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Sent: Wednesday, April 19, 2023 1:24 PM
To: Clerks Richmondhill <clerks@richmondhill.ca>
Cc: Simone Fiore <simone.fiore@richmondhill.ca>; Michael Shiu
<michael.shiu@richmondhill.ca>
Subject: City File OPA-23-0003

I am Vincent Ching, President of condo board of YRSCC1008 (9017 Leslie Street.)

I would like to formally submit to City Council a report from the Board of Directors of YRSCC 972 and YRSCC 1008, representing over 1500 residents living in the two condominium buildings (9015 and 9017 Leslie Street) which neighbour the Subject Lands. This report states the position taken by the condo board and residents with regard to the application submitted by Parkway Hotels.

Kindly distribute it to the Council members before the City Council Public Meeting on May 16, 2023 and make it available to other City departments if necessary.

Thanks.

Vincent Ching



York Region Standard Condominium Corporation # 972 and #1008

NEIGHBORHOOD RESIDENTS' RESPONSE TO PARKWAY HOTELS' APPLICATION (OPA-23-0003)

The Board of Directors of YRSCC 972 and YRSCC 1008, representing over 1,500 residents living in the condominium buildings (9015 and 9017 Leslie Street) which neighbour the Subject Lands. The residents were all very upset after they received the Notice of Application. The Board called a meeting on April 11, 2023 to hear the residents' reaction to Parkway's re-development proposal and invited Councillor Michael Shiu to attend. We got a very enthusiastic response and 160 residents attended the meeting. All the residents voted unanimously against the application. The Councillor stated at the meeting that he also object to the application. He also committed to provide guidance and support to the residents to make sure that their voices are heard by City Council. We are grateful for his leadership and representation of our interests in the governance of the Municipality.

The following are issues discussed at the meeting and the position taken by the condo Board and residents with regard to the application submitted by Parkway Hotels:

- 1) The Application does not comply with Federal Zoning Regulations for Buttonville Airport
Section 3.1.9.9 of the Official Plan states that "The height of buildings or structures shall be restricted in accordance with the Federal Zoning Regulations for Buttonville Airport for as long as the Buttonville Airport continues in operation."

- 2) The proposed development does NOT comply with the land use and design policies as stated in the Richmond Hill Official Plan

The current Official Plan zoned the Subject Lands (which is part of this Application) and surrounding lands as Employment Area and Employment Corridor, with the predominant use of land to be high performance industrial, office, and major office uses. The Subject Lands and surrounding area to the north and east were approved for employment conversion to a mixed-use designation. The RHOP permits a maximum site density of 2.5 FSI, with the greatest density being directed to the Highway 7 frontage. The RHOP also applies the following height requirements with regard to development of lands within the portion of the Regional Mixed-Use Employment Corridor designation located on Highway 7: a minimum height of 3 storeys and a maximum height of 11 storeys and the tallest buildings must be directed to the Highway 7 frontage (Policy 4.8.2.1.9).

OPA 18.3 designates the Subject Lands as part of the East Beaver Creek and Highway 7 as a Local Centre. OPA 18.3 states the City's current intensification hierarchy, which ranks Local Centres third, below Richmond Hill Centre and Key Development Areas ("KDA") and Regional Corridors. Local Centres are specifically planned to accommodate intensification at a scale and



York Region Standard Condominium Corporation # 972 and #1008

intensity that is less than the KDAs. They will be important community focal points and will develop as revitalized, mixed-use centres with pedestrian-oriented, human-scaled main streets.

We fully agree with the designation of the Subject Lands as a “Local Centre” in Richmond Hill Intensification Hierarchy, in accordance with the Richmond Hill Official Plan.

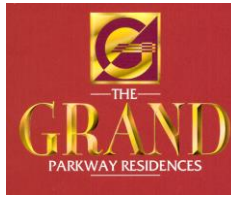
The current proposal to build nine towers with some being 48 storey high (i.e., 42 storey high towers on top of 6-storey podium) with a FSI of 5.5, far exceeds the height and density allowed for Local Centres and KDAs and is closer to the development density allowed in Richmond Hill Centre, which accommodates the highest level of intensification in the City, with the greatest height of 40 storeys and the maximum density of 6.5 FSI. The RHOP states that the two designated KDAs (both of which are on Yonge Street Regional Corridor) have a maximum density of 4 FSI and a maximum height of 20 storeys.

