

Hau, Lucy

Subject: FW: Extended driveway by-law

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

From: Renee Levine [mailto:rlevine@baseconsulting.ca]

Sent: June 25, 2006 9:01 PM

To: dcousens@markham.ca; fscarpitti@markham.ca; jheath@markham.ca; jjones@markham.ca; eshapero@markham.ca; bodonnell@markham.ca; sdaurio@markham.ca; jvirgilio@markham.ca; gmckelvey@markham.ca; jwebster@markham.ca; dhorchick@markham.ca; kusman@markham.ca; achiu@markham.ca

Subject: Extended driveway by-law

I am writing with great dismay about the process in which the proposed Driveway Bylaw has been managed. While there has been lip service to public consultation, having been to a meeting, it was patently obvious to all who attended, that an agenda was being pushed and that there was really never intention to do anything but go through the motions of having public meetings. In fact, at the meeting that I attended, a Counsellor who did not want to hear objections to the by-law actually left. I also cannot fathom why there is such an urgency to pass this bylaw. I find the lack of governance shocking and it would not fly in a corporate setting where accountability to share-holders is required.

I object to the fact that while this may very well be an issue in the City of Toronto, living in the Town of Markham has different lifestyle and environmental considerations. Public transportation is readily available in the City. It is appalling to try to get downtown from anywhere north of Steeles without having to use two transit systems (for which we have to pay twice) or by taking one's car to either the GO station or to the subway.

Have you considered the demographics of the issue? I live in a neighbourhood that is approximately 25 years old. Our children were young when we moved into the neighbourhood. Now they are adults and as previously mentioned, need cars because the transit system does not serve us well. My husband and I also require cars to go to work. I realize that the new VIVA bus system has been put into place, but I question as to whether consultants were paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to do demographic studies to ascertain where people work i.e. in York Region or downtown? (based on the traffic going south on the 404, I don't really need to hire consultants for the answer). In addition, why paint with a broad brush all neighbourhoods in the Town of Markham. Are the demographics in Ward 2 identical to other Wards- I very much doubt it and I believe that weighs heavily into some decision-making.

My husband and I spent a great deal of money to have our driveway extended, using the services of professional landscapers so that it would be aesthetically pleasing. My driveway and yard are well landscaped. It would have behooved the committee to show some examples on your powerpoint of some driveways that looked lovely. There are myriads of examples of "legal" driveways in front of completely unlandscaped yards or with grass that is full of weeds and needs cutting that are far more unattractive than my yard. (In addition, I would question "the Aesthetics Police" as to whether they like the appearance of the new townhouse project at Bayview and John- it looks appalling, has significant density and will only increase to our traffic problems.) I digress, but the point is relevant.

For years, we got tickets when we parked on the street, as did visitors to my home. Now suddenly you have reversed the decision and it would be ok, providing that a great deal of money is expended on getting parking permits- providing that you are eligible. Smacks of a cash grab.....

Please address how the by-law addresses the following:

1. Drainage- if existing driveways can be left, but not used, the drainage issue still

exists.

2. Aesthetics- what is to prevent someone from parking "beat up" cars, buses, tire racks, etc, etc on a legal driveway?

3. Snow storage- it is the same snow, with the same issue. In fact, I believe that it is far more dangerous to have street parking. Have you contemplated issues like:

1. snow removal vehicles
2. emergency vehicles
3. school buses.

More cars on the street create compounded problems for all of the above.

At best, I would request that you rescind this by-law proposal completely. I believe that our tax dollars would be far better spent on more pressing social issues than a canned irrelevant project. At the very least, I would expect grandfathering the existing driveways. I have worked with contracts for years and it is unheard of to penalize existing people with new terms in the way that you are suggesting. Please deal on a case-by-case basis with extraordinary circumstances, but do not deal with the issue on such a global manner.

Your reply is anticipated. Failure to reply indicates to me that you are in fact not interested in what the public has to say.

Sincerely,

Renee Levine
41 Huntington Park Drive,
Thornhill, Ontario
Phone: 905-731-3499
rlevine@baseconsulting.ca