

Development Services Public Meeting Minutes

Meeting Number: 1
February 4, 2025, 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Live streamed

Roll Call	Mayor Frank Scarpitti	Councillor Reid McAlpine
	Deputy Mayor Michael Chan	Councillor Karen Rea
	Regional Councillor Jim Jones	Councillor Andrew Keyes
	Regional Councillor Joe Li	Councillor Amanda Collucci
	Regional Councillor Alan Ho	Councillor Juanita Nathan
	Councillor Keith Irish	Councillor Isa Lee
	Councillor Ritch Lau	
Staff	Andy Taylor, Chief Administrative Officer	Daniel Brutto, Senior Planner
	Arvin Prasad, Commissioner Development Services	Rick Cefaratti, Senior Planner, West District
	Giulio Cescato, Director of Planning & Urban Design	Laura Gold, Council/Committee Coordinator
	Graham Seaman, Director, Sustainability & Asset Management	Stephen Lue, Senior Manager, Development
	Sabrina Bordone, Manager, Development, Central District	Stephen Corr, Senior Planner
		Stacia Muradali, Manager, East District
		Nadia Lawrence, Special Project Coordinator

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The Development Services Public Meeting convened at 7:06 PM with Regional Councillor Joe Li in the Chair.

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST

Councillor Karen Rea disclosed a pecuniary interest for item 4.2 – Neamsby Investment Inc. due to her being on the Board of Director on a Board associated with the application.

3. DEPUTATIONS

Deputations were heard with the item.

4. REPORTS

4.1 PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION REPORT, WARDEN ANGUS DEVELOPMENTS INC. AT 10565 WARDEN AVENUE, APPLICATION FOR ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT (WITH AN ASSOCIATED DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION) TO PERMIT THE DEVELOPMENT OF APPROXIMATELY 847 RESIDENTIAL UNITS, A MIXED-USE MID-RISE BLOCK, A PORTION OF A SECONDARY SCHOOL, A PORTION OF TWO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, A PORTION OF TWO NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS INCLUDING ONE DUAL-USE PARK, A PARKETTE, A STORMWATER MANAGEMENT FACILITY AND THE SUPPORTING ROAD AND LANE NETWORK AT 10565 WARDEN AVENUE (WARD 6), FILE NO. PLAN 24 194063/ 24 194066 (10.5)

The Public Meeting this date was to consider an application submitted by Warden Angus Developments Inc.

The Committee Clerk advised that 34 notices were mailed on January 14, 2025, and a Public Meeting sign was posted on January 13, 2025. There were no written submissions received regarding this proposal.

Daniel Brutto, Senior Planner, West District, gave a presentation regarding the proposal, the location, surrounding uses and outstanding issues.

There were no comments from the audience with respect to this application.

Moved by Councillor Amanda Collucci

Seconded by Councillor Ritch Lau

1. That the report dated February 4, 2025 titled “PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION, Warden Angus Developments Inc., Zoning By-law Amendment (with an associated Draft Plan of Subdivision) to permit the development of approximately 847 residential units, a mixed-use mid-rise block, a portion of a secondary school, a portion of two elementary schools, a portion of two neighbourhood parks including one dual-use park, a parkette, a stormwater management facility and the supporting road and lane network (Ward 6)”, be received;

2. That the Record of the Public Meeting held on February 4, 2025, with respect to “Warden Angus Developments Inc., Zoning By-law Amendment (with an associated Draft Plan of Subdivision) to permit the development of approximately 847 residential units, a mixed-use mid-rise block, a portion of a secondary school, a portion of two elementary schools, a portion of two neighbourhood parks including one dual-use park, a parkette, a stormwater management facility and the supporting road and lane network (Ward 6)”, be received; and,
3. That the Applications by Warden Angus Developments Inc., Zoning By-law Amendment (with an associated Draft Plan of Subdivision) to permit the development of approximately 847 residential units, a mixed-use mid-rise block, a portion of a secondary school, a portion of two elementary schools, a portion of two neighbourhood parks including one dual-use park, a parkette, a stormwater management facility and the supporting road and lane network (Ward 6), be referred back to staff to provide a future recommendation report; and further,
4. That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

4.2 PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION REPORT, NEAMSBY INVESTMENTS INC. AT SOUTH SIDE OF 14TH AVENUE, EAST OF THE AANIIN COMMUNITY CENTRE, AND WEST OF MARKHAM ROAD,

