** The Applications propose to redesignate the site from Parkway Belt West to Neighbourhood, with site specific permissions to permit a high-density residential use. Although the density has been calculated on an entire site basis as 1.06 x the lot area, the density is 3.11 x based on the area of the development site. The proposed use is not permitted in the Neighbourhood designation. The proposed heights and density are more consistent with the Centres and Key Development Area designations.

There are no lands on Bathurst Street in Richmond Hill that are designated to permit high density residential development. All residential lands on the east side of Bathurst Street are designated Neighbourhood.

The west side of Bathurst Street, in the City of Vaughan, is primarily designated Low-Rise Residential, with a Mid-Rise Mixed-Use pocket at the intersection of Rutherford Road. The maximum permitted height in that area is 12.0 storeys. There is one designated High-Rise Residential site north of Rutherford Road, which is subject to a 15 storey height limit.

If approved, the proposed development would be out of keeping with anything existing or planned along Bathurst Street. It would be inappropriate to approve a development of this magnitude in this location.

2. **Prematurity and Precedent:** The proposal represents a significant change in planned context for the site. If approved, it would inevitably pave the way for high density, high-rise development to locate on Bathurst Street. Such a significant change should not be undertaken on a site-by-site basis but through a coordinated and comprehensive planning exercise as has occurred along Yonge Street. Regional Council is currently undertaking the delineation of Major Transit Station Areas (“MTSA”). At this time, the site is not proposed for inclusion within an MTSA and it is outside the defined 500-800 m radius for an MTSA under the Growth Plan. The proposal is premature and should await the outcome of the delineation exercise at a minimum.
3. **Relationship to the Surrounding Residential Communities:** Provincial policies supportive of intensification should not be relied upon at the expense of good urban design that appropriately interfaces with the surrounding community. The development site is surrounded by low-rise residential communities to the west, east, and north. The proposed height and massing are excessive, and do not provide for appropriate transition to the existing communities. We echo the preliminary concerns set out in the Staff Report, including with respect to the proposed building heights that far exceed the planned building height of 4 storeys on Bathurst Street and penetrate the angular plane to the north. The buildings are quite “bulky” and would present an imposing mass from any perspective. The proposal will have adverse impact with respect to privacy and overlook, particularly to the north and east.
4. **Impact on the Surrounding Environmental Lands:** The proposed development is adjacent to a significant woodland that is designated Natural Core, and the Regional Greenlands System. Review of the technical studies is necessary to ensure that impacts on the environmental lands have been appropriately addressed. Our clients would also request the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed landscaping design for the site. The



landscaping intent is relevant to providing an appropriate buffer to the adjacent woodland. High quality landscaping could also be utilized to mitigate the adverse impacts on adjacent and nearby residential lands.

In summary, our clients believe that with reduced height to be in keeping with the Neighbourhood permissions, improved massing, and other mitigation remedies, redevelopment of this site could be achieved in a manner that is appropriate for the Bathurst Street corridor and more sensitive to the surrounding communities.

We request notice of any upcoming meetings and/or decisions related to this proposal.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Best regards,

Amber Stewart

c. Clients