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Communication	
CW:	007 5/16
Item:	9

Mayor and Members of Council
c/o Mr. Jeffrey Abrams, City Clerk
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan ON
L6A 1T1

October 4, 2016
File 7550

Dear Mayor and Members of Council,

RE: Community Area Policy Review for Low-Rise Residential Designations Adoption of Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Development in Established Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods

Weston Consulting is the planning consultant for Sunfield Homes and currently working with our client on multiple infill projects in the City. At this time, no formal applications have been filed; however, we have discussed potential development concepts with City staff and completed a formal pre-application consultation process with one of the projects.

This letter is provided in response to the proposed guidelines prepared by Urban Strategies Inc., dated September 2016, entitled *Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Development Establishment Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods* (herein referred to as 'Guidelines') that are being presented to Vaughan's Committee of the Whole on October 5th, 2016. Staff have recommended to the Committee that these guidelines be approved.

Flexibility: The guidelines acknowledge in the third paragraph of Section 1.2 that the requirements outlined within the document are guidelines only. This is very important and we recommend you bold and/or underline this text prior to approving this document. Infill development projects are inherently unique and each site has its own unique constraints and characteristics. It is not realistic to assume that each individual infill project will be able to comply with all the guidelines provided in this document.

Built Form: The updated Guidelines do not appropriately consider varying forms of low density residential housing options such as stacked townhomes, back-to-back townhomes and low-rise apartments (sometimes referred to in the Official Plan as 'multi-unit residential buildings'). In the right location and context, these built forms are appropriate in low-rise residential neighbourhoods and represent a form of infill development. The proposed guidelines fail to address these built forms. It is unclear if this is an oversight or if the City is suggesting through omission that these type of residential buildings are not appropriate in low-rise residential neighbourhoods altogether.

Continuation of Housing Form: The Guidelines require that infill development only occur through the replacement of existing dwellings with the same building type (Section 4.5). For example, a large lot with a single detached dwelling can only be replaced with new single detached dwellings. The guidelines would prohibit this lot from being intensified with a semi-detached or townhouse units. This is overly restrictive and runs counter to general planning principles. It is acknowledged that the majority of intensification in Vaughan will be directed to intensification areas per the Official Plan; however, some parcels of land in low-rise residential neighborhoods are also appropriate for accommodating a modest amount of intensification too. By including this single guideline, the default starting position by staff when reviewing the vast majority of infill applications in the City's low-rise residential neighbourhoods will be that of opposition and refusal.

Entrance onto a Public Street: Guideline 5.1 states that townhouses should be oriented to have their front entrance on a public street or a public park. This has the potential to be narrowly interpreted in the future to mean that infill development is prohibited from having townhouse units that front onto a private laneway or private amenity area. This does not reflect the many unique properties typically associated with infill applications that can accommodate townhouse units on a private street or amenity area while still ensuring no adverse effect on the rear privacy of adjacent dwellings. Condominium roads can be constructed to function as public streets allowing for access and design improvements that assist in the development of sites with access and internal movement constraints. It is also common practice for townhouse developments utilizing underground parking to front onto a courtyard or walkway. This section should be revised to clarify that if townhouse units are to be oriented onto a private laneway or amenity area that they be designed to avoid any potential adverse effect on the privacy of adjacent dwellings.

We appreciate your consideration of the above and look forward to further participation in this review. Please provide us with future notice of meetings, reports or draft policies in relation to this matter. Should you have any questions, please contact the undersigned at (ext. 232) or Michael Vani (ext. 252).

Yours truly,

Weston Consulting

Per:



Tim Jessop MES, MCIP, RPP
Associate

- c. Larry Lecce, Sunfield Homes
Clement Messere, Bill Kiru & Grant Uyeyama City of Vaughan (email only)

Britto, John

From: Abrams, Jeffrey
Sent: October-04-16 4:40 PM
To: Britto, John
Subject: FW: Letter Submission - COW - October 5, 2016
Attachments: Comments on Low-Rise Infil Design Guidelines - COW, 2016.10.05 - Weston Consulting.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

For CW

From: Michael Vani [<mailto:mvani@westonconsulting.com>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 04, 2016 12:46 PM
To: Abrams, Jeffrey <Jeffrey.Abrams@vaughan.ca>
Cc: Tim Jessop <tjessop@westonconsulting.com>; Messere, Clement <Clement.Messere@vaughan.ca>; Kiru, Bill <Bill.Kiru@vaughan.ca>; Uyeyama, Grant <Grant.Uyeyama@vaughan.ca>
Subject: Letter Submission - COW - October 5, 2016

Hello Jeffrey,

Kindly see the attached letter submitted in regards to Item 9 on the Committee of the Whole agenda for the meeting scheduled on Wednesday, October 5th 2016.

Kindly confirm receipt of this correspondence.

Best regards,

Michael Vani, BURPI
Planner



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