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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Development Application 11& 15 Houghton Boulevard and 55 Joseph Street
Attachments: 4612_001.pdf

From: Ken Slater

Sent: Wednesday, February 06, 2013 9:21 AM

To: Scarpitti, Frank; Heath, Jack; Jones, Jim; Landon, Gord; Li, Joe; Burke, Valerie; Shore, Howard; Hamilton, Don; Moretti, Carolina; Campbell, Colin; Ho, Alan; Kanapathi, Logan; Chiu, Alex; Huycke, Stephen

Subject: Development Application 11& 15 Houghton Boulevard and 55 Joseph Street

Dear mayor and members of council, we are enclosing a brief overview of our above noted project for your review, so you will better understand our submission coming before you this February 12th council meeting. As you may recall several of our neighbours had previously voiced concerns regarding this project. The enclosed shares our side of the story with you so you might be properly informed.

Regards

Gemini Urban Design & Wycliffe Homes

Per Ken Slater and Gary Bensky

February 6, 2013

Gemini Urban Design (Houghton) Corp.
1485 Whitehorse Road
Downsview, Ontario M3J 2Z2

**AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MAYOR &
MEMBERS OF MARKHAM COUNCIL**

Subject: 10 Lot Subdivision, Houghton Blvd. and Joseph Street

In anticipation of the upcoming council meeting of February 12, 2013, we would like to provide you each, with this memorandum in order to best understand our project which will be brought forward at the February 12, 2013 council meeting.

You may recall this item was at the Development Services Committee meeting of December 11, 2012 and before council December 18, 2012.

In conjunction with the City of Markham's various departments and along with the TRCA, we refined our site plan to reflect input and commentary received from those agencies. This was the plan presented to you together with a supporting positive recommendation report from planning staff, at the December 11, 2012 Development Services meeting, which was unanimously supported at that time.

Our site is very remote and visually protected from the surrounding neighbourhood. Additionally it is situated at the end of this very short stub road. The topography is such that the elevation of our property is well below that of the neighbouring Albert and Joseph Streets.

An important element by us was in the processing of our application to the City to take the route of "the path of least resistance".

Notwithstanding the obvious advantages of higher density and the Provincial mandate of intensification, we opted to develop 60' single family lots, to reflect our desire to fit within the existing fabric of the community and respect the existing O.P.

This approach received support and was validated by planning staff, with a positive report, supporting our proposed development.

Summary of facts and benefits are as follows:

1. OPA allowable density 6 units per acre. Our site 3.8 units per acre. Surrounding average density 7.8 units per acre.
2. Total site area 5.26 acres of which 3.18 (nearly 60%) are being deeded to the City as future greenbelt.
3. A 5 meter servicing access to the valley lands is also being deeded to the city in order to maintain the Mount Joy Creek greenbelt.
4. Significant tree preservation efforts as well as a comprehensive planting program are proposed.
5. Building elevations have been designed to respect the adjacent Heritage District along with peer review.
6. A sanitary sewer is being built to Albert Street, thereby allowing the existing homes on Houghton to connect to the sewer thereby eliminating their septic systems.

Also of note is that the three neighbours who live immediately adjacent to our project have both been on public record of supporting us.

We thank you in advance for taking the time to understand our position. We re available for any commentary you may have.

Ken: Cell number 416-882-4992 or Gary: Cell number 416-587-1428

Regards,

Ken Slater / Gary Bensky
For Gemini Urban Design and Wycliffe Homes.

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Please vote NO to proposed subdivision in the 'one and only' Markham village

From: Charlotte Wilson

Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2013 9:06 AM

To: Scarpitti, Frank; Heath, Jack; Jones, Jim; Landon, Gord; Li, Joe; Burke, Valerie; Shore, Howard; Hamilton, Don; Moretti, Carolina; Campbell, Colin; Ho, Alan; Kanapathi, Logan; Chiu, Alex; Huycke, Stephen

Subject: Please vote NO to proposed subdivision in the 'one and only' Markham village

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

On Tuesday, please vote NO to the proposed development in old Markham village. What is proposed by Gemini is completely out of character with the surrounding neighbourhood and will essentially ruin the look and feel of this historic area.