Based on the above, we conclude that this application must be rejected because it does not comply the Zoning By-laws as well as Schedule A1 (City Structure) and Schedule A2 (Land Use) of the Official Plan. Furthermore, this ambitious application is incompatible with the size of lands and existing surrounding environment.

- 3) Our Objection to Parkway’s application for an “Official Plan Amendment” to redesignate the Subject Lands from being a Local Centre to a Key Development Area in order to increase the maximum height and density of the development. In our view, this application is an abuse of process and should not be allowed.

It is evident that the developer is trying to seek a “re-write” of the criteria used for land use designation (as a Local Centre or a Key Development Area) and to seek fundamental changes in the “City Structure” and “Intensification Hierarchy” as set out in the current Official Plan. And they are trying to do this under the disguise of an “application for OP amendment”. In our view, what they are trying to do is beyond the scope and mandate of an “OP amendment”. If they are in disagreement with the criteria used for designation of land use intensification, they should have filed an appeal of the Official Plan to the OLT at the time when the Official Plan was first approved by the City and Region.

By applying to redesignate the Subject Lands to a Key Development Area, the developer is making an *open challenge* to the legality and applicability of the Richmond Hill Official Plan, which is a *legal document* that will guide decisions to manage future growth and development of the City.



York Region Standard Condominium Corporation # 972 and #1008

The City Council and staff must strive to protect and preserve the integrity of the Official Plan and related Planning Policies to ensure future compliance of the Official Plan by other developers.

- 4) The Subject Lands does not meet the criteria to be redesignated as a Key Development Area
OPA 4.4 states that KDAs are intensification areas located on a Regional Corridor where public rapid transit services intersect with major nodes of retail and commercial development activity, and where opportunities exist for redevelopment of large sites that can support new public streets, parks and urban open space connections. OPA 18.3 identifies KDAs as areas where large parking fields, underutilized sites, and/or parcels of vacant land presently exist.

The City staff has applied objective planning standards and policies before designating the two KDAs to be on Yonge Street (i.e., the Yonge Street and 16th Ave/Carrville Rd KDA and Yonge Street and Bernard Ave KDA) and preparing a Secondary Plan for each KDA. From our point of view, it is quite evident that the Subject Lands do not meet the basic criteria to be considered a KDA; in that they are NOT “areas where *large* parking fields, underutilized sites, and/or parcels of vacant land presently exist”, and the land is NOT large enough to support new public streets, parks and urban open space connections as required for a KDA.

The developer needs to recognize the fact that the “lands available for redevelopment” on the Subject Site are three small “pockets” of land (with total area of about 4-5 acres) situated on an “already developed” site (with existing Sheraton Hotels, Conference Centre and retail shops) and the “land for redevelopment” can be made available only after the demolition of 3 small-size existing buildings. The fact that the “land for redevelopment” is scattered and small in size makes it impossible to develop such lands to be a KDA.

- 5) Height of new builds must be compatible with height of existing buildings in the Neighborhood
Parkway Hotels applied to amend the Official Plan to “redevelop” some “pockets” of “developed lands” which already contain two hotels, a conference centre, 2 three-storey strip plazas, a low-rise office building and a health club. Parkway proposed to demolish three low-rise buildings (i.e. 650 Highway 7E, Best Western Hotel at 600 Highway 7E, and 9005 Leslie Street) and use the “open space” on the subject lands (which includes parking and loading dock areas, green space, etc.) to build nine 35-42 storey towers.

Currently, the tallest buildings in the block bound by Leslie/Highway 7/E Beaver Creek/E Pearce are the two condo buildings (9015, 9017 Leslie St.). The Richmond Hill City Hall and the Sheraton Hotel are both 9 storeys high. While we support the Official Plan to intensify the



York Region Standard Condominium Corporation # 972 and #1008

development in this block, it is our position that any new development in this block must be contextualized with the neighbourhood. Allowing 42 storey towers to be built on the subject lands would be out of character with the 13 storey condo buildings and other low-rise buildings which are in existence or authorized in the vicinity. Therefore, it is our position that the current height restrictions must be respected and maintained for any new builds, and the new builds must be situated on lands made available by the demolition of the 3 existing buildings. To minimize any impact on the broader employment lands north of the Subject Site, we propose that any new builds on the Subject Lands must be directed to the Leslie and Highway 7 frontages.

