

From: E DM

Sent: Monday, January 15, 2024 2:08 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>

Cc: Rob MacLean; Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>

Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal - Written Submission, Development Services Committee

January 15, 2024

Dear Markham Council and Markham City Clerk:

Re: Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment applications submitted by Grmada Holdings Inc. to permit two 60-storey towers, 1,330 residential units, an eight-storey podium and ground related retail uses on the 0.72 ha (1.78 ac) lands located on the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Elgin Street at 7509-7529 Yonge Street, known as the York Farmers Market and Octagon Restaurant properties.

Please accept this as a written submission in opposition to the above-noted applications in advance of the Development Services Committee Meeting on January 23.

This proposal is massive in relation to the current Official Plan. We have serious concerns about a development this significant being undertaken without the Secondary Plan being completed to address the impacts on infrastructure such as roads, traffic, sewers, schools, utilities, park land, parking etc. We support the findings of the Staff Recommendation Report that calls for the Applications to be rejected.

We note that, according to the Staff Report, many important related concerns were raised with the applicants and have, to date, not been addressed. These are fundamental issues for the safe and effective functioning and liveability of our community and cannot be ignored.

We remain unconvinced that the Applications, as is, are acceptable. And they certainly are not, without acceptable solutions to all of the concerns, including service and infrastructure issues, raised by the proposal.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Elizabeth and Robert MacLean

2 Alcaine Court
Thornhill, Ontario L3T 2G7

From: Gayle Ferguson

Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 1:58 PM

To: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>; Gold, Laura <lgold@markham.ca>

Subject: Proposed condos

CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

As an Elgin Street home owner and resident, I agree totally with the Planning Staff action to recommend refusal to permit the building of 2 (two) 60 storey condos at the south east corner of Yonge and Elgin Streets in Thornhill.

Regards.

Gayle Ferguson

61 Elgin Street

From: John Carrington
Sent: Thursday, January 18, 2024 11:01 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal

CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to support the Markham City staff recommendation of **not** approving Grmada Holding Inc.'s Application for an Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment re redevelopment of 7509-7529 Yonge Street.

I believe that a Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan is in preparation and surely this Application should be considered within the context of that Plan after it is completed.

I understand and generally agree with the need for more urban densification. However, surely it must be done in a fashion which supports the City's goals, achieving liveable communities, and the goals of both York Region and the Province of Ontario. As proposed by the Applicant, I do not believe its Application meets these.

Yours truly,

John Carrington
69 John Street
Thornhill, ON
L3T 1Y3

From: Vaughn Hibbits
Sent: Wednesday, January 17, 2024 11:36 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal

CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I am writing to submit my views to the Development Services Committee on the 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal.

The Grmada Holding Inc's Application for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendment was rightly rejected by The City of Markham. This specific development proposal needs to be made only within the context of the Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan which is in the process of being completed.

The City of Markham works hard to have sound and orderly urban planning which achieves having liveable communities. The Provincial Policy Framework and York Region also support our city's goals.

Sincerely,

Vaughn Hibbits
22 Dale Park Court,
Thornhill, ON.
L3T 2A2

From: Elizabeth Janz
Sent: Friday, January 19, 2024 12:02 PM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal

CAUTION: This email originated from a source outside the City of Markham. DO NOT CLICK on any links or attachments, or reply unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I wish to address members of Markham Council at this meeting.

I am pleased to request time to speak at the meeting. I would appreciate remote access if possible. please notify the City Clerk in advance with an email to clerkspublic@markham.ca.

in addition please find my written submission

To Markham City Council

We support the council's refusal of the proponent application. The planning report is a good starting point of why the proposal needs to be refused.

Any redevelopment and infilling within existing communities should be well planned and should include detailed plans prior to consideration of an amendment to ensure that the amendment and zoning are complimentary to and well planned with the existing communities, services and land use constraints prior to a proponent seeking approval of a generic increase in density and land use. How can we fully participate unless we can see and comment on the actual development to be established at the site. This proponent is not interested in the community only the increased value associated with maximizing density for resale. I can not support changes that are so undefined and open ended for an infill in a highly residential community.