The proposed plan includes a zoning amendment that would allow homes that are much bigger, higher and closer together than the current by-laws allow. The resulting homes would tower over and dwarf all of the existing homes. They would be visible from other streets and would completely ruin the quaint 'old-tyme' feel of this unique area that all Markham residents value.

Voting no on Tuesday will encourage the developer to come back with a plan more suitable to the village. The neighbourhood residents are not against development of these lands – in fact, we think that a more reasonable plan will enhance the community.

There are so many other places in Markham where a subdivision like the one Gemini has proposed would be perfect. Old Markham village is not one of them. Please vote 'no' to prevent irreparable damage to the one and only Markham village.

Thank you so very much,

Charlotte Wilson

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To: Mayor&Councillors@markham.ca; shuycke@markham.ca
Subject: Houghton/Joseph development (GEMINI), Feb. 12, 2013

Mayor and Councillors,

As you know, residents of Markham Village's heritage district are extremely concerned about the proposed Gemini project on Houghton Boulevard and Joseph Street in Markham's Old Village. Under current zoning restrictions and by-laws this development would not be possible due to the endless variances and exemptions. This project is against the wishes of surrounding tax payers and voters but will incur an excessive financial benefit to a single developer who, besides the financial gain from this proposed subdivision, has no interests in our neighbourhood and is not a voter in our ward.

The proposed dwellings would be more than a third bigger and up to 8 feet taller, towering over surrounding dwellings, on much smaller lots than average in the surrounding area. At ten of such units, this can only be seen as a full scale modern subdivision, in an area where this does not currently exist.

These dimensions have not before been proposed to Council in a public meeting as they had not previously been finalized. At least one conversion error (from meters to feet) has been made in the staff report. The report also does not contain a business case as to why such dimensions have been proposed. Yet, tonight you will have to vote on it.

- We are asking that you defer the project back to staff to eliminate any mistakes that were made in the report and we are also asking that you thoroughly inform yourselves of the new dimensions of the proposed dwellings and have a good understanding how this compares with the surrounding area (far and wide) as well as what drives the need for such excessive dimensions, prior to voting.

Never before in this area has a subdivision of this scale and size been planned this close to a conservation river; the Mount Joy Creek. The dwellings are proposed to be built at a distance to conservation area that is unprecedented.

- We are asking that the City works with the developers to increase the buffer zone between development and the protected conservation lands to make it more reasonable and in line with similar developments elsewhere.

We believe that this proposal will forever lose the heritage character of one of Markham's most cherished neighbourhoods that people even move from the Beach in Toronto for!

- We are asking that the number of homes on the Houghton side of the project will be reduced to a total of seven (instead of nine) so that they can

sit on lots that are appropriately sized for their footprint and will better fit in with the surrounding area.

The proposed condo road is extremely narrow. In a situation like the recent snow fall, for example, the currently proposed condo road will not provide enough space to ensure adequate snow clearance. It also cannot accommodate sufficient parking spots in such a situation. It is true that other existing roads in the neighbourhood are narrow, but this is not something we should plan for! Rather, the existing roads pose restrictions that we will have to live with and work around.

By allowing this condo road at its existing width and ownership structure, the City of Markham is abdicating its responsibility to protect the interest of its residents and deliver services, such as snow clearance and general street maintenance. We do not want to be at the whims of a condo association who may choose not to carry out maintenance on the road and the sewage because there is a direct and immediate tie to money out of their pockets.

- We as residents ask that the City of Markham protects us from the above mentioned issues; a municipal road, in accordance with current zoning and by-laws and at a reasonable width would ensure this.

