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**UNIONVILLE SQUARE SHOPPING CENTRES LTD. APPLICATIONS FOR OFFICIAL PLAN
AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENTS TO PERMIT A MULTI-PHASED, MULTI-BUILDING,
MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AT 8505, 8601 WARDEN AVE AND 3760, 3828 HWY 7
E (WARD 3) – PHASE 1 LANDS**

DSC Meeting, March 28, 2022
Written Communication from URA

March 26, 2022

This is a written communication on behalf of the URA regarding The Preliminary Report for Unionville Square Shopping Centres Ltd. Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law amendments to permit a multi-phased, multi-building, mixed-use development at 8505, 8601 Warden Ave and 3760, 3828 Hwy 7E (Ward 3) to be presented at the DSC Meeting, March 28, 2022. Consistent with the preliminary staff report, our comments relate largely to the Phase 1 proposal (southern portion of the subject lands).

As mentioned in the Preliminary Report the proposed development will be reviewed in the context of the existing policy framework The Official Plan (2014) and with regard to the Markham Centre Secondary Plan (MSCP) update – March 1st, 2022.

URA supports redevelopment of the current **Markham Town Square** and also the motion adopted in January 2019 by City Council to expand the boundary of the current Markham Secondary Plan to include a number of sites, including the subject lands. URA also supports the theme of the blend of Mixed-Use Mid-Rise and Mixed-Use High Rise.

We are closely monitoring this application and we are hoping to get some answers today or in the near future.

1. The most important concern is the **proposed height** of all five towers which exceed the maximum height as specified in the Official Plan (2014) i.e. **15** storeys.

The tower heights on the west are higher than the Preferred Development Concept (48, 42 and 35 vs 30 storeys) as proposed in the Markham Centre Secondary Plan Update to DSC (March 1st, 2022) - see Appendix.1.

The tower height of the eastern tower at 25 storeys is **much higher** than in the Preferred Concept from DSC – see Appendix 1. Won't this cause all sorts of overlook and shadow issues to the east Ellington Park Condos located on Verclaire Gate?

2. The proposed **building density** of **6.20 FSI** is greater than that permitted in the Official Plan (2014) which is 3.0 FSI as well as the Preferred Concept as proposed in the Markham Centre Secondary Plan Update (March 1st, 2022) to DSC i.e. **5.0 FSI** – see Appendix 1.

3. The higher heights and FSI versus the Preferred Concept are an alarming precedent, if approved. If this trend were to continue for all developments in Markham Centre, it is clear that the total population target of Markham Centre of 109,000 would be greatly exceeded, thereby putting pressure on the surrounding hard and soft infrastructure. We believe that Council must take a stand so that the total target residential population of 109,000 is not exceeded.

4. Are **private streets** 'A' and 'B' going to be accessible only for the residents of the five towers? Does it mean that the other residents of Unionville will not be able to drive and to shop in the new grocery and pharmacy stores? Currently many residents of Unionville are shopping at the existing No Frills, Shoppers Drug Mart and other retailers in the existing plaza.

5. **Building Form and Massing.**

We are concerned that the separation distances between Towers 1 and 2 and Towers 2 and 3 are **30.7 metres** and between Towers 3 and 4 only **25.0 metres** while The Markham Built Form, Height and Massing Study specifies a minimum separation distance between tall buildings of 40 metres.

6. The **location of the west towers** precludes building the '**diagonal street**' shown in the Preferred Concept plan that the City consultants were so pleased about (see Appendix 2). According to the Official Plan policies that apply to the Mixed Use Area, an adequate park space must exist as shown in the Preferred Concept. Due to the west towers' location, the big park was removed in the proponent's proposed Development Concept (see Appendix 2).

7. **Parking.**

The applicant proposes 1,174 spaces to support the development within the Phase 1 Lands, while the By-law requires 2,190 parking spaces. This represents a shortfall of 1,016 parking spaces (46.4%). We strongly believe that this ratio (only 0.7) needs a parking justification analysis.

We would like to know why most of the parking spaces are above ground. We prefer below ground parking, especially for residential units, as it reduces overall tower heights. Times' development right across the street is building underground parking, so it is likely not a groundwater issue.

Moreover, the proposed parking will be primarily for residents with only bicycle spaces for visitors and to serve the retail functions. According to the proponent's Development Concept (see Appendix 2) it is not expected to have a designated parking to serve the retail functions which is a serious concern for the community.

8. **Retail components**

A 40,000 sq ft supermarket is proposed to replace the existing No Frills which has an area of 54,000 sq ft. Hence an enlarged residential community will have to shop in a 25% smaller grocery store. The same scenario applies to the existing Shoppers Drug Mart (with an area of 17,600 sq ft) which will be replaced with a much smaller pharmacy as part of some other retail spaces that correspond to the remaining 20,100 sq ft of ancillary retail space.

