

**From:** Elena Serebryany <eserebryany@rogers.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 18, 2014 9:23 AM  
**To:** Clerks@vaughan.ca  
**Cc:** Abrams, Jeffrey; Britto, John; alan@slobodskyassociates.ca; 'Thornhill V  
**Subject:** OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FILE OP.13.013 & ZONING BY-LAW A  
**Attachments:** Letter to city 18 Feb 2014.pdf

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Item #	2
Report No.	8 (PH)
Council - February 18/14	

Hello.

Please see attached letter from Preserve Thornhill Woods Association re **ISLAMIC SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI JAMAAT OF TORONTO Application.**

We request the attached letter be included in the communication to be received by the members of the council at today's meeting. We the residents of Thornhill Wood requesting this letter to be addressed before proceeding with the task force.

Please confirm acceptance of the letter and the distribution to the members of the council.

Thank you in advance for your help in this matter.

*Elena Serebryany, CA*  
416-568-5759

**OFFICIAL PLAN AMENDMENT FILE OP.13.013**

**ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FILE Z.13.036**

**ISLAMIC SHIA ITHNA-ASHERI JAMAAT OF TORONTO**

*Dear Councilors and Committee Members,*

The community of Thornhill Woods and the surrounding neighborhoods strongly oppose the development proposed in the applications OP.13.03 and Z.13.036. Concerns have been outlined to City Council members during the hearing on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 and include:

- Objections to zone designation changes to allow high density and high rise dwellings (RA3). This application's planning contravenes existing city plans outlined in OPA#600 and future city development outlined in VOP2010, which clearly exclude the area of Thornhill Woods for intensification or high density development.
- Objections to by-law exceptions that permit extraordinarily dense and high dwellings to be constructed which clearly changes the visual and topographical makeup of the neighborhood, puts excessive strain on the neighborhood's fragile infrastructure and will potentially cause irreplaceable damage to the environment and to public safety
- Objections to by-law exceptions permitting the applicant to construct less than half of the required parking spaces in order to increase the development's land utilization. If approved, this exception will transfer the burden of overflow vehicle parking to the surrounding streets, will create unacceptable congestion, will restrict emergency vehicle access to main roads and will cause public safety issues for the entire neighborhood.
- Concerns regarding the financial viability of the applicant, directly impacting their ability to complete the project and fund all the necessary upgrades to the neighborhood's infrastructure. These concerns are not groundless. Historically, the applicant launched a similar project to construct a large mosque and ran out of funds mid-project. As a consequence, the affected neighborhood's skyline to the south was impacted for nearly a decade with an unsightly, partially completed steel and concrete skeleton. The residents of Thornhill Woods are concerned that a similar situation could materialize on a much larger scale with two gargantuan 17 story unfinished towers serving as a constant eyesore along a major arterial road such as Bathurst Street
- Concerns about traffic in a neighborhood that is already suffering from high traffic congestion during morning and afternoon rush hour periods. Residents of neighborhoods north, northwest and northeast of Thornhill Woods are already cutting through Thornhill Woods to avoid extremely high traffic congestion on Rutherford, Major Mackenzie, Dufferin and Bathurst Streets and it is now quite common to see 15-20 cars backed up at stop signs along all north/south and east/west intersections within Thornhill Woods during the morning and early evening commute times. Concerned residents can't even begin to imagine the impact that the proposed project will have on traffic congestion inside Thornhill Woods as 3,000 or more new residents and their associated visitors are added to our overcrowded streets. Any future traffic study needs to not only take into account the increased traffic from the new

apartments/townhouses being proposed, but it must also include the impact from the future expansion of the Jaffari school, the massive traffic increases during special events at the mosque, the additional traffic caused by visitors to the complex and the increase in traffic from delivery and service vehicles.