Kind regards,

Robin Banerjee
Amanda Helderman

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Gemini Development: Houghton Blvd and Joseph St

-----Original Message-----

From: Robert and Brenda Young
Sent: Monday, February 11, 2013 11:06 PM
To: Mayor & Councillors; Huycke, Stephen
Subject: Gemini Development: Houghton Blvd and Joseph St

First of all, thank you for deferring your decision on this development from your December meeting so that Councillor Campbell could hold a meeting to hear again from the residents of Houghton Blvd and Joseph St. Thank you Councillor Campbell for hosting the meeting and thank you Deputy Mayor Heath, Regional Councillors Joe Li and Jim Jones for attending too. I do plan on attending the meeting tomorrow night -- but I do not plan to speak.

I believe, that the meeting Councillor Campbell called last month showed that our "village like" community within Markham is not against development -- we are against the size and have some legitimat concerns that need to be address by the City and by the developer before it is too late.

I will have been a resident on Joseph St for 20 years this coming April. I myself have gone through some major redevelopment of my house this past year. I believe I did everything in accordance to the various bylaws of our City and the expectations of Heritage and in the end I believe the house suits our unique village neighbourhood. There in lies my major concern with this proposed development -- there are far too many zoning amendments with this development that do not suit the area. From what I understand this development is not officially in our Heritage area -- if that is the case - you can not get much closer to the Heritage area. Any development needs to take into account the uniqueness of the neighbourhood.

I ask you all, to do what you can to slow this development down so that a more suitable to village friendly development can be put forth by the developer.

Thank you for your time and all you do make Markham the great city that it is!

Robert Young

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Below is what you said on June 19, 2012. Please read it before you vote tonight

From: Cameron Wilson

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2013 12:42 PM

To: Scarpitti, Frank; Heath, Jack; Jones, Jim; Landon, Gord; Li, Joe; Burke, Valerie; Shore, Howard; Hamilton, Don; Moretti, Carolina; Ho, Alan; Kanapathi, Logan; Chiu, Alex; Cefaratti, Rick; Campbell, Colin

Cc: Huycke, Stephen

Subject: Below is what you said on June 19, 2012. Please read it before you vote tonight

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

Tonight you will be voting on the proposed Gemini development in Markham Village. I would like to remind you briefly what was said at the June 19th, 2012 meeting by you and your colleagues.

“This development will conform to the infill bylaw”. This was explicitly stated by Rick Ceferatti, Mayor Scarpitti, and several other Councillors. **As now proposed, IT IS NOT EVEN CLOSE TO MEETING ANY OF THE EXISTING BYLAWS.**

- In terms of square footage, 8 of the 10 houses will be about **33% larger** than the existing GFA bylaw allows.
- The height of the houses will be **7 feet higher (over 20%)** than the existing bylaw allows.
- The building depth will be increased by **7 feet more** than the existing bylaw allows.
- Building setbacks from the property lines are substantially reduced, meaning the houses will be **much closer to each other, and much closer to the street** than the existing bylaw allows.
- Two of the proposed lots have **less frontage** than the existing bylaw allows.
- Two other proposed houses have **more coverage** (meaning more house on less land) than the existing bylaw allows.
- The allowable projection of the porch is **over 4X** the existing bylaw – from 1.5 feet to a proposed 6.6 feet.

Even with the assumption of complying with the in-fill and other current bylaws, there was complete agreement by the Council that the **development as proposed in June was unacceptable. How could it be acceptable now, when nearly every facet of the proposed development is worse than initially proposed in June?**

Ken Slater, the owner of Gemini, said that the comments by Mayor and Council were just ‘political posturing’. I would be really disappointed if this was the case.

Kind Regards,

Cameron Wilson

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Opposed to Bylaw Amendment - Gemini Development - Council Meeting tonight

From: Scott Bentley

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2013 3:44 PM

To: Mayor & Councillors; Huycke, Stephen

Subject: Opposed to Bylaw Amendment - Gemini Development - Council Meeting tonight

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

It has come to my attention that the Houghton/Joseph/Gemini proposal is in front of council again tonight, with regards to the Bylaw Amendment.

