

**Britto, John**

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COMMUNICATION	
CW -	FEB 6/18
ITEM -	3

**From:** Lawrence and Gail Blackman [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, February 6, 2018 10:47 AM  
**To:** Clerks@vaughan.ca  
**Cc:** Birch, Carol; Britto, John; blackmanfamily@rogers.com  
**Subject:** Committee of the Whole Meeting re Wycliffe Development Clark Avenue west of Bathurst  
**Attachments:** Vaughan Committee of the Whole Meeting Blackman Feb 6 2018 Meeting.docx

It would appear that there has been a problem with my previous e-mails to you due to the size of the files attached (e-mails returned undeliverable)

Please find attached my comments regarding the Wycliffe Development at Clark Avenue West with the photos embedded into the Word Document:

ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT FILE Z.16.037  
DRAFT PLAN OF SUBDIVISION FILE 19T-16V008  
WYCLIFFE CLARK LIMITED  
WARD 5 - VICINITY OF BATHURST STREET AND CLARK AVENUE WEST

Although I will make every effort to attend this afternoon's meeting, I would appreciate your sharing them with Council.

Please confirm that you have successfully received my comments with photos.

Thank you,

Gail Blackman  
[REDACTED] Eddy Green Court  
Thornhill, Ontario  
L4J 2S5

My name is Gail Blackman and I am a resident of the Westminster Green neighbourhood south of Clark Avenue West. Last January, I shared my concerns regarding the proposed Wycliffe development, both in a detailed written submission to the Planning Department and orally at the Public Committee of the Whole Meeting. As Council is reaching a point where it is about to decide on the proposal, I wish to comment further on the notes provided by the Planning Department as they pertain to Pedestrian Linkages, specifically via the former Mullen Drive Right-of-Way.

In its report posted online, the Development Planning Department states that the “existing pedestrian paths that traverse over private property have been established across the subject lines by residents of the local area.” Although this may be true, I take exception to the claim that the paths are “ad hoc.” That a *formal* pedestrian walkway was not built in this location, but rather farther west along Tansley Road, does not mean that it wasn’t planned. As a member of the former Westminster Green Ratepayers Association, I can attest to the fact that we were all fully aware of the reserved Mullen Drive Right-of-Way adjacent to the undeveloped lands south of Clark. Quite possibly, the lack of a *formal* pedestrian linkage at the T-intersection of Mullen Drive, McMorran Crescent and Tansley Road could be attributed to the fact that a roadway was expected to eventually be constructed there, most likely with sidewalks on both sides of the road, as on the rest of Mullen Drive. Moreover, that the City of Vaughan included a “Neighbourhood Signed Bike Route” through the Mullen Drive Right-of-Way in the final draft of its 2007 *Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Study* would seem to further support its planned intention to continue to allow access through this area for residents.

To a great extent it has been the lack of transparency regarding the pedestrian linkage to our community that has been particularly distressing to many of us. As previously noted, the Notice Sign regarding the proposed Wycliffe Development, posted in the fall of 2016 on the south side of Clark at the intersection of Clark and the south entrance road leading into the Promenade Mall, did not in any way suggest that the existing pedestrian access routes through the former Mullen Drive Right-of-Way may be affected. With only residents living within 150 metres of the development site being notified of the Public Meeting, this sign represented the primary and probably *only notice* for most of the pedestrians who have been using the Right-of-Way as their means of accessing Clark Avenue and especially, the Bathurst Clark Resource Library, the Promenade Mall and the bus stop on the north side of Clark, for so many years.

That the City of Vaughan had in fact sold off a portion of the Mullen Drive right-of-way that had benefitted community residents for over 35 years to Reena in June 2015 without first publicizing its intention to do so is extremely disconcerting. To recently find out via a Councillor’s newsletter that Reena had organized a meeting this past fall of which residents such as myself were not aware until weeks after the fact is not at all conciliatory to many of us affected. To now be told that the pedestrian linkage will require the consent of Reena, the landowner of 927 Clark Avenue West to the west of the subject lands is even more frustrating as perhaps this could have been avoided had Wycliffe, Reena and the City of Vaughan (who owns

the land at the north end of Mullen Drive) been more open with the community involved. Together we may have been able to explore more options.

