

June 16, 2015

Chairman and Members, Committee of the Whole

City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive,
Vaughan ON
L6A 1T1

MGP File: 11-2003

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| Communication |
| CW: <u>June 16/15</u> |
| Item: <u>10</u> |

Via email rose.magnifico@vaughan.ca

Dear Chairman and Members:

Re: Item 10, Committee of the Whole Meeting, June 16, 2015
Natural Heritage Network Study
Natural Heritage Network Inventory and Improvements, Study Completion and
Recommendations
Amendment to the Vaughan Official Plan 2010
File #25.5.4
Block 41 Landowners Group Inc.

We are the planners and project manager for the Block 41 Landowners Group in the City of Vaughan. We are writing on behalf of the Block 41 Landowners Group who own approximately 232 hectares of land within Block 41. Representatives of the Block 41 lands have been actively involved in the NHN Study since its initiation in 2012 and have made submissions and met with City staff on a number of occasions.

The purpose of this letter is twofold. First, to acknowledge the progress made in refining the policies and maps since the April 14, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting. Second, to highlight the remaining areas of concern for the Block 41 Landowners Group which we understand staff are proposing to be further studied as input to the Block 41 Secondary Plan and Block Plan.

We appreciate Committee deferring the matter of the NHN Study (Item 1, Report No. 17) at the April 14, 2015 Committee of the Whole meeting and referring the item back to staff. This deferral accorded representatives of the Block 41 Landowners Group an opportunity to work with staff to further refine policies and address outstanding issues and areas of concern. Representatives of the Block 41 Landowners Group met with staff on May 1, 2015 and May 15, 2015, and we are pleased to note that consensus was reached on a number of issues. We note that the amended policies before you today are the result of ongoing consultation and staff's attempt to resolve some of the policy issues raised.

We do however note that some of the areas of concern raised by representatives of the Block 41 Landowners Group continue to remain, namely:

- **Significant Valleylands:** We are concerned that the VOP 2010 policies continue to elevate all valley corridors within the City to the status of significant valleylands without the opportunity for site-specific review and evaluation of significance. We note that the policies of the Greenbelt Plan do not prescribe such a blanket categorization of all valley corridors as significant valleylands, and as such we would ask that the policies of the City's Official Plan allow for the evaluation of potential significance both within and outside of the Provincial Greenbelt Plan area during the development process.
- **Significant Woodlands:** We note that the policies maintain 0.2 hectares as the minimum threshold size for determining woodlands as Core features. This is not consistent with the approach provided in the Regional Official Plan, the intent of the earlier 2010 VOP, or the recommendations of the Phase 2-4 NHN Study (dated May 2014) which recommended that woodlands need to be >0.5 hectares in size in order to achieve Core Feature status. It is our position that woodlots between the size of 0.2 hectares and 0.5 hectares, and their associated 10 metre Vegetation Protection Zone, typically exhibit more limited ecological functions. Protection of such features should be considered in the overall context during the Secondary Plan and Block Plan process where the urban requirements for roads, transit, schools, parks and housing are planned to achieve densities that exceed most existing communities in Vaughan.
- **Compensation Protocols:** We note that Recommendation 6 proposes that habitat compensation protocols and guidelines be developed through the Secondary Plan process currently underway for the two New Community Areas, one of which is Block 41. We require additional time to consider the implications of the compensation principles and can only support these protocols if they allow for refinement and are based on scientific principles and analysis.
- **Mapping Concerns:** We would like to highlight that the information used in Schedules 2, 2A, 2B, and 2C is not up-to-date and that updated information regarding features should be incorporated as part of the development process.

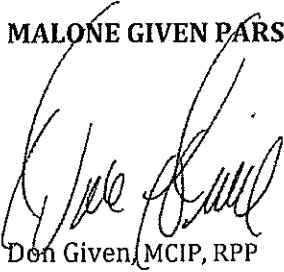
Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed policy revisions.

TO: Chairman and Members, Committee of the Whole
RE: Item 10, Committee of the Whole Meeting, June 16, 2015

June 16, 2015

Yours truly,

MALONE GIVEN PARSONS LTD.



Don Given, MCIP, RPP
President

cc John Mackenzie, Commissioner of Planning, City of Vaughan
 Tony Iacobelli, Environmental Planner, City of Vaughan
 Block 41 Landowners Group Inc.
 Mr. R. Hubbard, Savanta Inc.
 Ms. N. Mather, Stonybrook Consulting