- Concerns about the woodlands and the Don River as yet another nature preserve within Vaughan falls victim to the whims of unchecked development. One of the most striking and beautiful aspects of Thornhill Woods are the protected blocks of forested areas within our neighborhood that are home to countless species of plants and animals. Any attempt on the part of developers to cut down more forested areas and the resulting destruction of environmentally important river drainage pathways must be strongly resisted. Surely there are ways the land can be developed in a conservative manner; within existing zoning requirements that doesn't caused a negative impact to our Conservation Authority lands.
- Concerns about schools that are already at capacity and are now turning away students from adjacent neighborhoods. While the applicant may claim that students located within the proposed development will attend the school within the Jaffari complex, it goes without saying that a major percentage of these children may ultimately end up in the public school system. In fact, the City of Vaughan has a legal obligation to make space for these children whether they ultimately attend the public schools in the neighborhood or not. Neither Thornhill Woods nor any of the adjacent neighborhoods currently have enough capacity to handle the additional load of such a large number of additional students and busing children to other areas of York Region will not only negatively impact the lives of our children, but it will add an additional burden to our traffic congestion issues as busing becomes the norm versus the exception.
- Concerns about sanitation in a neighborhood that was not designed to handle the water and sewage load of a high density development. The city planners, who originally approved the urban plan for Thornhill Woods and the adjacent areas, never contemplated the addition of two 17-story high-rise buildings within our neighborhood. The residents of our community are not only concerned that we do not have sufficient capacity storm and sewer capacity to handle load from the applicant's development project, but we are also worried that the approval of high density development within Thornhill Woods will serve as a precedent for additional high density development in an area that is already suffering from flooded basements and sewage backups. Should the applicant's project be approved without properly assessing the future impact to our area's sanitation systems, countless taxpayers will ultimately pay the price as costly infrastructure fixes are added after the applicant's developers have long since left.
- Concerns about electrical capacity in an area that is already suffering from outages and brown outs during the hot summer months. The community is concerned that there may already be insufficient electrical capacity to meet the needs of development projects that have already been approved for the neighborhood and we are concerned that the applicant's massive expansion plans will push our electrical system to the breaking point.
- Concern that the former Vaughan Glen Hospital, located at 9000 Bathurst Street, which is listed on the City of Vaughan's Register of Cultural Heritage Value as per Part IV, Subsection 27 of the Ontario Heritage Act, appears to be in a state of neglect and disrepair. As observed from Bathurst Street, the current state of this building appears to include: broken window glazing exposing the building's interiors to the exterior climate and water infiltration; damaged doors; damaged window and door frames; damaged front steps; a lack of snow removal from the

access paths leading to the building; unusual staining along the lower portions of the roof showing possible water damage and water infiltration into the structure; and possible collapse of the roof in the rear of the building. Judging by the heritage value placed on this structure by the City of Vaughan's Register of Cultural Heritage, in order to prevent any further deterioration of this structure, we request that an immediate site inspection be undertaken by members of the City's staff. As part of this site inspection, it should be confirmed that; the building is in a stable state; either heat is present within the structure to prevent water pipes from bursting, or that all water service has been shut off; there is not standing water within the structure; and that measures are in place to prevent dry rot to the structure, water infiltration into the building and the entry of wildlife into the building. Anything short of undertaking these preventative measures shall be considered "demolition by neglect" of a structure registered as a cultural heritage by the Ontario Heritage Act.

Given all of the above concerns and issues and the extent of the impact to our community, the residents of Thornhill Woods would like to request the following:

1. We feel it is imperative to allow a small group of Thornhill Woods residents, who have been designated by the members of our community, to meet with the City's Planning Staff to understand the planning process (both technical and procedural) that will be undertaken and its implications on our neighborhood. As part of this process, we would like the opportunity to participate in working group processes in order to have better understanding of both the timing and the deliverable outcomes from each step of the city's planning processes.
2. As we understand, the developer named in the application does have the option of taking this matter to the Ontario Municipal Board if certain conditions are not met by the city within a defined period of time. While this action is entirely within the applicant's rights, it would certainly be a sign of good faith if the applicant guaranteed in writing that such an appeal would not be undertaken until the Task Force that was authorized at the Feb 4 council meeting has had a reasonable amount of time to engage in negotiations with the applicant and the output of the task force has been reviewed by the city council.

Sincerely,

Elena Serebryany, CA

VICE, Preserve Thornhill Woods Association