We will continue to oppose the proposed amendment and rezoning to allow before any amendments to the OP and zoning are submitted for review. We are adamantly opposed to the proposed change in the Official Plan to permit 60 storey towers at 7509-7529 Yonge Street.

We support withdrawal of any proposed OPA and rezoning without detailed proposal, along with supporting environment, social and technical reports for the site's redevelopment to ensure redevelopment of the site can be understood by the community, what it will look like and what impact it will have on the community and services within the community. This is not a "green field" location but an infill.

We formally request the below issues associated with site be addressed as part of any proposed OP amendment and rezoning for redevelopment at this location:

1) Markham has no buildings currently 60 stories in height. In Toronto's downtown core, only has about a dozen buildings with 60 stories or more. Toronto has located structures of this height in its core in a highly urbanized areas which Markham ward 1 is not. Markham ward 1 is abutting Yonge street and includes historic Thornhill. This area has a low rise residential character as was intended under the current OP and should remain. The redevelopment of the site should continue to protect the character of the community and old Thornhill.

2) World on Yonge is 31 stories and even at that height is not congruent with the area. It towers above the mixed uses within the area which is highly commercial, and industrialized with some residential. It is also significantly distanced from historic Thornhill. World on Yonge is located south of the train yard overpass - giving physical and visual separation between the existing low to mid rise development north of the bridge. World on Yonge has commercial development across from its location. It also has a large separation between its location and most of the low density housing located within its envelope (which is south of the bridge) whereas this proposed OP amendment and rezoning will abut low to mid rise residential. 60 stories at this location without any of the buffers is clearly an unreasonable planning decision.

3) Can fire protection services to buildings of these heights without purchasing new equipment? What is the cost of providing fire services to buildings of this size?

4) Parking from the low to mid rise buildings already have taken up most of the street parking in the area. Unless you are thinking that the site can support 20 plus levels of underground parking for residential and commercial uses, how does the proponent propose to manage pressure?

5) Traffic will increase along with safety concerns at the schools in closest proximity to the site as well. Has the child safety and increased traffic been accounted for?

6) Do we have enough school spaces to accommodate the pressures from the proposed residential increases? and does development of the site have anticipated impacts to the size of roads servicing Ward 1?

7) What are the cost of providing increased policing associated with commercial and residential increases under this proposal?

8) only 13 buildings in the core of Toronto are more than 60 stories of residential; do we really support 60 storey developments outside of the main core of the GTA when even Toronto has few of this height?

9) What public parkland is being created for Ward 1 if any new development is permitted on the site? How will community services be increased to accommodate increases as result of development of the site?

10) What impact will the development have on water, waste and other municipal services? Will we see any delays and interruptions to critical services including water? How will construction be managed so as not to adversely impact the community?

We ask that any amendment and rezoning of this site be refused until and subject to public review of detailed design for redevelopment of the site. Until a proponent is prepared to commit how it proposes to redevelop the site in detail (from an environment, economic, social and cultural perspective along with technical documents), the site should not be amended or rezoned.

Thank you

Elizabeth Janz and Ghasem Fani
28 Alcaine Court
Thornhill, Ontario
L3T 2G7

From: DIANE BERWICK

Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 4:19 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>; Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>

Subject: Development Services Committee - January 23, 2024. Items 6.1 & 9.1: 7509-7529 Yonge St.

To: Members of the Development Services Committee

**Items 6.1 & 9.1: 7509 - 7529 Yonge Street - Grmada Holdings Inc.
Applications for Official Plan & Zoning By-Law Amendment to
Permit a Mixed Use Development.**

I agree with Mr. Rick Cefaratti's "Recommendation Report" for the January 23, 2024 Development Services Committee meeting that the applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment submitted by Grmada Holdings Inc. be refused. Mr. Cefaratti's detailed report spells out clearly and completely the many reasons why these applications should be refused so I will not repeat them here.

I adamantly oppose this proposed development as outlined in Grmada's applications.