APPLICATIONS FOR OFFICIAL PLAN AND ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT TO PERMIT A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT THAT INCLUDES THREE APARTMENT BUILDINGS WITH HEIGHTS OF 8, 9 AND 11 STOREYS, COMPRISING 785 PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL UNITS; 34 TWO-STOREY PURPOSE-BUILT RENTAL TOWNHOUSE UNITS; PRESERVATION OF A DETACHED HERITAGE DWELLING; AND, A 0.15 HA (0.37 AC) PUBLIC PARK AT SOUTH SIDE OF 14TH AVENUE, EAST OF THE AANIIN COMMUNITY CENTRE, AND WEST OF MARKHAM ROAD, MUNICIPALLY KNOWN AS 5933 14TH AVENUE, AND LEGALLY DESCRIBED AS BLOCKS 270 AND 271, PLAN 65M-4686, (WARD 7), FILE NO. PLAN 24 198977 (10.3, 10.5)

Councillor Karen Rea disclosed a pecuniary interest for item due to her being a Director on a Board associated with the application. Councillor Rea did not participate in the discussion on this item.

The Public Meeting this date was to consider an application submitted by Neamsby Investments Inc.

The Committee Clerk advised that 174 notices were mailed on January 14th, 2025, and a Public Meeting sign was posted on January 17, 2025. There were 22 written submissions received regarding this proposal prior to the Development Services Public Meeting.

Stephen Corr, Senior Planner, East District, gave a presentation regarding the proposal, the location, surrounding uses and outstanding issues.

Randy Peddigrew, Remington Homes, spoke about how it is becoming increasingly difficult for young people and seniors to afford housing. Mr. Peddigrew advised that the development proposal would provide more housing options, be designed and managed like condominiums, and be built to be a complete community. The proposal will also generate less traffic than a commercial development would on the subject lands.

Kerrigan Kelly, Groundswell Urban Planners, representing the Applicant, provided a presentation on the proposed development.

Giulio Cescato, Director of Planning and Urban Design, clarified the City can expand upon the York Region Official Plan's policies for the subject land, but cannot omit any of the uses.

The following deputations were made on the proposed development:

Mike Clare, President, Markham Interchurch Affordable Housing (MICAHA), spoke about the importance of building affordable housing. MICAHA has built over 6,000 affordable housing units to date. Affordable housing provides seniors wanting to downsize, and young people wishing to remain in Markham with a housing option that allows them to live in a dynamic community. Providing housing options decreases police interactions and reduces the need for certain types of emergency management services. The affordable and rental housing units are available to people of all denominations. Mr. Clare urged Council to support the development proposal.

Suku Navaratnam – spoke in support of the application as there is a need for affordable housing options for young adults like his son that grew up in Markham and want to continue to live in Markham, noting that his son currently lives in his basement. Mr. Navaratnam suggested that we should welcome newcomers to Markham and that most immigrants start off renting. Mr. Navaratnam advised that existing affordable housing complexes in Markham are safe and do not create community issues. Mr. Navaratnam also spoke of the importance of seniors having affordable places to live so that they can help their children with childcare.

Lesley Sahakian – spoke in support of the project due to the need for more purpose-built rental units that provide affordable housing options to responsible recent graduates, young professionals, and seniors. Ms. Sahakian noted that if Markham does not build affordable rental housing it will lose essential workers that are the backbone of the City's

economy to other communities, and it will not be providing seniors living in Markham with affordable downsizing options. Ms. Sahakian spoke of the need to provide tenants with dignity and protection in Markham, noting that rental prices have skyrocketed due to low supply and increased demand. Ms. Shahkian also spoke of the need for more mixed income housing in Markham to ensure that it is a livable place for all.

Min Ouyang – expressed concern that taxpayer dollars are being used to support a development proposal, but that will adversely affect the existing community, and that a 11-story building is not permitted under the City’s Official Plan. Mr. Ouyang asked Council to not support the project.

Yan Gao – registered but did not speak.

Ben Gao – registered but did not speak.

Jennifer Fabrico-Smith - representing Central Markham Housing Stability Committee, spoke in support of the proposed development. She questioned the kind of community that residents and Members of Council would like Markham to be in the future, advising that affordable housing is not a burden rather it allows young professionals to continue to live in Markham. She challenged residents and Members of Council to break the stigma of affordable housing.

