

**Ministry of  
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**Ministère des  
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C10 - CL

February 16/16

CW Rpt. 7  
Item 15

February 11, 2016

John MacKenzie, M.Sc.(Pl) MCIP, RPP  
Deputy City Manager, Planning & Growth Management  
City of Vaughan  
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive  
Vaughan ON L6A 1T1

Dear Mr. MacKenzie:

Subject: Vaughan Official Plan – Natural Heritage System  
MMAH File #: 19-DP-1500-10009

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The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MAH) remains involved in the appeals of the City of Vaughan Official Plan 2010 ("VOP 2010") to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) to ensure matters of provincial interest are appropriately incorporated into the VOP 2010.

The purpose of this letter is to ask the City of Vaughan to take steps, as required under s.3(5) of the *Planning Act*, to bring the natural heritage policies and schedules in the VOP 2010 into effect in a manner that is consistent with the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014*.

Through the One Window process MAH provides a single voice for the Province on land use matters. Since approximately 2007, the Province has worked directly with the City of Vaughan, the Region of York, the Toronto Region Conservation Authority and other stakeholders to ensure the requirements in provincial policies and plans are incorporated into what became the VOP 2010.

When the VOP 2010 was appealed to the OMB, the Province worked in earnest with the City, Region, TRCA and other stakeholders to scope and resolve appeals, and to bring the plan into conformity with the *Growth Plan* and *Provincial Policy Statement*. We are all pleased that significant progress has been made in the OMB proceedings, and much of the VOP 2010 is now in effect, including Natural Environment policies in Chapter 3.

As you know, the *Provincial Policy Statement, 2014* ("PPS") brought into effect on April 30, 2014, requires the protection of natural features. To do this, the diversity and connectivity of natural features in an area, and the long-term ecological function and biodiversity of natural heritage systems need to be maintained, restored, or where possible improved.

In order to properly implement the provision of the PPS, Vaughan's Official Plan must be consistent with the provincial policy, it is therefore imperative that Vaughan's Natural Heritage Network (NHN), which represents Vaughan's natural heritage system, come into force and effect as an element of OMB's approval of the VOP 2010. Your staff report recommendation in support of a partial approval of Schedule 2 of the Official Plan would be in keeping with this requirement.

We understand the City of Vaughan Committee of the Whole ("VCW") received the staff recommendation report on February 2, 2016. However, the VCW did not endorse the recommendations to implement the NHN in the VOP 2010, but instead proposed deferring the implementation of the NHN until the next municipal comprehensive review.

We are significantly concerned that the VCW proposal at the February 2, 2016 meeting negatively impacts joint government efforts to bring the NHN into force, and will also prevent the timely implementation of settlements with the parties relating to the NHN.


The deferral of the NHN into the VOP 2010 for several years is not consistent with the PPS and is contrary to s.3(5) of the *Planning Act*. We are also concerned that this proposal does not conform with the Region of York Official Plan, and that failing to identify applicable natural heritage features introduces uncertainty into planning and development in the City of Vaughan.

In addition, the boundaries of natural heritage areas subject to protection must be identified before undertaking a municipal comprehensive review. The Province will not be in a position to comment on a future Region of York and City of Vaughan municipal comprehensive review until after the NHN in Schedule 2 has come into effect.

Ministry staff therefore request that city staff so advise Council of the City of Vaughan, and request that Council amend the directions received from Committee as a Whole, to reflect the staff recommendation contained in the February 2nd report and associated communications.

We look forward to continuing to work with the City of Vaughan and Region of York to bring the VOP 2010 into effect. Should you have any questions with respect to the matters raised above we would be pleased to meet with you. I can be reached at 416-585-6063.

Sincerely,



Mark Christie  
Manager

c.c. V. Shuttleworth – Region of York