Sincerely,

Diane Berwick
"The Robert Jarrott House"
15 Colborne Street
Thornhill, Ontario

From: Jennifer Copeland
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 9:52 PM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>; Patton, Lauren
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal, DSC Meeting Jan 23, 2024, File Plan 23 141587

To the Markham Development Services Committee,

Re: File Plan 23 141587 for the redevelopment of 7509-7529 Yonge Street

I fully concur with the recommended City of Markham refusal to approve the development permit for this project until the new Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan has been completed.

It is premature to proceed with any development plans until the Secondary Plan has been completed.

I urge the committee to remain firm and withhold all development approvals at this time.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Copeland
10 Village Squire Lane
Thornhill, ON
L3T 1Z9

From: Linda Robinson
Sent: Saturday, January 20, 2024 11:05 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal

I am submitting my views to the Development Services Committee on the proposed 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal.

I am deeply concerned about further development of this type of proposal. I understand the necessity of affordable housing, but clearly there needs to be existing amenities to support expanding populations. Schools, parking, and traffic congestion, to name a few, amid a largely less dense residential area will only present more issues unless restrictions are in place.

On the other side of Yonge Street, Vaughan Township has managed to keep the flavour of the neighbourhood, while allowing development that supports growth, but not disruption.

I am certain the City of Markham will work to do the same for future development of these spaces.

Sincerely,

Linda Robinson

Sent from my iPad

From: RALPH ROBINSON
Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 12:26 PM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge St Redevelopment Proposal

I am writing to express my opposition to the proposed development at 7509–7529 Yonge St.

I have lived in the Markham and Thornhill area for close to 60 years and have seen the community grow in a managed and respectful manner over the years. However, this latest proposal causes me serious concern about the ability of our local infrastructure to support this many residential units.

Together with schools, parks, green space and most particularly traffic I am convinced we are not capable of digesting a project this magnitude without serious consequences.. As far as traffic is concerned, there are times even today when we come very close to gridlock. A project of this magnitude would certainly have a major negative environmental impact..

I'm also concerned that the proposed development does not fit what the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. On the other hand, height restrictions along lines of the Minto buildings across the street have protected and respected the character of our neighbourhood.

Hopefully whatever development takes place on these sites will be in keeping with the upcoming Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan.

Your sincerely,

Ralph Robinson
25 Vintage Lane
Thornhill, On
L3T-1X7

From: Sahar Nezami

Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 7:43 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>

Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>; Patton, Lauren

Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge street redevelopment proposal, file plan 23 141587

Good evening

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the request for approval of a permit to build a 60-story building at the aforementioned address. I understand that there is a strong recommendation to delay any such approval to after the development and approval of the Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan, a recommendation with which I strongly agree.

I am supportive of a legal and comprehensive Ontario plan to address housing issues in the GTA, but I don't want to be worrying about every single greedy developer's plot to circumvent the process or try to fly it under the radar and reap immediate benefit from a project that may not be sustainable or supportable by a holistic plan and infrastructure.

I also don't appreciate how the Markham citizens themselves seem to be policing and monitoring this instead of confidently relying on the process to protect us and also set us up for a more welcoming future.

Regards

Sahar Nezami

109 John st

Thornhill, ON

L3T 1Y3

From: segklein Klein

Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 5:08 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>

Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>; Patton, Lauren

Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street Redevelopment Proposal, DSC Meeting Jan 23, 2024, File Plan 23 141587

To the Markham Development Services Department,

I have read the January 23, 2024 report prepared by Markham Senior Planner, Rick Cefaratti, regarding the Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendments related to the above noted Redevelopment Plan 23 141587.

I fully concur with the recommended City of Markham refusal to the approval of the development permit for this project until the new Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan has been completed.

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, Policy 1.2.1 and Policy 4.6 and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020, clearly emphasize adherence to the Official Plan in order to ensure that "Planning for new and expanded infrastructure will occur in an integrated manner, including evaluations of long-range scenario-based land use planning."

York Region clearly reiterated that any approval of the zoning amendments for this specific development without the guidance of the new Secondary Plan, which is now under development, would be premature.

This is especially true given the areas of concern already put forward during preliminary meetings, such as insufficient downstream sanitary capacity constraints, building construction within the regulatory floodplain, proximity to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District and location within a Protected Major Transit Station Area for the planned Clark Subway Station.