Liya Lin- expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that she has worked hard as a single mother to purchase a home in what was promoted to be a low-rise community, which included a future development of an office building that is now being proposed as a high-rise development, and that the schools in the community cannot handle additional students due to classes already being crowded, and resources already being limited.

Ali Hasemi Sohi – expressed concern regarding the proposed development due to there being a lack of transit, walkable areas, and cycling facilities in the area. Mr. Sohi suggested that affordable housing is more appropriate in areas where there are more transportation options, suggesting the vacant lands by Pacific Mall or south of Enterprise Blvd would be more suitable for this type of development.

Jethro Kwan- a young adult, first time Markham homeowner, and a long-term Markham resident, spoke in opposition to converting the employment lands to residential lands due to Ward 7 needing employment opportunities due to the area traditionally having a higher unemployment rate relative to other areas of Markham. Mr. Kwan asked Council to maintain the current zoning of the land as it is more compatible with the community.

Jerry Lin – expressed concerns regarding the proposed development due to the lack of transit in the area, the low parking ratio, the traffic congestion it will create, that it does not align with the life experience of existing residents and due to there being few

employment opportunities in Ward 7. Mr. Lin noted that the subject lands are not suitable for this type of development.

Yangxiu Zhu – expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: the lack of notice and transparency regarding the proposal; that affordable housing should be distributed more equitable amongst Markham’s communities, noting areas like Angus Glen have no affordable housing; and that the homeowners of the yet to be occupied townhomes were not notified of the public meeting and likely did not see the public meeting sign. Mr. Zhu urged Council to reconsider the handling of this project and noted that all decisions regarding the proposal should be transparent.

Kim (Kimberly) Hu – expressed the following concerns regarding the development proposal: the parking ratio is too low when a car is needed to get around; the lack of nearby transit and regular transit services to support the proposal; that the parking from the proposal will spill over to the Community Centre; and that it will be difficult for residents to evacuate during an emergency as a result to traffic congestion. Ms. Hu suggested that the subject lands were not in a good location for the underprivileged.

Urmish Shah – expressed concern regarding the development proposal due to 40 inconsistencies he found in the traffic impact study. Mr. Sha questioned how the increase in traffic would be addressed. Mr. Sha noted that extra traffic would also be generated from ride sharing, which was not mentioned in the study, and that it will now take emergency vehicles more time to reach their destination.

Arianna Zhong – homeowner in nearby community advised that she feels betrayed that she bought a house in an area marketed to be a low-density community, with nearby vacant lands zoned for employment uses. She questioned what type of protection homeowners have from this type of occurrence. Other concerns she expressed regarding the proposal include, the low parking ratio, and that the stormwater management system will not be able to handle the proposal, noting there are existing challenges with stormwater management system. Ms. Zhong was not against affordable housing, but did not think this was the right location.

Camilla Singh, representing South Markham Community Action Table, spoke of the great need for affordable housing in South Markham. Ms. Singh shared stories of residents in need of affordable housing and explained how increasing the supply of affordable housing would help single parent families thrive. Ms. Singh advised that creating more housing options will provide people in need with the opportunity to rebuild their lives though providing them with housing stability.

Jing Chong- spoke in opposition to the proposed rezoning of the subject lands from employment to residential high-rise. Ms. Chong expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that existing infrastructure cannot support the

development, including schools, hospitals, the shopping centre, and Community Centre; traffic on 14th Avenue would get worsen; and the increased risk of flood due to the ground water being high in this community.

Steven Ming expressed concern regarding the development proposal and noted the following were not considered in the traffic impact study: the impact of projected population growth on traffic, residents returning to work due to back to work mandates, seasonal impacts on traffic due to winter conditions, and that traffic will increase since a significant portion of the new Victory Green Community has not moved in yet. Mr. Ming asked Members of Council to reject the application and rezoning of the subject lands.

Vishnu Siva – expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that a high-rise development is being built in a predominately low-rise community; that a mixed-use development with both shops and residential units would be a better option for the community as Ward 7 has fewer businesses than other areas of Markham; and that affordable housing is not being evenly distributed across Markham. Mr. Siva encouraged Council to prioritize the needs of the families that live in the community.

