

March 21, 2022
Mayor David West
& Members of Council
225 East Beaver Creek Road
Richmond Hill, ON L4B 3P4

Dear Sirs & Madam :

Council Meeting - C# 11-22 - March 23, 2022
Item # 14.1 - Member Motion
Expanding Walkable Trails and
Supporting Agriculture In The Greenbelt

I support the Motion before you as presented by Councillor Tom Muench.

However, I am greatly disturbed that his previous and similar Motion of April 14, 2021 (*The Future of Agriculture In Richmond Hill*, attached) has gotten waylaid, accidentally or otherwise, in the machinations of the City's internal business processes.

Citizens deserve timely public service. Waiting nearly a full calendar year for City staff to deliver materials requested by Council is unacceptable. Worse is jamming up against deadlines for inclusion of those materials in the Official Plan. This prejudices landowners and it denies long recognized functioning of democratic processes.

Clearly the Motion of March 23, 2022 is a 'do-over'. An attempt to be 'nice', sweeping systemic cultural problems in the Planning and Infrastructure department under the rug. In 2021, Richmond Hill placed 26th among 32 Ontario municipalities reviewed in the Armstrong Strategy Group's Municipal Democracy Index study (page 12, attached) and dead last in overall democratic performance for an Ontario municipality (page 11, attached).

Every citizen in Richmond Hill trusts (emphasis added) a decision of Council minuted by Public Meeting will be carried out by staff; every citizen should be concerned Commissioner of Planning and Infrastructure, Kelvin Kwan did not execute the study on the viability of agriculture in Richmond Hill, as set out by Council's recorded 6 to 2 vote of last April (Minutes, April 14, 2021, pages 15-16, attached). And in the intervening months, the public has heard nothing from the Commissioner to suggest he was unable to complete his assigned task.

Given this, it now is questionable such a work by Planning and Development will be of any value at all.

You should be aware, because the Commissioner was silent, a study was ... / 2

undertaken by concerned landowners. This has now been completed, by no less an authority appearing before the Ontario Municipal Board hearings on the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM), as the Minister of Municipal Affairs' expert witness on geotechnical and hydrological matters. This study promotes the growth of more Moraine and corrects oversights made in the haste of original ORM land-use designations.

Council's vote of April 14 last, sealed by By-Law # 15-21, gave even more weight to decisions made during the Public Meeting. This By-Law interestingly, was Moved and Seconded by the two dissenting votes to Councilor Muench's Motion (Councillors West and Cilevitz), Minutes, page 20, attached).

Let me be clear, at the closure of the April 14th public Meeting, Members of Council trusted the Commissioner would complete this task. As did members of the public.

While the City has policies and procedures in place as per Section 224 of the *Municipal Act*, Commissioner Kwan has put Council Members responsible for his oversight, in conflict with Section 227, which follows as :

“Part V.1 Accountability and Transparency

Section 227

It is the role of the officers and employees of the municipality,

- (a) to implement council's decisions and establish administrative practices and procedures to carry out council's decisions;
- (b) to undertake research and provide advice to council on the policies and programs of the municipality; and
- (c) to carry out other duties required under this or any other Act and other duties assigned by the municipality.”

Every citizen in Richmond Hill should be concerned...

Sincerely,

Carla Worden

1393 Bethesda Side Road

Attachments :

- Councillor Muench Motion of April 14, 2021
- Ontario Municipal Democracy Index, Armstrong Strategy Group pages 11-12, 2021
- Public Meeting Minutes, pages 15-16, April 14, 2021
- Public Meeting Minutes, page 20, April 14, 2021
- Section 227, The Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c.25