I trust in the recommendation of Markham's competent Planning Dept. Team.

Best regards,

Sylvia E. Gatti-Klein

22 Dell Glen Court

Thornhill, ON

L3T 2A3

From: Valerie Burke

Sent: Sunday, January 21, 2024 4:55 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>; Gold, Laura; >; Mayor & Councillors <mayorandcouncillors@markham.ca>; Lue, Stephen; Messere, Clement; Cefaratti, Rick

Subject: Re: Item 9.1 - Recommendation Report - Grmada Holdings Inc., Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments at 7509-7529 Yonge Street

To the Members of Development Services Committee

Re: Item 9.1 - Recommendation Report - Grmada Holdings Inc., Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments to permit a mixed use development consisting of two 60-storey towers, 1,330 residential units, an eight-storey podium and ground related retail uses at 7509-7529 Yonge Street

Please support the staff recommendation to refuse this application. Staff provided very reasonable, well thought out professional advice at the pre-consultation meeting. Since the development is located at the Gateway to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District it should demonstrate compatibility and highlight its unique and special location.

The applicant needs to go back to the drawing board and work with staff to revise this application so that it will:

- be compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood and the Gateway to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District
- comply with the Official Plan
- accommodate sanitary sewage capacity and transportation needs
- respect the Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA)'s requirement to locate structures 10 metres from the flood plain to prevent flooding risks to future residents, existing residents and businesses
- set a positive precedent for future development along the Yonge Street corridor

Please refuse this application to protect the community of Thornhill for existing and future residents.

Valerie Burke

From: Babak YP
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 9:13 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Str. Project Objection

To the Markham Development Services Committee,

I have read the January 23, 2024 report prepared by Markham Senior Planner, Rick Cefaratti, regarding the Applications for Official Plan and Zoning By-Law Amendments related to the above noted Redevelopment Plan 23 141587.

I fully concur with the recommended City of Markham refusal to the approval of the development permit for this project until the new Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan has been completed.

The 2020 Provincial Policy Statement, Policy 1.2.1 and Policy 4.6 and the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020, clearly emphasize adherence to the Official Plan in order to ensure that "Planning for new and expanded infrastructure will occur in an integrated manner, including evaluations of long-range scenario-based land use planning."

York Region clearly reiterated that any approval of the zoning amendments for this specific development without the guidance of the new Secondary Plan, which is now under development, would be premature.

This is especially true given the areas of concern already put forward during preliminary meetings, such as insufficient downstream sanitary capacity constraints, building construction within the regulatory floodplain, proximity to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District and location within a Protected Major Transit Station Area for the planned Clark Subway Station.

I trust in the recommendation of Markham's competent Planning Dept. Team.

Kind Regards,

Babak Yazdanparast

8 Dale Park Crt, Thornhill, ON, L3T 2A2

From: Lister Smith
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:08 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: 7509-7529 Yonge Street, Thornhill

Dear Sirs:

Unfortunately, I was unable to access the staff report regarding the proposal of Grmada Holdings Inc. to permit two 60-storey towers, comprising 1,330 residential units, an 8-storey podium, etc. at the above noted location. Regardless, I am fully supportive of the position taken by the City of Markham Planning Department to reject the proposal.

The proposal is totally out of keeping with the area, will place enormous strains on public infrastructure and create traffic chaos in an already very busy area. 60-storey buildings will significantly shade existing area properties and are more akin to Bay/King office towers than the Yonge/Elgin area of low-rise buildings.

The application must be totally rejected.

Thank you.

Lister M. Smith and Susan J. Smith
76 John Street,
Thornhill, ON L3T 1Y2

From: Loui II

Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 10:46 AM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>

Subject: Comments Related to the Redevelopment Plan 23 141587

To the Markham Development Services Committee,

I support the City of Markham's refusal to approve the redevelopment Plan # 23 141587.

The development permit for this project cannot be approved before the new Yonge Street Corridor Secondary Plan has been completed, in order to be certain the development fits the community well.