As you know, this is a primary concern for the majority of residents in the Markham Village.

I am one of those concerned residents and stand in opposition of the proposed amendments. This is not what was established for this project when it was at Council in June.

A resolution was passed at that time to deal with this very issue.

I am asking you to vote NO tonight and address the concerns of your constituents.

Regards,

Scott Bentley

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Gemini Development

From: shannon

Sent: Tuesday, February 12, 2013 4:34 PM

To: Heath, Jack; Scarpitti, Frank; Jones, Jim; Landon, Gord; Li, Joe; Burke, Valerie; Shore, Howard; Hamilton, Don; Moretti, Carolina; Ho, Alan; Kanapathi, Logan; Chiu, Alex; Huycke, Stephen; Campbell, Colin

Subject: RE: Gemini Development

To Whom It May Concern,

The community, as well as Council, raised some serious concerns with the Gemini Development at the DSC meeting in June. Subsequently, at the meeting in January, it seemed as though none of those concerns had been addressed. In fact, it seemed as if we had taken a step backwards. When we asked Biju Karumanchery (Senior Development Manager at the City of Markham) why staff did not take into consideration what the Councillors said, we were told it was because there was no specific resolution made and that the minutes are only a summary.

So how does Council ensure that the requests and concerns raised in the meeting are actually dealt with? In the case of the Gemini Development, there were several major issues that the Councillors raised on this development that have clearly not been addressed because Gemini is pushing ahead to amend the zoning laws which would completely disregard any of these issues.

I would like to ask that Council defer this item and not send it to the next Council meeting for a zoning change until everyone concerned listens to the audio and staff re- looks at the project with the Councillors' requests and concerns in mind.

Shannon Bentley

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Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Houghton Blvd development - my input

From: Susan Taylor
Sent: February 12, 2013 5:59 PM
To: Ken Slater
Cc: 'Lianne McOuat'; Campbell, Colin; Heath, Jack
Subject: Houghton Blvd development - my input
Importance: High

Ken, when I am not being a realtor or looking for a new house, I am president of the Cornell Rate Payers Association and we have our monthly board meeting tonight. Sorry that I didn't figure out this conflict until yesterday. For what it's worth, here are some comments that you can share this evening. I am cc'ing Colin Campbell and Jack Heath on this email. Hope it's helpful. Susan.

I am very supportive of a new housing development at the end of Houghton Blvd. That is a beautiful pocket of Old Markham Village and I think it's wonderful that more people will have the opportunity to live there and appreciate it.

Overall, I believe that the plans shared with me last week by Ken Slater are on the right track. I have suggested to Mr. Slater that he consider two changes that would likely be appreciated by future purchasers and existing neighbours:

1. Remove one or two lots. Particularly Lot 10 — because even with the density dictated by the Official Plan — that lot with the driveway running between two existing properties seems much too crowded and inflicts on the privacy of the two adjacent homes on Joseph. I think that pool sized lots are important to buyers in the proposed price range, and the demographic of the existing neighbourhood, and slightly deeper backyards throughout the development should be considered.
2. Re-design the facades of the homes to be more in keeping with the heritage style of some of the surrounding homes: including some siding finishes, more expansive porches, more gables, etc.

But overall, I have seen many examples of how the Province has inflicted "intensification" on unsuspecting communities - town homes and even stacked town homes - and I believe that would *could* be proposed for this space on Houghton Blvd could be a lot worse.

I don't believe this development, even in it's current form, will have a negative impact on property values. On the contrary, as a Realtor who has represented buyers and sellers in this community, I believe the suggested price points of \$1m - \$1.5m for these proposed homes will likely have a positive halo affect on the surrounding existing homes.

Susan Taylor
Markham Resident