

**LETTER TO THE CITY OF RICHMOND HILL RE: OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT 18.6
VILLAGE LOCAL CENTRE**

From: Downtown Richmond Hill Property Owners Group (the “Owners Group”)

To: Mayor Dave West, and members of the Council of the City of Richmond Hill (the “City”):

Re: Item # 15.4.5, SRPBS.23.028 - Request for Approval - OPA 18.6 Village Local Centre (City File MOPA-23-0001) - (CW Item 11.5) - (Proposed By-law 106-23) for council meeting at Nov. 8, 2023

Dear Council Members of Richmond Hill,

We are a collective of longstanding residents, entrepreneurs, and property proprietors deeply engaged in the historic village core of Richmond Hill. Attached, you will find a comprehensive list and map detailing over 60 affiliated private properties. Regarding to proposed OPA 18.6, it is declared that:

- 1) Property owners are prepared to establish a collaborative partnership with the City of Richmond Hill aimed at investing in the development of properties within the village core, with the ultimate goal of revitalizing an area that has languished in neglect over recent decades;
- 2) A significant portion of property owners located within the downtown Richmond Hill core are engaged in property development activities in municipalities other than Richmond Hill. Their preference for other areas stems from a perceived higher level of collaboration with development applications and less “red-tape” in those jurisdictions, compared to the City of Richmond Hill;
- 3) Over the past 15 years, the City of Richmond Hill has enacted the Official Plan (OP) in 2010 and the Secondary Plan in 2018 without due regard for the concerns of property owners. The ramifications of these actions have manifested in the form of a dire state of affairs within downtown Richmond Hill. Unfortunately, those plans had failed because the City did not sufficiently consult with land owners in the area. Our Owners Group is concerned that the same mistake will be made again by the City. Accountability for these missteps should be earnestly considered. If the City of Richmond Hill repeats these errors in the upcoming 2023 Official Plan, the foreseeable outcome may well mirror the failures of the Official Plan in 2021 and the Secondary Plan in 2018;
- 4) It is our considered view that the proposed OPA 18.6, in its current form, unequivocally discourages any feasible development within the properties situated in the downtown core. Should OPA 18.6 be ratified without modification, it would effectively preclude any future development efforts by our group members. We believe that the outcome would mirror the results achieved following the approval of the 2017 Secondary Plan for the village core, which regrettably yielded no tangible progress; and
- 5) The central concerns of our group can be summarized as follows:

- a. The request for an increase in density from the proposed 3 and under to a minimum of 4 in the initial proposed areas;
- b. The request for an increase in density from the proposed 3.5 and under to a minimum of 5 for the proposed areas;
- c. A desire to expand the total number of stories from the proposed 9 to a range of 12-15 stories and from the suggested 15 to 20 stories; and
- d. A request for enhancement of the angular plane restrictions to not unduly curtail the development of the total number of stories mentioned in item c.

There is no feasible reason as to why the residents of Richmond Hill and the property owners would not benefit from the downtown village core going through a Yorkville-esque type of redevelopment. This would inevitably create new tax revenues for the City, and increase values for owners of all property in Richmond Hill. Most importantly, this would create a vibrant community that residents would be proud of, containing world-class housing, retail and entertainment spaces.

With the population of Canada set to grow drastically in the coming years, our council members can be a part of history today, by getting ahead of this development and making Richmondville an attractive hub for decades to come.

Our group members reserve their full rights to explore this matter through additional governmental and legal procedures, should we determine that our concerns are not adequately considered at this junction.

Best Regards,

DOWNTOWN RICHMOND HILL PROPERTY OWNERS GROUP