This is especially true given the areas of concern already put forward during preliminary meetings, such as insufficient downstream sanitary capacity constraints, building construction within the regulatory floodplain, proximity to the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District and location within a Protected Major Transit Station Area for the planned Clark Subway Station.

Best regards,

Jeff Budd

26 Dale Park Ct

Thornhill, ON

L3T 2A2

From: Olana Alcock
Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 11:55 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Cc: Councillor, Keith Irish - Markham <kirish@markham.ca>
Subject: Development services committee meeting Jan 23, 2024

To: Development Services Committee
Re: Meeting Jan 23 , item #9.1

I wanted to write to tell you that I thank you for your refusal of the Grmada Holdings Inc. application for Official Plan and Zoning ByLaw amendment. I wholeheartedly agree with the committee's refusal of such an application for Markham.

A building of that height is hugely out of proportion for Markham, (it is not even currently seen in downtown Toronto)! Further, the necessary infrastructure to support a building of that ridiculous height is not available (sewer, traffic congestion, schools, etc).

Please add me to the notification list if Markham decides to revisit the current Markham By Law which limits building height to 8 stories.

Also, could you send me the link to listen in to the meeting tomorrow. If at all possible, an approximate time when item 9.1 would be discussed.

Many thanks,
Olana Alcock
7 Marie Court
Thornhill

From: jo.honsie jo.honsie

Sent: Monday, January 22, 2024 1:04 PM

To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>; Mayor & Councillors
<mayorandcouncillors@markham.ca>; Gold, Laura

Subject: DSC meeting Item 9.1 7509-7529 Yonge St

Dear Sir and Madam

I support the staff recommendation to reject this application. They have researched it well to support their decision.

In addition, I would say that Heritage wise, it is a buffer or gateway to Old Thornhill. We need to respect heritage on both sides of Yonge St and keep it compatible and to respect the existing code of 8 storys.

This application has a number of issues like: parking, flood plain, storm drains, sewage, schools, traffic. Should we not wait until the secondary plan has been issued to go ahead with any proposal?

I am reminded that in London, England, they have managed to balance heritage with a lot more subway lines than we do. I can tell you that there are not 68 story towers on every corner on their subway lines so why do we have to?

Many thanks,

Joan Honsberger, 60 Elgin St, Thornhill

Thornhill Historical Society

To: Development Services Committee

January 22nd, 2024

Subject: **Item 9.1 7509-7529 YONGE STREET (File PLAN 23 141587)**

Dear Members of the Development Services Committee,

I am writing on behalf of The Thornhill Historical Society to **express our steadfast support for the recommendations presented in the report by the City's planning staff** dated January 23, 2024, regarding the proposed development by Grmada Holdings Inc. at 7509-7529 Yonge Street.

The Thornhill Historical Society firmly believes in the preservation of our community's heritage and in promoting development that respects and integrates with our rich historical legacy. The proposed development of two 60-storey towers, an eight-storey podium, and related retail uses at this location presents significant concerns regarding its impact on the cultural and historical fabric of our community. They are:

1. **Incongruence with Heritage Preservation:** The scale and design of the proposed development, as detailed in the staff report, are not in harmony with the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District. The preservation of the historical character of this area is paramount. The proposed development's excessive height and density could irreversibly alter the character of the surrounding heritage conservation area, which is crucial to our community's identity and historical significance.
2. **Planning and Urban Design Considerations:** We concur with the staff's assessment that the proposed development does not represent good and orderly land use planning. The plan seems to be evaluated in isolation, disregarding the broader context and without a comprehensive and coordinated approach. This could set a concerning precedent for future developments and might undermine the strategic vision for sustainable and community-oriented growth in the area.
3. **Impact on the Community and Environment:** The proposed development raises significant concerns regarding infrastructure strain, especially considering the sewer capacity constraints and the location's proximity to the regulatory floodplain hazard area associated with the Don River Watershed. The potential environmental and community impact warrants careful consideration and alignment with broader city planning initiatives.
4. **Support for Strategic Priorities:** The Thornhill Historical Society supports the strategic priorities of developing safe, sustainable, and complete communities. The absence of a secondary plan for this area, as noted in the staff report, suggests that this proposed development does not align with our strategic priorities.

