

**From:** howard doughty

**Sent:** Saturday, September 11, 2021 9:18 AM

**To:** Sandra DeMaria <[sandra.demaria@richmondhill.ca](mailto:sandra.demaria@richmondhill.ca)>; Clerks Richmondhill <[clerks@richmondhill.ca](mailto:clerks@richmondhill.ca)>

**Subject:** City Files: D01-21006 & D02-21011 (corrected)

This submission revises a similar document submitted yesterday. Apart for a couple of minor corrections in punctuation, it includes an inadvertent excised phrase at the end of the seventh (single-sentence) paragraph, highlighted here in **red**. Please replace the previous submission with this one.

*H.D.*

**Attention:**

Sandra DeMaria, MCIP, RPP, Senior  
Planner [sandra.demaria@richmondhill.ca](mailto:sandra.demaria@richmondhill.ca)

Stephen Huycke, City Clerk at  
[clerks@richmondhill.ca](mailto:clerks@richmondhill.ca)

**Subject: City Files: D01-21006 & D02-21011**

Rahm Emanuel, ex-President Obama's first chief-of-staff, future failed Mayor of Chicago, expressed enemy of public education and educators, and current president Biden's unconscionably and hideously inappropriate recommendation to become the next US Ambassador to Japan, did achieve something over the past couple of decades: he virtually guaranteed his future place in some forthcoming edition of *Bartlett's Familiar Quotations* when, back in the Fall of 2008, he told an elite symposium of politicians, senior government officials, and top corporate executive that:

“a good crisis is a terrible thing to waste!”

I call this the “Rahm Factor” — as in “ram/Rahm [something] through” when people are too timid, tentative, deformed, and distracted by a “crisis” to use normal methods to rebuff, repel, reject, or reverse some initiative, innovation, proposal, or policy that would otherwise have been deemed so obnoxious that it would not even have been floated as a “trial balloon” or raised for serious consideration. In a “crisis,” however, people with temporary control of the decision-making process can sometimes get away with doing what would have been inconceivable in what pass for normal circumstances. This is one of those times.

The current provincial government has not only botched the response to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, but it has managed to make its own incompetence on files from ecology to education so distressful to citizens who are engaged in or concerned about the systemic problems our society is facing that they cannot react thoughtfully and effectively to matters of immediate, practical importance.

Whether the topic is climate change, the opioid epidemic, mounting mental disorders and disease, economic hardships and homelessness, endemic misogyny and racism, various strains of social alienation now erupting in “anti-vaxxer” mob violence, enduring concerns about employment precarity in the “gig economy,” or any number of other stains on individual self-confidence and collective sanity, people are at or near the end of their respective ropes.

So, what better time to launch mammoth assaults on “green space” and sustainable communities?

It is plain that the City of Richmond Hill has been leap-frogging on the prevailing political ideology abetted by the general state of confusion, social malaise, and normlessness to crank up and set in motion as much dysfunctional development as possible — perhaps in recognition that the impending provincial and municipal elections will produce a markedly altered range of political attitude and action more in keeping with the genuine ideals and interests of the residents of this community.

The current provincial premier, whether through his typically anti-democratic Ministerial Zoning Orders or “dog whistles” to like-minded municipal officials, has given *carte blanche* to building-besotted municipal governments to approve whatever construction projects they (and their overt and covert backers in the private-sector “development” industry) want in order to make vast short-term gains regardless of the long-term pain they will inflict upon the existing communities that they will disrupt and the future communities that will eventually pay the price for the socially and ecologically unsustainable environment that the urban-industrial holocaust their uncontrolled addiction to quick profits will create.

The proposal in the referenced document, “D01-21006 & D02-21011” is just one in a huge offensive **against the public interest**.

