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October 30, 2023

The City of Richmond Hill

Sent by Email: clerks@Richmondhill.ca

225 East Beaver Creek Road
Richmond Hill, Ontario
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Attn: Hon. Mayor West & Members of Council

Re: Committee of Whole Meeting November 1, 2023

**Proposed Official Plan Amendment 18.6 to the Richmond Hill Official Plan Village
Local Centre (the “Proposed OPA”)**

**Kingsmen Major Mackenzie Inc., Martin Abramian, Harry Harakh, and David
Lancaster (collectively the “Major Mackenzie Landowners’ Group”)**

52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76 Major Mackenzie Drive West

Hon. Mayor West & Members of Council,

KLM Planning Partners have been retained by the above noted owners collectively the Major Mackenzie Landowners’ Group who own lands municipally known as 52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76

Major Mackenzie Drive West which consists of approximately .75 ha (1.84 acres) (the “Subject Lands”). We provided comments on the Proposed OPA in our letter dated June 19, 2023 and appeared as a deputation at the Public Meeting for the same on June 20, 2023.

In addition, we have met with City Planning Staff with carriage of OPA 18.6 on two occasions, involving the potential for site specific planning policies for the Subject Lands to recognize the

unique opportunities. Through these conversations, staff were not comfortable with this approach, but were of the opinion that maximum height, density, transition and details associated with the Elizabeth Street extension would be appropriately established through site specific applications where a complete application would contain all necessary studies, details and analysis to ensure decisions are made involving a more comprehensive approach.

We have reviewed with our client the Proposed OPA and we continue to have the same general concerns that were expressed with respect to the May 11, 2023 draft namely the proposed maximum heights and density and details with respect to completing the Elizabeth Street extension.

This letter is to request that Council direct staff to revise OPA 18.6 in order that the height and density together with details of the Elizabeth Street extension can be differed and established through a future site-specific planning application process.

Based on the foregoing, we respectfully request the following be added to recommendation b) to the staff report as follows:

b) That Council adopt Official Plan Amendment 18.6 (attached to SRPBS.23.028 as Appendix A) subject to the following further modifications (added modifications are shown in bold):

1) That section 2.2.2.16 be replaced as follows:

2.2.2.16. That policy 4.3.1.1 (11) be renumbered to policy 4.3.1.1 (8), and that the word “site” be added after the word “maximum”, and that the words “of a development block” be deleted, and that the remaining text after the word “Village” be deleted and replaced with “Local Centre is shown on Schedule E1 (Density Allocation).” so that it appears as follows:

“8. The maximum site density within the Village Local Centre is shown on Schedule E1 (Density Allocation). **Notwithstanding, for lands municipally known as 52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76 Major Mackenzie Drive West, maximum site density will be established through a site-specific planning act application process involving an Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment.**”

2) That section 2.2.2.17 be replaced as follows:

2.2.2.17. By adding a new policy 4.3.1.1 (9) with the following text: “9. To ensure that new development within the Village Local Centre is contributing to the minimum density

target assigned to the applicable PMTSA area as shown on Schedule A3, new development shall provide a minimum gross floor area equivalent to the application of the following:

a. A minimum density of 1.5 FSI for development located within Development Blocks abutting Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive to which a maximum density of 3 FSI or higher is assigned on Schedule E1.). **Notwithstanding, for lands municipally known as 52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76 Major Mackenzie Drive West, maximum site density will be established through a site-specific planning act application process involving an Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment.**

b. A minimum density of 0.5 FSI for development in all other areas not identified in item (a).”

3) That section 2.2.2.23 be replaced as follows:

2.2.2.23. That policy 4.3.1.1 (16) be renumbered it to 4.3.1.1 (11) and that the text be deleted and replaced with the following text:

“11. The following height permissions shall apply to development:

a. A minimum building height of 2 storeys;

b. For properties south of Wright Street and Dunlop Street, a maximum building height of 9 storeys, along with a maximum base building height of 3 storeys.

Notwithstanding, for lands municipally known as 52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76 Major Mackenzie Drive West, maximum building and maximum base building heights will be established through a site-specific planning act application process involving an Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment;

c. For properties located north of Wright Street and Dunlop Street, a maximum building height of 15 storeys, along with a maximum base-building height of 6 storeys and a maximum street wall height of 3 storeys.”

4) That Section 2.2.4.2 be modified by replacing Policy (2) as follows:

(2) Sidewalks shall be provided on both sides of new public streets. **Notwithstanding, for lands municipally known as 52, 58, 60, 66, 74 and 76 Major Mackenzie Drive West, details with respect to the Elizabeth Street extension shall be established**

through a site-specific planning act application process involving an Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment.

We believe that our proposed further policy modifications allow the details to be differed and addressed as part of site-specific applications which is appropriate for the following reasons:

- 1) This will allow the Subject Lands to develop to their full potential with respect to density and height given the Subject Lands location, opportunities, and lack of constraints. We believe that greater density than 2.0 and 3.0 FSI and greater heights than a maximum of 9 story's as proposed within the Proposed OPA can be achieved for the Subject Lands in terms of supporting transit, the efficient use of land, services and community facilities without adverse physical or functional impact on the planned function of the Village Local Centre.
- 2) The Subject Lands are not directly oriented to the Local Centre that is focused along Yonge Street north of Major Mackenzie Drive. This unique attribute, together with the combined lot depth, minimal interface with low rise residential, no requirements for protecting angular planes on Yonge Street to preserve views of church spires and other architectural features of the Village allows the Subject Lands to play a greater supportive role to both existing and planned transit and the revitalization of the historic downtown due to proximity and connections to the heart of the Local Centre.
- 3) The Subject lands are within a less than 5-minute walk of the associated station located south of Major Mackenzie Drive which forms the basis of Protected Major Transit Station Area 48 ("PMTSA 48") .
- 4) Major Mackenzie Drive is also identified as part of the Region's planned Rapid Transit Corridor within the ROP. Major transit station areas and Regional Corridors within the ROP are identified as part of the Strategic Growth Areas as part of the intensification strategy of the Region.
- 5) This strategy is further articulated in Section 4.1.3 of the Region's Official Plan further states in part that *"Strategic growth areas will attract the majority of development and contain a mix of uses, with densities (highest to lowest) based on the following hierarchy: i. Regional Centres ii. Subway station major transit station areas iii. **Other major transit station areas (bold emphasis added)** iv. Regional Corridors outside of major transit station areas v. Local centres and corridors."*
- 6) There is an abundance of parks and community facilities in the immediate vicinity that support intensification.
- 7) There is precedent on the south of Major Mackenzie Drive and along Yonge Street for higher density and heights that have been approved in the range of 15-21 story's and an FSI of 3.3 to 5.1 within the same major transit station which will also have an influence on the character.

8) The Subject Lands are integral to the future Elizabeth Street extension. Details associated with number of sidewalks, etc. are best addressed as part of a site-specific applications considering such matters as right of way width, City standards and the need to connect with existing approved infrastructure.

On behalf of our client, we wish to thank the City for allowing us to participate. If there are any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully,

KLM PLANNING PARTNERS INC.

Mark Yarranton, B.E.S, MCIP, RPP.
Partner

cc: - Kelvin Kwan, City of Richmond Hill Commissioner, Planning and Infrastructure Department
- Major Mackenzie Landowners' Group