6) Increased Traffic Congestion

The proposed development will add 3,460 dwelling units and potentially 14,000 new residents to this location. This will exacerbate the already congested traffic on this strip of Regional Road Highway 7 where the entrances/exits from Highway 404 are located. There is no indication in the application that York Region Transportation Services has been consulted on this proposed development. The York Region Transportation Services has NOT included the consideration of this mega project in their Roads and Transit Capital Program.

A cursory review of the Transportation Impact Study submitted as part of the Application by the developer reveals two apparent flaws in the study. First, the study was based on traffic data collected on November 17, 2022, when the Province was still under “Covid lockdown” and a significant number of people are working from home or doing online schooling. Secondly, the “Trip Distribution” data used for the Study was derived from the 2016 Transportation Tomorrow Survey, which is outdated for current use. Also, there is no indication that the Transportation Impact Study has taken into account all the new and upcoming land use development along Highway 7 and Leslie Street. The reality is that although there are two bus stations situated on Highway 7 outside the Subject Lands, there is a lack of proper transit infrastructure to accommodate the current users and the influx of 14,000 potential new residents.

7) Lack of Municipal Infrastructure Support

Adding 111 hotel rooms and 3,460 dwelling units to this small parcel of land would put a severe strain on the local municipal infrastructure requirements, such as watermain, sewers, storm water drainage, sidewalks, streetscaping and active transportation facilities. However, the Parkway application does NOT address any of the infrastructure issues and there is no information to indicate that the current municipal infrastructure can support and sustain this mammoth development project with total gross area of \$3 million sq. ft.

8) Lack of Park and Community Service Facilities

The developer focused the application on “where” to erect the 9 towers with 3,460 dwelling units and chose to ignore the fact that the 14,000 potential new residents also need parkland and other



York Region Standard Condominium Corporation # 972 and #1008

support services for their daily living. The site map indicates that there is a one acre “strata park” planned for this mammoth development. It is obvious that the developer has failed to address the Official Plan requirement to dedicate 1 hectare (2.47 acres) of land for park and other public recreational purpose for each 300 dwelling units proposed for residential development. In other words, for the proposed development of 3,460 residential units, the developer is *required* to dedicate 12 hectares (29 acres) of land for such purposes.

- 9) Blockage of Sun and Views, Shadow and Wind Tunnel Effect of the Towers The developer is trying to realize maximum profit from the zoning change at the expense of the interests of the 1,500 residents who have been living in the neighbouring condominium units for the past 20 years.

Three of the proposed towers (T5, T6 and T7 as shown in the site plan) which are more than three times the height of the two 13-storey condo buildings (9015/9017 Leslie), are going to be situated in close proximity to the south side of the condo buildings, blocking the views and sunlight and causing a shadowing effect for more than half of the 9015/9017 residents whose units face the south side. This is literally pushing the residents against a brick wall three times the height of their own building and “boxing” them inside several encroaching towers.

- 10) Our Uncompromising Position: The Subject lands are designated Employment Corridor and Employment Area and has been converted to a mixed-use designation. The Highway 7 and E Beaver Creek area is designated as a “Local Centre” in the Official Plan.

We do not support any further amendments to the Zoning By-law or the Official Plan pertaining to the Subject Lands. The land use and design policies applicable for current zoning of the Subject Lands (as Employment Lands converted for mixed-used development) must be applied for consideration of any application for new development: that the maximum site density is 2.5 FSI and the maximum height is 13 storey (which is the tallest height allowed in the entire Ward 6 and neighboring community), with the greatest density and height being directed to Highway 7 and Leslie Street frontage.

We feel strongly that the City has a duty to protect the residents from invasive development and to protect the vulnerable residents from the towering concrete forest, all done under the banner of “intensification of development.” The City must ensure that any new development will not damage our living environment and adversely affect the quality of life of over 1,500 long-time residents neighbouring the proposed development.

Document approved by the Board on April 13, 2023
