

From: Clayton Haluza
Sent: Friday, May 12, 2023 8:52 PM
To: Clerks Richmondhill <clerks@richmondhill.ca>
Subject: Resident Comments: City File ZBLA-23-0004 (11592 Yonge St)

Good Evening,

My name is Clayton Haluza and I am a resident and property owner in the City of Richmond Hill, I am writing this email as per the written notice I recently received via post – a copy of which is attached for your convenience.

I write this email as to submit my written comments for the public record regarding City File ZBLA-23-004(ZBLA – 23-007 and SP-23-0009).

The zoning amendment submitted for consideration by the City by 802559 Ontario regarding 11592 Yonge St seeking to permit an automobile dealership is an absolute travesty in urban planning, does not align with future commercial prospects, and is not the best use of the property in question and hence the application should be declined by the City outright. I submit that there is absolutely no changes 802559 Ontario can make to their application that should make this application permissible. The best use of the plot of land in question is residential, for reasons I will outline below this plot of land should only be zoned and development only allowed if the proposed development is for a midrise residential building, similar to it's neighbour 11611 Yonge St – which is what I would use as my example of what is the best use of that land, in character for the community and aligned with Richmond Hill's official plan.

When one considers the geography and surrounding area of 11592 Yonge St an automobile dealership does not maximize the existing amenities around the property in question which include:

- 1) Viva dedicated bus lanes which create extremely local easy to access public transit
- 2) Resident friendly existing commercial spaces – specifically 11700 Yonge St and 122 Tower Hill Rd – both are highly walkable from the subject property and contain resident convenience amenities between them including a grocery store, a pharmacy, Canadian Tire, 3 banks among others
- 3) The extensive park system immediately behind the subject property (ie the Saigon Trail, Tower Hill Dog Park etc)

All of the above create an extremely livable ecosystem for future residential development – residents living at a residential development at 11592 Yonge St would be able to go about a high level of activity without using an automobile and instead leverage the walkability and transit connections of the property. This must be taken into account as it factors into the livable city and environmental goals that the City of Richmond Hill has set for itself. An automobile dealership would not make best use of these existing amenities that the city and private sector have already allocated capital too. It would in fact waste and underutilize existing infrastructure and amenities 11592 Yonge St has existing access to.

I would further suggest that should the City of Richmond Hill truly want/need commercial spaces on 11592 Yonge St an automobile dealership is the wrong type of commercial to allocate this space to. The local car dealership is a challenged business in decline. Beit consolidation of brands/parent companies (ie the creation of Stellantis being the most recent example) or the threat of EVs to their profitability the local car dealership is a business with challenges in the near future which will inevitably mean there will be less of them. With each passing year Global automotive companies have merged, and reduced their

brands – this has reduced the number of car dealerships required. However, the greater threat to their business is the emergence of the EV which is now a government mandated requirement- we know that EVs will grow as a percentage of overall car sales and this is an existential threat to car dealerships. Car dealerships drive most of their profitability from their service department, EVs require significantly less service because they have significantly fewer parts. You likely have access to high quality research material, however I am happy to provide if needed sources to support the argument that the transition to EVs will sap profitability and lead to closures of dealerships. Lastly automakers are also experimenting with omnichannel sales strategies, Tesla has gone so far as to essentially not have traditional dealerships. If Richmond Hill allows the subject property to be used for the purposes of an auto dealership it is possible within the decade we have a zombie property on our hands. If Richmond Hill is in significant need of car dealership spaces then as an alternative the development of 11488 Yonge St and 11623 Yonge St should be pursued to meet this goal. Both of these properties are former new car dealerships which are now underutilized commercial spaces. It would likely be a net economic improvement (in terms of taxation and employment) to have them developed to modern car dealerships, and as such the risk of the industry long term is justified because of the immediate benefit to the City.

Furthermore as it has now been widely reported in the media and supported by the analysis of many economists The GTA is in the middle of a housing crises. The crises has occurred for a variety of reasons however what is a key contributing factor is a demand for housing that far outstrips supply. This has lead to a GTA wide decline in housing affordability, and Richmond Hill has seen affordability decline at a rate that is worse then the GTA average. This is rapidly becoming a City where people of cannot afford to live. The long term success of this City depends on our ability to attract and retain residents, based on the current crises in housing, which is supply and demand driven, we will not be able to do so. That is a long term threat to the economic and social life of this city. As such the City must make planning decisions that prioritize increasing housing supply to avert this crises becoming even worse. We must prioritize allocating land use for solving this problem above all else.

The ultimate outcome of this I view to be important, there are very few pieces of land like 11592 Yonge St left in Richmond Hill. Completely undeveloped land on Yonge St with the amenities around it this land has are a rarity. It is vital we put it to best use and use it to solve problems this city faces. As such I would strongly implore the City Planning Department to soundly recommend rejecting this proposal. Richmond Hill has many commercial spaces which are underutilized, they should be improved/redeveloped to support our commercial needs. This land based on its location should be residential.

I cannot express strongly enough my opposition to this proposal.

I would also like to be updated on the outcome of this file – as per the attached.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Clayton Haluza