We appreciate the thorough analysis and the thoughtful recommendations provided by the city's planning staff. The Thornhill Historical Society urges the Development Services Committee to accept these recommendations and refuse the proposed amendments by Grmada Holdings Inc. It is essential to ensure that any development in this historic area is conducted in a manner that respects our heritage, aligns with strategic community planning, and preserves the unique character of Thornhill for future generations.

Sincerely,

Barry Nelson,
Heritage Advocate

Adam Birrell
President,
Thornhill Historical Society
www.thornhillhistoric.org
Facebook: facebook.com/ThornhillHistoricalSociety
YouTube: youtube.com/channel/UCPLCMyqfPVR1sMUAWqOpgfQ
Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/thornhillhistoricalsociety/>

January 22, 2024

VIA E-MAIL: clerkspublic@markham.ca

Paul Chronis
Land Use Planner
t. 416-947-5069
pchronis@weirfoulds.com

File 16699.00003

Development Services Committee
City of Markham
Markham Civic Centre
101 Town Centre Boulevard
Markham, Ontario, L3R 9W3

Dear: Members:

Re: Item 9.1: RECOMMENDATION REPORT, GRMADA HOLDINGS INC. AT 7509-7529 YONGE STREET, APPLICATIONS FOR OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT TO PERMIT A MIXED USE DEVELOPMENT CONSISTING OF TWO 60-STOREY TOWERS, 1330 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, FILE PLAN 23 141587 (10.3, 10.5)

We are lawyers for Grmada Holdings Inc. (the “**Applicant**”) with respect to its property at 7509-7529 Yonge Street, located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Yonge Street and Elgin Street (the “**subject site**”), in the City of Markham (the “**City**”).

On behalf of the Applicant, we have reviewed the Staff’s Recommendation Report (the “**Report**”) in respect of the above-noted matter and wish to express our disappointment that Staff are recommending refusal. **We ask that the Development Services Committee (the “DSC”) and Council not adopt the recommendations and resolve to direct Staff to continue processing the Application.**

As the Members are aware, the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning Applications (the “**Applications**”) seek permission to permit the comprehensive redevelopment of the subject site with a two tower mixed-use development at 60 storeys that provides for a landmark, transit and pedestrian oriented development that will define the southeast corner of Yonge Street and Elgin Street. The proposed development will also improve the public realm along both Yonge Street and Elgin Street through the inclusion of at-grade retail spaces, including space for a Farmers Market and other landscape and streetscape elements.

In our opinion, the proposal represents an opportunity to redevelop an underutilized site with a transit-oriented mixed-use building, which will offer and increase residential housing options and retail services along this stretch of Yonge Street.

The Subject Site is located approximately 300 metres from the future Clark Subway, a Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA) , proposed as part of the Yonge North Subway Extension Project. The planned North Subway Extension along Yonge Street increases the development

potential of the Yonge Street Corridor and makes it even more critical to advance the Block in which the Subject Site is situated on to support transit oriented development as illustrated in the Comprehensive Block prepared by Brook McIlroy (2023).

We do not support Staff's reasons, labelling the Applications as premature, for the following reasons:

1. It is well documented that we are in a housing crisis. The provincial government has made significant strides in upgrading the planning process to unlock and unravel the approval process to deliver much needed housing. Every unit counts and this development represents a direct response to the identified provincial housing initiative. To await the commencement and advancement of the proposed Yonge Corridor Secondary Plan (the "YCSP"), which at minimum will take no less than two years to process, fails to recognize the crisis we are in. Waiting this long for a study to be completed would be highly prejudicial, particularly considering that there is no firm completion date for the City's study.

The province has done its fair share to deliver much needed housing. The onus is now on the City to do its fair share.