Yiqing (Sliva) Shi – understood the need for affordable housing but expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that it would increase traffic congestion; that it would increase noise and air pollution; and that it would increase the risk of flooding and erosion due to there being less permeable surfaces. Ms. Shi noted that comments from residents living in the community should be given priority over comments from people that do not live in the area.

Yingrui Rui – expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: the low parking ratio being proposed when there is minimal bus service in the area and no bicycle lanes, the traffic congestion the development will create, and the impact development will have on the storm water management system. Ms. Rui suggested that Members of Council should listen to the community's concerns regarding the proposal.

Jing Abby Lin – expressed concern regarding the proposed development due to it having a low sustainability score based on the City's Sustainability Check List for Site Plans, suggesting that it does not meet the threshold of 55 points, which is required for high-rise developments. Ms. Lin explained that the development proposal does not have walkable streets or a nearby trail system that are needed to support this type of proposal.

Qasim Ali – registered but did not speak.

Minshen Su - registered but did not speak.

Lee Webb, representing the Affordable Housing Coalition of York Region, spoke in support of the proposed development. Mr. Webb spoke of the great need for this type of housing in Markham and noted that 81,000 Ontarians are currently experiencing

homelessness. Mr. Webb explained how more affordable housing units are being lost each year than gained and that York Region has the lowest proportion of homes that are rentals in the Greater Toronto Area. Mr. Webb advised that the proposed development would provide housing for people at various points in their life and that it would improve Markham's housing market. Mr. Webb suggested that affordable housing should be based on income rather than market value rent. Mr. Webb advocated for Council to support the proposed development and affordable housing.

Reed Zhao- expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that there has not been enough public consultation or transparency regarding the development; the impact of the development will have on the heritage house on the subject lands; that it will be very difficult for residents of the proposed development to not have a car due to the location of the subject lands.

Yue Ying Lu – expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that the subject lands are being rezoned from employment lands to residential high-rise, and that existing infrastructure cannot support the proposed development, including the schools, roads, and health care system.

Charmaine Hugh - resident of Hagerman Corner Community Homes, which has a wait list of 10 to 15 years (the waitlist is similar at other affordable housing complexes), spoke in support of the proposal. Ms. Hugh asked residents to think of the people who cannot afford to buy or rent a house elsewhere and that need a place to live. Ms. Hugh advised that affordable housing provides single moms, seniors, young adults, and individuals with disabilities with a place to live. Ms. Hugh spoke about the diversity of the Hagerman Corner Community Housing Board of Directors and noted that residents of all denominations are welcome to apply and live in the affordable housing units. Ms. Hugh supported the proposal and advocating for ending the stigma around affordable housing.

Shanta Sundarson spoke in strong support of the application, emphasizing the need for more affordable housing. Markham is growing fast, and it is not realistic for it to remain a low-rise community. Rentals are an essential part of any community and denying a future generation, and essential workers the opportunity to live in Markham is unfair. Communities are not meant to be frozen in time, and the City is moving away from the reliance on the car. Schools are built in response to population growth, and there is no evidence that renters commit more crimes than homeowners. Ms. Sundarson suggested that the application should be approved.

Jun Hao Zeng – registered but did not speak.

Elizabeth Brown spoke in support of the development application, noting the importance of having purpose-built rentals. They provide seniors, young people, and newcomers with a stable place to stay. Tenants can be put in precarious situations without purpose-built

rentals, such as being evicted with little notice from their unit with no place to stay. More than 300,000 rental units will be needed in the GTA over the next decade to meet the increasing rental demand, which is supposed to rise by 58%. The development application could have a mixed-use component by adding a commercial floor or a daycare if the community is seeking more employment opportunities. However, she liked the application as it stands.

Lynn Loewen, a young adult raised in Markham and currently renting in Markham, spoke in support of the proposed development due to it being close to grocery stores and in an established community. Ms. Loewen noted that having purpose-built rentals in Markham is integral to the community, explaining how purpose-built rentals protect residents from being evicted at any time. Ms. Loewen advised that most of her friends have moved out of Markham to find more affordable housing. Ms. Loewen spoke to the need for more buses and the improvement of traffic flow to help support the proposal. Mr. Loewen was supportive of adding commercial uses to the site if it helped the development proposal move forward.

Lori Clarke – registered but did not speak.

Bridget Simon -resident residing in community housing, spoke in strong support of the proposed development and suggested that we should welcome and help young families live in Markham.

