

3. Scheduled Business:

3.2 SRPI.21.040 – Request for Comments – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Applications – Whitehorn Investments Limited, Stephen-Mitchell Realty Limited, 891566 Ontario Limited and Ledbrow Investments Ltd. – City Files D01-20015 and D02-20029

Leigh Ann Penner of the Planning and Infrastructure Department provided an overview of the proposed Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Whitehorn Investments Limited, Stephen-Mitchell Realty Limited, 891566 Ontario Limited and Ledbrow Investments Ltd. to permit two high density mixed use residential/commercial apartment buildings on a portion of the subject lands. Ms. Penner advised that staff's recommendation was that the staff report be received for information purposes only and all comments be referred back to staff.

Nolan Moss, Smartcentres, on behalf of the applicant, noted his appreciation for the comprehensive summary provided in the staff report and clarified that the application was only for the portion of lands along 16th Avenue and that the remainder of the shopping centre would continue to operate as a shopping centre, including the No Frills. Mr. Moss advised that a long-term plan and vision for the shopping centre exists and was demonstrated in the conceptual framework plan submitted with the application, and that they looked forward to working with staff and Council through the City's Official Plan review process. He noted that an information session was held on March 31, 2021, at the request of Councillor Chan, and that there were valuable takeaways from the meeting and written submissions to the City since then. Mr. Nolan also advised that he was joined by colleagues that would help answer any questions that Council may have.

David Crowley, 48 Greenbelt Crescent, a retired transportation planner and long-term resident shared concerns regarding the proposed height and density of the development, the precedent that would be set if approved, and implications on traffic. He noted concerns with the reduction in parking ratios, questioned the assumptions regarding future car ownership that were made by the BA Group, and shared relevant transit-use statistics. Mr. Crowley shared his belief that the subject area could see densities greater than those existing in St. James Town and near North York (City) Centre, and that the greater densities did not lead to greater transit-use, as further outlined in his submission as

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Correspondence Item 3.2.2 o). Mr. Crowley also advised that he had not seen any evidence that residents travelling to dispersed suburban locations in Richmond Hill would willingly choose transit or taxis in the future. He also noted that since COVID-19, work from home trends indicated that fewer people in the future would move to Richmond Hill high-rises and commute downtown by transit or other modes.

Marie Chow, 6 Belinda Court, expressed her disappointment and opposition to the proposed development, noting that it violated all of the key development parameters laid out in the Official Plan and KDA. She advised that 315 residents had signed her petition and preferred growth that was more restrained and less intrusive in fashion. Ms. Chow shared her concerns regarding the impact of increased density on traffic and pedestrian safety, and compared and contrasted the character of two buildings to note that most proposals received by the City lacked character, landscaping and warmth. She also shared lessons learned from COVID-19, noting that greater density led to greater risk of infection, working from home was here to stay, and that outdoor greenspace was key for mental health, as further outlined in her submission as Correspondence Item 3.2.2 q). Ms. Chow also shared her belief that it was imperative to apply the lessons learned from COVID-19 and build responsibility, and shared her hope that Council respect residents' concerns and deny the developer's request to amend the City's Official Plan.

John Li, 206 Brookside Road, shared concerns regarding the density of the proposed development, the lack of parking and commercial space, and questioned if the area had the infrastructure to support the density. He shared his opinion that land distribution needed to be balanced to meet the essential needs of residents, and argued that quality of the life would suffer at the densities being proposed in the area. Mr. Li compared the Yonge Street and 16th Avenue intersection with St. James Town, noting that it was a symbol of poor high density planning. He noted that if all current planning applications were approved, the proposed population in Richmond Hill would surpass the required intensification targets for the next 20 years. He also advised that the required density of the MTSA was 300 residents per hectare, and as such, the conversion of commercial lands to a high-rise residential development was not needed.

Moved by: Councillor Chan
Seconded by: Councillor Cilevitz

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Extract from
Council Public Meeting
C#16-21 held April 21, 2021

Appendix "A" to
Staff Report SRPBS.23.006
City Files: D01-20015 and
D02-20029

a) That Staff Report SRPI.21.40 with respect to the Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Whitehorn Investments Limited, Stephen-Mitchell Realty Limited, 891566 Ontario Limited and Ledbrow Investments Ltd. for lands known as Part of Lot 41, Concession 1, E.Y.S. (Municipal Addresses: 9301, 9325 and 9335 Yonge Street), City Files D01-20015 and D02-20029, be received for information purposes only and that all comments be referred back to staff.

Carried Unanimously

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