The current inhuman and inhumane juggernaut is endemic to what former Ontario Chief Justice Roy McMurtry’s kid brother John called “the cancer stage of capitalism” (Halifax: Fernwood Books, 2013). It is the mark of “conservatives” who no longer want to *conserve* anything, unethical opportunists and exploiters of what they disingenuously call “creative destruction” (see Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy*, New York, Harper & Row, 1943) and transactional fiscal manipulators and greed-mongers who insist on monetizing and commercializing the futures of our children and forthcoming generations of our progeny. They may or may not be “corrupt” in the narrow legal and technically criminal senses of the term, but they are nonetheless morally bankrupt.

I am a concerned resident of Ward 1 in Richmond Hill. I strenuously object to the development application at Coons Rd. and Yonge St. in Oak Ridges. The applications seek to build an 8 storey residential apartment building consisting of 214 units and 347 parking spaces.

When I moved into this neighbourhood in 1984, I was assured by the Town Council and the Planning Department that the whole of Ward 1 was an environmentally sensitive area and that the population would be capped *in perpetuity* at 6,000 residents.

In the intervening three decades and more, this solemn promise has been broken at every opportunity.

Combined with the massive residential development across Yonge Street (which has, I am sure, only been placed “on hold” until after the next municipal election), this initiative will almost equal on its own the projected maximum population that Ward 1 can safely sustain.

This plan far exceeds existing zoning which permits no more than 4-storeys and does not fit the existing community. It will result in excessive traffic taking shortcuts through the surrounding neighbourhoods to access Bloomington Rd, Bathurst Ave, and King Rd.

This plan must be considered in conjunction with other applications nearby, including the massive Yonge Zone across the street, far too much development for the Oak Ridges Moraine.

Over the past three years, Richmond Hill has received enough development applications to build all the units needed to cover the projected population growth for the next 20-years. This application does nothing to address the affordability crisis and adding just another 8-storey building in Oak Ridges is unnecessary.

With the Municipal election next year, Richmond Hill Council members must ensure responsible development and remember they serve the residents.

Remember:

“a liveable Ward 1 is a terrible thing to waste.”

I suffer under no illusion that my words will persuade those preternaturally committed by reason of political ideology or pure self-interest to support this and related proposals. I have also endured decades of rhetoric about the futility of trying to “stop progress.”

I do, however, believe that the meaning of the word “progress” remains essentially contested and is not settled — philosophically, politically, socially, economically, morally, or ethically.

So, while sending this note may only have some personal benefit as a matter of immediate, transitory psychological catharsis, I justify this expenditure of time and effort in my writing it and others reading it as follows; in the words of Canada’s beloved conservative philosopher George Grant (1918-1988) — echoing the sixteenth-century sage Richard Hooker (see *Of the Ecclesiastical Polity*, 1598) — I have composed this

note, if for naught else, then for this “that posterity may know we did not, loosely through silence, let things slip away as in a dream.”

The merry minions of mendacity who have put forward this proposal and their egregious enablers in the political system do not have the common weal at heart. They must be reined in and permanently fettered. If this seems unlikely because of the prevailing political economy and its sustaining ideology, then I can only offer the wisdom of past masters.

Perhaps American defence attorney Clarence Darrow (1857-1938) had it right when he claimed that “lost causes are the only ones worth defending”; however, I will cheerfully adopt the attitude of the alleged “father of modern conservatism” Edmund Burke (1729-1797) when he claimed hopefully that the only thing necessary for evil to prevail is for good citizens to do nothing. So, Quixotic as these efforts may seem, I choose to believe that they will not entirely go to waste, that many others will express — though assuredly more succinctly — sentiments similar to my own and that, if for no reason other than that they may hope for electoral success next time, the current councillors will — in some but certainly not all — cases, do the right thing and put a stop to this application.

To ensure my written objections to this proposed development are received and recorded as part of the public record with the City of Richmond Hill, I am submitting my comments directly to Sandra DeMaria, the Senior Planner assigned to these proposed applications and the City Clerks Department.

Respectfully yours,

*Howard A. Doughty*

Howard A. Doughty

10 Cheval Court

Postal Code: L4E 2N7