

City of Vaughan Committee of the Whole Council Meeting – Jan 14, 2014 @ 3:00 p.m.

Council Chamber 2nd Flr. Vaughan City Hall

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Communication
CW: Jan 14/14
Item: Dep 1 (22)

Opening

I would like to express my gratitude for being able to speak in front of you all today to express residents' concerns regarding the proposed designated bike lane on Peter Rupert Avenue, part of Block 18 between Major Mackenzie Dr and Rutherford Rd. As a resident within this subdivision, a homeowner on Peter Rupert Avenue, and a director with the Eagle Hills Community Association, I would like to comment on the Council's decision on June 25, 2013 to approve this bike lane along with the decision to endorse a no parking restriction on both sides of this road.

Our community association was formed in September of 2013, and as we held an open house for residents within our area, we wanted to ensure that the resident's voices were heard and that any issues were brought to Council. On this evening in attendance were councilors Sandra Yeung Racco, Deb Schulte and Gino Rosati. Although numerous issues were mentioned and heard, the most important issues facing residents within our community is the traffic on Peter Rupert ave along with the proposed bike lane. To date, we are aware that the City had issued a survey and conducted an open house in relation to the bike lane; however as a group we feel that we would like an opportunity to work with the city on a reasonable outcome that is fair to both the city and residents. As we are now an established rate payers group with a voice representing our community, we would like ask the council to reconsider the proposed bike path. If you live in this subdivision, it is evident that the concerns regarding Peter Rupert Avenue are serious enough that have many residents frustrated and would like to see the city take action. Some of these issues are:

- Extreme Traffic Congestion
- Through my dealings with one of the Senior Traffic Technologists, studies confirmed in excess of 8,800 vehicles drive this street both North and South bounds on a daily occurrence
- Constant speeding above the speed limit (we have observed many cars driving in excess of 100 kms.
- Speeding cars passing in oncoming traffic to pass a slower vehicle.
- As this street is a cut through street, the traffic is horrendous especially during morning and evening rush hour times, residents who live on this street have difficulty getting out of their own driveways in the morning
- Majority of the traffic on this street is by individuals who don't even live in this subdivision and cut through from Keele st. and proceed all the way to highway 7, and vice versa.
- Bottlenecking of traffic at both the north (at Major Mackenzie) and south (at Rutherford) intersections as everyone is making their way to and from each of the GO stations. As well cars, using these entrances/exits of Peter Rupert to make U turns to avoid left turn lane traffic buildups on McNaughton and Confederation.
- Cars failing to stop at stop signs

We feel rectifying these issues should be the city's priority to rectify first and foremost as opposed to installing bike lanes in spring 2014.

I would also like to note and make you aware that from one of our recent (November 21, 2013) rate payers association meeting, the proposed approved bike lane on Peter Rupert Avenue was a main topic of discussion once again. We have evidenced much displeasure regarding this bike lane in contrast to the City of Vaughan's survey that suggested positive percentages to the approval of this bike lane from the residents of our community. As a community and as group, we feel many residents were not knowledgeable about the bike lane and proposed no parking restrictions. We would also like to express our concerns over the survey itself. We feel the City did not receive enough responses to properly conclude that residents were in acceptance of the bike lane and no parking restrictions.

- Online Survey was bulk delivered to all 5875 addresses within this community.
- A total of 147 survey responses were received by the city which only equal a minute amount of 2.5 % of the overall residents in these areas
- Of the 147 received responses, 67% were in favor of adding the bike lane along with no parking restrictions which also amounts to 98 residences (1.5% of the overall 5875 surveyed residences).
- Why did the survey questions in regards to no parking restrictions on Peter Rupert Ave only target those who reside on the street, they are the ones who will be impacted.
- Is council aware that a dedicated bike lane was just installed in late summer of 2013 along Dufferin Street on the east side travelling both north and south bound serving the same purpose and direction that the proposed bike lane on Peter Rupert Avenue would serve? As this bike lane is off of the main road which is a safer option than having it on a main road!
- Installing a bike lane on the street of Peter Rupert Avenue would only add to this already over congested street.

Therefore we feel that the decision by council to approve the bike lane and no parking restrictions is based on an insufficient amount of approvals by the people that reside in these areas and we are asking the city to reopen this issue.

Over the past 6 months I have personally expressed my displeasure with the city which lead me to contact Sandra Yeung Racco who in turn connected me with one of the city's sustainable transportation specialists. Through multiple emails as well an inperson meeting, I did express the concerns we have as residents of this community in approving this bike lane and no parking restriction. I also offered many suggestions regarding the no parking decision such as;

- No parking on one side of the street, no parking during certain times only, or a bike route with no parking on one side of the street only. Many of us have noticed that the only times bicycles ride on this street are early Saturdays or Sunday mornings in the spring, summer or fall seasons when a group of 10-15 cyclists ride this route as part of a bicycle run. Of the ideas I presented, nothing was discussed any further through my dealings with the transportation specialist thus is why I am here today.

The response I had received was that due to the success rate of the results and the fact that the council had recently approved the bike lane, there was not much that could be done to overturn this decision.

We feel as a community that as long as the bike path lines have not been painted on the road, we still have an opportunity to work with the city to resolve our issues and come to a common ground on a final decision.

In terms of the no parking, this is a very big issue amongst residences who reside on Peter Rupert Avenue. We have had parking since 2007 when we moved in this area and we would like our parking to remain. I was told by the transportation specialist that as long as there where lay-bys or a perpendicular street off of Peter Rupert Avenue within 160 metres from your homes that this would suffice in lieu of having no parking in front of my home. We feel that it is not acceptable. Do we have to tell family members and friends who would like to visit that they can park up the street and walk over to our home. Many people have family members that are elderly or disabled, are we to tell them when they come over to visit, park down the street and walk 1/5 of a kilometer to get to our homes?

Conclusion

As residences within the great City of Vaughan, we are nothing without the City and the City is nothing without the people. We would like our voice to be heard amongst council and we are asking to meet once again to continue discussions regarding the bike lane issues prior to the lines being painted on the street. I'm sure we can come up with a final decision that will suffice for both parties. Just like Peter Rupert is a 2 way street, we are willing to work with the city and we expect the city to work with us.

Thanks You,

Eagle Hills Community Association



