

March 20, 2024

Mr. Stephen Huycke, City Clerk

Dear Mr. Huycke,

Re: Request for Comments – OPA and Zoning Amendment Applications – 2747883 Ontario Inc. and 2753502 Ontario Inc. – 13572 and 13586 Bayview – City Files OPA-23-0009 and D02-2009

As a former Councillor for Richmond Hill, I fought to protect one of the most important geological landforms in Ontario known as the Oak Ridges Moraine (ORM). The Moraine is a geological landform of sand, soil and rock left behind by the glacier during the last ice age. It is a ridge stretching from the Trent River to the Niagara Escarpment forming a natural heritage and green space system. The ORM is strategically located north of and parallel to Lake Ontario and divides the watersheds draining south to Lake Ontario and north into Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe. The Moraine shapes the form and structure of the Greater Toronto region and the ecological functions critical to the region's environmental health.

The Moraine has a unique concentration of environmental, geological, and hydrological features that are vital to the ecosystem, including:

- Clean and abundant water resources – head waters of rivers, kettle lakes and groundwater recharge area
- Healthy and diverse plant and animal habitats
- Unique landforms – wetlands, hills, and valley formations
- Prime agricultural lands

The proposed development at 13572 and 13586 Bayview Ave. abuts the Snively Wetlands which are a natural water filtration system for surface drainage and groundwater, as well as healthy and diverse plant and animal habitats. I personally witnessed the annual amphibian migration and spawning every spring near the intersection of Bayview Ave and Snively Rd. This is also the area that the threatened Jefferson Salamander was spotted.

The proposed development application has had two prior development applications approved by past Councils, including:

- A four (4) storey building approved by Council in 2015
- An eight (8) storey building with 103 units approved by Council in 2022
- An amended application for an eight (8) storey building, requesting an additional 32 units for a total 135 units submitted for approval by the current Council in 2024.

The applicant has not committed to a construction start date, nor are any of the units deemed to qualify for the provincial definition of "affordable housing" that would benefit the community. Furthermore, the site contains 221 vehicle parking spaces which abut and could damage the sensitive wetlands.

The nearest shopping areas to the proposed development are on Yonge St, which is too far for most people to walk, especially in winter. Transit service in the area is limited, so residents will probably resort to driving a private vehicle to shop or work.

Based on the landowners' action to date, there is no assurance that the site will be developed, even if Council approves the additional 32 units. Past action would suggest that the owner may be land banking to increase the value of the property.

If the City wishes to meet affordable housing targets for 2031 and protect environmentally significant lands, the City must impose meaningful consequences on landowners that fail to meet the terms of the development approval agreement in a timely manner. This applicant has had two approvals and failed to develop the site. Council should deny the current application for an additional 32 units and impose strict measures to protect the Snively Wetlands as well as demand the development of "affordable housing" as defined by the province by 2031.

Respectfully,

Vito Spatafora, Richmond Hill Resident

Cc: Mayor David West and Members of Council