9. Shadow impact

Is this acceptable? (Taken from the shadow report, which is not attached to the agenda)

“The shadow study demonstrates that there is some incremental shadow impact on the low rise residential neighbourhoods to the north and east.

With respect to the proposed public park area (Phase 2) there is incremental shadow impact throughout the day and at 5:18 p.m. (on March/September 21st) the park is almost entirely in shade.”

10. Community amenities

There is no designated area for a community amenity. More than 64% of the proposed residential units (1060) will be larger than 1 bedroom in order to meet the needs of large families and households. Assuming that only 30% of the occupants will be families with babies and toddlers, the need of a day-care is becoming very significant.

There is no place for a day-care and there is no visitor parking for parents to drop and pick-up their kids.

11. Wind Impacts

The following are very suggestive of potential safety concerns: (Taken from the wind impact report not attached to the agenda)

“The conditions over most grade-level pedestrian-sensitive areas within and surrounding the development site will be acceptable for the intended uses with a few exceptions including:

- *Sidewalks and building access points along the internal road separating the podia;*
- *The grade-level opening through the east podium; and*
- *The outdoor amenity area at the south side of the east podium.*





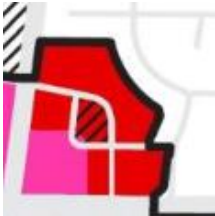
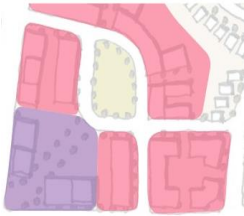
For these locations mitigation measures are recommended and include both canopies and wind barriers.”



“The Level 6 outdoor amenity spaces over the west podium rooftop will be predominantly uncomfortable for walking throughout the year. “

*“To ensure **sidewalks along the internal road** are comfortable for walking or better throughout the year, it will be necessary to reduce northwesterly winds channelling between the podia, as well as the down wash and acceleration of winds around the northeast and northwest corners of Tower 3 and Tower 4, respectively.”*

“The grade-level outdoor amenity is not comfortable for sitting without mitigation during the summer months.”

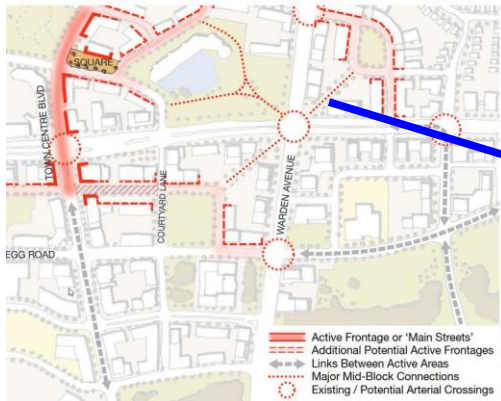
Appendix 1. Standards vs. Proposal

	Official Plan - 2014	Secondary Plan Concept Feb. 2021	Secondary Plan Concept March 2022	Actual Proposal
Height (storeys)	Max. 15 (Mixed-Use High Rise)			Tower 1 – 48 Tower 2 – 42 Tower 3 – 35 Tower 4 – 30 Tower 5 – 25
Density (FSI)	Max. 3 (Mixed-Use High Rise)			6.2
Land Use	8505 Warden – MU <u>High</u> Rise 3760 Hwy7 E – MU Mid Rise 3828 Hwy 7 E – MU Mid Rise 8601 Hwy 7 E – MU Mid Rise			8505 Warden – MU <u>High</u> Rise 3760 Hwy7 E – MU <u>High</u> Rise 3828 Hwy 7 E – MU <u>High</u> Rise 8601 Hwy 7 E – MU <u>High</u> Rise

 Mixed Use High-Rise
 Mixed Use Mid-Rise

Appendix 2. Markham Centre Concept vs. Proposal

General Framework



The location of the west towers precludes building that "diagonal street" shown in the demo plan that the consultants were so pleased about.

..... Major Mid-Block Connections

Great Spaces



The big park shown in the demo plan is removed in the proposed development..



Letter of Opposition - PLAN 21 139592 Zoning By-Law Amendment Application - PRELIMINARY REPORT UNIONVILLE SQUARE SHOPPING CENTRES LTD. APPLICATIONS FOR OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENTS TO PERMIT A MULTI-PHASED, MULTI-BUILDING, MIXED-USE DEVELOPMENT AT 8505, 8601 WARDEN AVE AND 3760, 3828 HWY 7 E (WARD 3)

To: Arvin Prasad, M.C.I.P., R.P.P., Commissioner of Development Services

To: Biju Karumanchery, M.C.I.P., R.P.P. Director of Planning and Urban Design

To: Jim Jones, Chair of Markham Development Services Committee

To: Dimitri Pagratis, M.C.I.P., R.P.P., Senior Planner, Central District

To: Sabrina Bordone, M.C.I.P., R.P.P., Acting Development Manager, Central District

Dear Sir & Madam,

We are owners of 15 Chillwood Court, Markham, L3R 9P1. Our house backs directly onto the Richard & Ruth's No Frills at 8601 Warden Ave. in Markham Town Square.

