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## **Redevelopment Applications for Hilton Markham Suites Ltd. (8500 Warden Ave)**

Deputation to Markham Development Services Committee, December 12, 2023 – Agenda Item 9.1

C:/URA-HiltonDeputation2023-12-12

This is an official deputation of the URA and has been approved by the URA Board of Directors.

The communications from other interested residents about this proposal cover numerous important issues – traffic, sewage, built form, parkland, schools and others. These are all valid concerns and we will not repeat them here.

We wish to raise two more fundamental issues relating to the staff report:

### **Failure to Follow Council Direction:**

On May 11, 2021, a statutory public meeting was held concerning this proposal. Written communications by several residents, and a deputation by the URA were received. A motion was passed that included the following clause:

*That the applications by Hilton Markham Suites Hotel Limited, for a proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Bylaw Amendment be referred back to staff for an interim report to Development Services Committee on the matters raised at the statutory public meeting.*

That is the last entry in the public record on this development. So imagine our surprise when a staff recommendation report arrives before you. Where is the interim report? Why has a Council directive not been followed?

### **Not Following Secondary Plan Recommended Development Concept**

The Markham Centre Secondary Plan has been in development for over 3 years. Many public and stakeholder meetings have been held. URA has been deeply involved all along. Thousands of hours of staff, consultant and resident time have been expended. The Secondary Plan has 11 guiding principles, containing such phrases as “support a diverse and prosperous economy”, “support arts, culture, recreation”, “create efficient and safe transportation system” and “build neighbourhoods with access to **ALL** things needed for daily life”.

On July 5 of this year, the Recommended Development Concept was presented to DSC – 113,000 residents, 69,000 jobs, 7 school sites, 4 community centres, 65 hectares of parkland etc. This represents

staff's and the consultant's expert opinion on how best to **balance** development with liveability, environment, provincial policy, sustainability etc.

The Hilton plan does not align with the density and height parameters of the Recommended Concept. Specifically, the density and therefore the population, as measured by Floor Space Index, is 50% higher than specified for this site, and that manifests itself in greater heights. This is not a surprise - other developers in the area are also coming forward with applications greatly exceeding the density of the Recommended Concept.

Our surprise is that staff agrees with the density of the Hilton proposal and is recommending it for approval. Why is staff not following the Recommended Concept? Is another revision to the Recommended Concept, after the thousands of hours of work over 3 years, coming?

It is important that **balance** be maintained. Any population increase demands more jobs, more road kilometers, more transit, wider sidewalks, wider boulevards, more parkland, more schools, more community facilities. We must maintain the liveability targeted in the guiding principles. We don't want to become another Yonge-Eglinton or Liberty Village with too many people and inadequate physical and social infrastructure.

In conclusion, we urge DSC to defer further work on this Hilton application until these fundamental questions relating to the Secondary Plan and liveability and infrastructure are dealt with.