2. The Applications were deemed complete on October 18, 2023. The Applications should be evaluated against the policies that were in force at the time the Applications were submitted, not against the unknown provisions of a policy document that does not yet exist.
3. It appears to us that one of the motivating reasons for the immediate refusal is to ensure the substantial Application fees are not refunded. The client has never threatened such request and was looking forward to a continued dialogue to advance the Applications, including attendance before a statutory public meeting to hear the concerns of the residents. Unfortunately, this refusal disenfranchises the Applicant and the residents of this opportunity.
4. The Members should be aware that there have been multiple planning studies and reviews associated with the Yonge North subway extension in the recent past, all of which show development on the subject site. Some of these include:
 - (a) Yonge Corridor Land Use and Built Form Study was endorsed by Markham Council in June 2022;
 - (b) York Region South Yonge Street Corridor Study Update;
 - (c) City of Vaughan Yonge Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan;
 - (d) Metrolinx: Yonge North Subway Extension: Neighbourhood Stations Analysis;

5. Of significant importance is the undisputed fact that the subject lands are within a four minute walking distance (less than 400 metres) from the Protected Major Transit Station Area (PMTSA) surrounding the 'Clark Subway Station ("PMTSA 9")'. The 'Clark Subway Station' PMTSA prescribes a minimum density of 250 people and jobs per hectare within Markham's jurisdiction. All land use planners recognize that this is a minimum target that applies to the overall PMTSA. The Applications compliment and provide supportive density to optimize the infrastructure that will be built. We understand the tunnelling contract has already been awarded. Additionally, the subject site is also near the Royal Orchard Station Area.
6. In respect of the noted comments related to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Report fails to recognize that there are existing buildings that currently occupy the area within the Regulatory floodplain hazard associated with the Don River Watershed. We also note that the prior work done in the area, as detailed above, also shows development within the floodplain.
7. In respect of the heritage comments, the official checklist for a complete application issued by Planning Staff did not require a heritage impact assessment. We also note that the Applicant was not provided a courtesy notice of the of the Heritage Committee meeting that was held on December 13, 2023 to permit a chance to participate in the process.

With respect to the specific heritage comments in the Report, we note that Heritage Staff's memorandum to the Markham Heritage Committee, opined that while the subject properties are situated in proximity to the public right-of-way boundary of the Thornhill Heritage Conservation District, the subject properties do not include any specific heritage resources. Additionally, the Heritage Staff noted that the proposal does not appear to negatively affect any heritage attributes within the City of Markham, however, suggested that the proposal would provide a stark contrast to the heritage attributes and current form of development on the west side of Yonge Street (in the City of Vaughan). As such, the Heritage Staff recommended that the Heritage Committee include a recommendation that they had no comments on the applications, and that the applications be circulated to Heritage Vaughan Committee for input.

8. For the above summary reasons, we are of the opinion that the refusal recommendation, which has the effect of stalling the advancement of housing units, does not conform with The Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe, 2020 (the "Growth Plan"), The PPS and the Region of York Official Plan. We encourage the DSC and Council to review the Planning Justification Report filed in support of the Applications which list all the planning benefits associated with this development.

9. We also wish to note that Staff requested a Comprehensive Block Plan (the “CBP”) for the area within the quadrant demarcated by Yonge Street to the west, Elgin Street to the north, Dudley Avenue to the east and Clarke Avenue to the south. The purpose of this CBP is to provide a guideline for an integrated approach to the development or redevelopment of land within the area identified by Staff.
10. The Report has not provided any comments on the undesirability of the Applications. A substantial amount of expert documents were filed in support of the Application, all as required in the pre-consultation checklist. The Report does not suggest that these supporting documents are inadequate.
11. For the above reasons, it is our opinion that the development is in keeping with the planning and urban design framework established by the applicable planning documents, including the Provincial Policy Statement (2020), the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2019), the Region of York Official Plan (2022), and the City of Markham Official Plan (2014), all of which support residential intensification in built-up areas, particularly in locations that are well served by existing municipal infrastructure, including higher order public transit. We encourage the Members to review the Planning Justification Report filed in support of the Applications, which lists all the planning benefits associated with this development.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and look forward to a resolution directing Staff to continue to work with the Applicant to advance this site-specific Application.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss our comments, please do not hesitate to contact me on 416.460.0038.

Yours truly,

WeirFoulds LLP



Per: Paul Chronis
Land Use Planner

PC/rm

Cc: Client