This letter is to express our **STRONG OPPOSITION** to PLAN 21 139592 - the Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendments made by Unionville Square Shopping Centres Ltd. (The Owner).

We are **DISAPPOINTED, SHOCKED** and feel **SUFFOCATED** by the **AGGRESSIVE** COMPREHENSIVE BLOCK PLAN. The idea of the **total loss of privacy** backing onto a row of **intimidating** 4-storey stacked townhomes at such **close proximity** is **daunting**. This proposed "multi-phased, multi-use, multi-building comprising high density residential units and townhouse blocks" concrete jungle development **ruthlessly snatch our right** to enjoy the open space from our home. The tranquility and privacy we now enjoy would be totally destroyed.

The south side of Hwy 7 and Warden Ave. to Birchmount Ave. and Enterprise Blvd. are already piling up with different developments of high-rise buildings. This PLAN 21 139592, if approved, can only bring an **additional surge** of population, traffic congestion, noise, cramped public spaces, even public safety issues. The **harmonized living environment** that we now maintain in our pocket of land will be gone forever.

We strongly **challenge the appropriateness** of the Proposed Development and have the following comments on the PRELIMINARY REPORT prepared by the Development Services Committee:

1. The Proposed Development is totally **incompatible with surrounding land uses**. It replaces a shopping plaza serving the community with a **concrete jungle**, composed of a cluster of 10 high-rise towers and mid-rise and townhouse buildings, in close proximity to the existing 2-storey single family homes along Chillwood Court and Buchanan Drive.
2. On the proposed density and building heights, **is it appropriate and absolutely necessary to redesignate** the Subject Lands to achieve a maximum overall density of up to **a soaring 6 times** the area? This **6.2 FSI** is way above the designation stipulated in the April, 2018 updated Markham Official Plan, 2014, on a maximum density of **2.0 FSI** for "Mixed-Use Mid Rise"; and **3.0FSI** for "Mixed-Use High Rise" for the Subject Lands, which deem to be the greatest level of intensification in Markham!!
3. On proposed **parking spaces**, the Owner proposes 1,174 spaces to support the development within the Phase 1 Lands, whereas the By-Law requires 2,190 parking spaces. This represents a shortfall of 1,016 parking spaces in relation to the total sellable Residential Gross Floor Area. How can this parking shortage be justified? We request that the **Transportation Impact Study** now under review by the City's Transportation Planning Staff be disclosed to all concerned parties involved in this opposition.
4. We won't need to review the "sun and shadow analysis and wind analysis" to conclude that if the Proposed Development is approved, then sun and wind will be a luxury for those of us who will be **living in the shadow of a giant concrete jungle**.
5. The existing Markham Town Square shopping plaza on the Subject Land contains 32 stores of various categories serving the community. With the much reduced retail space and the additional approximately 4,000 residential units from the Proposed Development, the ratio of non-residential land to the number of households in the community will be significantly reduced, hence the risk of **jeopardising the efficiency in providing quality service**.
6. With the rapid pile up of high rise buildings on the south side of Hwy 7 along both sides of Warden Ave, Birchmount Ave. to Enterprise Blvd., we are already experiencing **a big surge in population**. With this Proposed Development, intense impact and realistic problems will follow on traffic, road congestion, access arrangements, parking and transportation demand, pedestrian and drivers safety.
7. We strongly object to the density and building heights of Proposed Development, particularly the proposed **4-storey stalked townhouses** to the

northern edge of the Subject Land; and the proposed **6-storey residential building** at the **northeast corner** of the Subject Land. The **close proximity** of these units to the homes immediately behind them is mercilessly intimidating. Our row of individual homes on Chillwood Court and Buchanan Drive backs onto the back of Markham Town Square, hence there is absolute privacy and peace. With the Proposed Development, our **privacy would be totally gone**; just imagine how your lives would be like if you feel constantly being watched over or surveillance by **a continuous row of 4-6 storey high “neighbours”**? Moreover, the view of open sky and the source of light and wind would be totally lost from the rear windows of our homes.

We urge the Committee’s due diligence to re-evaluate the appropriateness of this Proposed Development and the adverse impact that it can bring to the residents of Markham. Living in a city as beautiful and as promising as Markham, we surely stand together and will do our utmost to protect and maintain a harmonized living environment.

We sincerely appreciate your attention to this Letter.

Kenneth Kwok & Sylvia Kwok