Kasthuri Thiru – spoke in support of the proposed development for affordable housing. Ms. Thiru noted everyone needs a home, and that making sure children have a home is more important than ensuring schools remain uncrowded. Let's support affordable housing and create a safe community for all.

Ying Hong Wang (David Sun) – registered but did not speak.

Hayden Poon – spoke of the importance of having both affordable housing and employment lands in Markham. Mr. Poon suggested that transit is very poor in this area as there is no weekend service. However, he suggested that the development proposal should not be rejected due to the lack of transit, as development comes before transit. Mr. Poon noted that if transit takes too long people will buy a car, emphasizing that investing in transit will provide more options for residents and developments.

Quasim Ali – expressed the following concerns regarding the proposed development: that there was no meaningful public consultation with the public on the proposal; that not a lot of residents received the public meeting notices; and that the notices were sent out when many residents were on vacation due to the Chinese New Year.

Neeba Shah - expressed concern regarding the proposed development and asked Members of Council to listen to the communities' concerns.

Mayor and Members of Council thanked the deputants for their feedback on the proposed development.

The Mayor spoke about the need for greater housing options in Markham to provide housing for young people and other deserving groups that wish to live in Markham, acknowledging that traffic is a problem across Markham. The Mayor explained that traffic would increase more during peak times if the subject lands were developed for employment uses rather than for residential.

Councillor Juniata Nathan advised that she was a firm believer of affordable housing but questioned if this was the right location for the development proposal. Councillor Nathan spoke of the importance of having transit and infrastructure in place to support Markham's growing population.

Staff responded to inquiries from Members of Council and the public.

Moved by Mayor and Rea pass midnight - carried

Moved by Mayor Frank Scarpitti

Seconded by Regional Councillor Jim Jones

1. **That the written submissions by Min Ouyan, Pamela Chiu, Margaret and Ilon Begshoeff, Urmish Shah, Cindy Yee and Roberto, Ratnagopal Suthakaran, Vishnu Skvasubramaniam, Elango Aruampalam, Meraj Amin, Gogulan Thirugnanasampanthan, Surees Panchadcharam, Suba Ratnasingam, Barbara Ribble, Clovis Grant, Rahulan Rasiah, Renee Procenko, Yingrui Rui, Jennifer Wigston, Lya Lin, Louise Greco Conforti, and Arianna Zhong, regarding (File NO. PLAN.24.198977), be received.**
2. **That the depositions by Mike Clare (Markham Interchurch Affordable Housing), Suku Navaratnam, Lesley Sahakian, Min Ouyang, Jennifer Fabrico-Smith (Central Markham Housing Stability Committee), Liya Lin, Alii Hasemi Sohi, Jethro Kwan, Jerry Lin, Yangxiu Zhu, Kim (Kimberley) Hu, Urmish Shah, Arianna Zhong, Camilla Singh, Jing Chong, Steven Ming, Vishnu Siva, Yingrui Rui, Jing Abby Lin, Lee Webb (Affordable Housing Coalition of York Region), Reed Zhao, Yu Ying Lu, Charmaine Hugh, Shanta Sundarson, Elizabeth Brown, Lynn Loewen, Bridget Simon, Kasthuri Thiru, Quasim Ali, Neeba Shah, regarding (File NO. PLAN.24.198977), be received; and,**
3. **That the petition from Markham Residents regarding (File NO. PLAN.24.198977) be received; and,**
4. That the "PUBLIC MEETING INFORMATION REPORT – Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application to permit three residential apartment buildings, townhouses, preservation of the George R. Cowie House and a public park, on the south side of 14th Avenue and east and west sides of Lepp Drive (Ward 7), (File NO.

PLAN.24.198977), submitted by Neamsby Investments Inc., be received; and,

5. That the Record of the Public Meeting held on February 4, 2025, with respect to the proposed Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application for the south side of 14th Avenue and east and west sides of Lepp Drive, submitted by Neamsby Investments Inc. (File PLAN 24.198977), be received; and,
6. That the Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment application, for the south side of 14th Avenue and east and west sides of Lepp Drive, submitted by Neamsby Investments Inc. (File PLAN 24.198977), be referred back to staff for a report and a recommendation; and further,
7. That staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried

5. ADJOURNMENT

The Development Services Public Meeting adjourned at 12:16 PM.