

November 28, 2021

To: Sandra DeMaria, [clerks@richmondhill.ca](mailto:clerks@richmondhill.ca)

From: Scott Rushlow, 16 Bawden Drive, Richmond Hill, ON

Re: **City Files D01-21008 and D02-21016**

Hello All,

It appears this development proposal is not being well received by the local residents. And why should it? At 32 floors and over 350 feet high it dwarfs anything in the area. (For reference, the tallest building in the area is a commercial building at the corner of Elgin Mills and John Birchall at 4 storeys) Hard to imagine a 350 ft tall condominium tower adjacent to recently planned and newly built single family housing. Homes that for many in the neighbourhood represent their greatest personal financial investment. Think about this; a 350ft high, 32 storey high density tower looking down on single family housing? Is this good planning? I would suggest that we can do better.

So, where should it go?

Well, the “Provincial Policy Statement (2020)”, which provides direction to municipalities charged with making land use decisions, provides some insight into where this type of development intensification should be located. So does “The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019)”, as does “York Region's Official Plan” as well as “The City of Richmond Hill's Official Plan” including the “North Leslie Secondary Plan”. I encourage everyone who has an interest in this situation, as well as the decision makers, to take some time to familiarize yourself with these land use planning documents. The reason being, they all say the same thing; that developments of this height and density need to be located in built-up centres or along major transit supported corridors. Why? In order for infrastructure spending (our tax dollars) to benefit the greatest number of people. The City of Richmond Hill identifies a number of areas within the city where this type of development is specifically wanted, and these are; a) the Bathurst and Hwy 7 area, b) the Yonge Street and 16<sup>th</sup> Ave area, c) the Village Centre, d) the Newkirk Richmond Hill Go Station, e) the Major MacKenzie Corridor, f) the Bayview and Hwy 7 area, and g) the East Beaver Creek and Hwy 7 area. You will note that common are the Yonge Street and Hwy 7 Corridors.

**Clearly, a stand alone high density development, such as the one being proposed for Leslie Street and John Birchall Road, does not align with provincial guidance and or the City's intensification objectives.**

cont'd

So what does the City envision for the North Leslie area?

More generally, it would appear from the City's "Official Plan Update, Emerging Key Directions (Sept 2021)" it describes the need for "Gentle Intensity" where a broader range of housing types are utilized in achieving its medium density housing and community development objectives.

(For example, duplexes, triplexes, up to low rise apartment buildings) Makes sense.

The "North Leslie Secondary Plan", the in-force planning document guiding development in the area bounded by Bayview Ave to the west, Elgin Mills Road to the south, the 404 to the East and 19<sup>th</sup> Ave to the North calls for, as one of it's guiding principles, "compatible development"; where "the design, orientation and intensity of new development recognize existing land uses". **In other words, new development should respect the character of the existing neighbourhood, where height and density are context appropriate.** I think the response from the property owners suggests this proposal does not pass this test.

At a personal level, I'm very concerned about the adverse effects of living next to a 350 ft tower. My property is literally steps away from this development, kind of difficult to use or even begin to enjoy your own yard space when you feel like there's hundreds of people looking down on you. Absolutely no privacy here and who would want that?

What would be more appropriate is to work within the policy framework objectives set out in the "North Leslie Secondary Plan". Remember, the proposed development site is currently zoned "RM10". This zoning permits generous development opportunities from either residential use or mixed use retail, office and personal services uses to a maximum of 10 storeys. 10 storeys! That would still make this development a full 6 storeys higher than the tallest building in this area.

....And whatever happened to the "Seniors Residences" initially proposed for this site? Remember the Sales Office "Community Plan" where it showed "Seniors Residences" for this location? I know this influenced my decision to commit to this neighbourhood... You? Had "32 Floor Condo Tower" been shown instead? I would have politely passed.

Yes, I get my neighbours concerns. I hope the decision makers do too.

In closing, it would seem to me that a 350ft tall, 32 storey high density development proposal adjacent to low density housing has to be considered inappropriate for the area. It is a significant departure from both the current Zoning By-Laws and North Leslie Secondary Plan design principles. Let's get this right.

Respectfully Submitted,

Scott Rushlow