In its report posted online prior to today's meeting, the Planning Department seems to offer some hope that the opportunity for a pedestrian connection from the surrounding community to Clark Avenue could be considered by Staff in the future should the abutting lands to the west of the subject lands, namely Reena lands, be developed. However, if the matter of providing a pedestrian linkage through the former Mullen Drive Right-of-Way is not dealt with now, I believe it may prove to be too late in the future. As part of Wycliffe's application, it has revealed its intention to sub-divide its property so that it can convey land to Reena who intend to construct a second building on its site. Presumably, Reena and Wycliffe have already collaborated on this and Wycliffe will only be conveying the portion of land that Reena would require to be able to construct this building. Once the Wycliffe application is approved, any future discussions about a pedestrian connection at Mullen Drive would rest with Reena who would most likely only have enough land for a building and the City of Vaughan who owns the land to the south. Contrary to the glimmer of hope offered by the Planning Department, Councillor Alan Shefman appeared to extinguish any chance for reconsideration for a pedestrian connection in his February 2017 interview with The Thornhill Post when he unequivocally stated that Wycliffe's and Reena's plans would not allow for the pedestrian access to be continued. If the City of Vaughan, Wycliffe, Reena *and* the neighbouring community collaborate together *now*, there may still be some flexibility in Wycliffe's, Reena's and the City of Vaughan's plans to include consideration for continued pedestrian access for residents from their neighbourhood through to Clark Avenue West and its "key destinations."

According to Vaughan's recently approved ***Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Development in Established Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods***, "where there are opportunities, infill development should expand the network of sidewalks, pathways and trails in the larger neighbourhood." Furthermore, as put forward in ***Centre Street Urban Design Streetscape*** document, when considering mid-block pedestrian connections, "where blocks exceed 160 metres, mid-block pedestrian connections should be provided." If the pedestrian linkage at the "former" Mullen Right-of-Way is taken away from residents living in the neighbourhood to the south, there would be a distance of approximately 550 metres between the two existing access points on Tansley west of Aish Hatorah Synagogue and on Bathurst at the north end of McMorran.

In his interview with the **Thornill Post** shortly after the Committee of the Whole meeting last January, Councillor Shefman claimed that the distance from Mullen Drive to the existing pedestrian walkway is only 50 metres. However, at my request, the Planning Department measured the distance, confirming it to be 150 metres as I'd estimated it to be. So by removing access to what is now being referred to as the "former" Mullen Right-of-Way, residents in the area south of the development will now have to use the pedestrian connection that is located about 150 metres to the west. If they want to go to the library or Promenade Mall, they will then

have to return about 150 metres to the east just to arrive back at end of what would have been Mullen Drive. To *safely* arrive at a bus stop on the north side of Clark Avenue West, they would need to walk about 200 metres west to cross at the New Westminster intersection or walk about 300 m east to the traffic lights at the entrance to the Promenade Mall, east of the Bathurst Clark Library. Children living in the new townhouse development would have to walk an extra 150 metres along busy Clark Avenue and then back another extra 150 metres along Tansley Road to arrive safely at their local public school. As stated in so many Vaughan publications, our communities should be more pedestrian-friendly, not less so.

Regarding the undeveloped lot to the south of Reena's land on the north side of the T-intersection at Mullen Drive, Tansley Road and McMorran Crescent that is presently owned by the City of Vaughan, I would respectfully ask the City of Vaughan to reconsider its intentions to divide this lot into two properties that the City would then sell to two buyers. In accordance with the Vaughan's **Urban Design Guidelines for Infill Development in Established Low-Rise Residential Neighbourhoods**, regarding lot frontage, "in the case of lot creation, new lots should be equal to or exceed the frontages of the adjacent nearby and facing lots. The frontage of the city-owned lot is approximately 75 ft. The frontage of the property at 219 McMorran Crescent east of the lot is about 53 ft; the frontage of the property at 266 Tansley Road west of the lot is about 44 ft. If the City were to sub-divide its one lot, the resulting frontage of the two new lots would be considerably less than the frontage of the adjacent lots. I would, therefore, strongly suggest that the City of Vaughan consider either one house and a pedestrian walkway, or perhaps more fittingly, a parkette and a pedestrian walkway. Given that the City will be receiving "cash-in-lieu of parkland dedication" from the developers, these funds could then benefit the very residents of the neighbourhood who have helped this community thrive for so many years.

With regard to the City's stipulation that the developer contribute to additional improvements and enhancements to the existing walkway on Tansley Road west of the Mullen T-intersection, I would respectfully ask that planners in consultation with York Regional Police experts carefully consider the safety of the walkway as it presently exists. With an opening on the east side of the stone wall about halfway between Tansley Road and Clark Avenue, leading into the parking lot of the Aish Hatorah Synagogue (three photos attached), there exists a risk for someone to lurk behind the wall on either side of the opening, a situation that would be even more dangerous when the building and its surrounding parking lot are unlit. An endangered pedestrian would be far from the entrance/exit points so might not be heard or seen if s/he were attacked.

As noted in the City of Vaughan's *Centre Street Urban Design Streetscape* document,

*"Connections are the potential aspects ... that serve to strengthen and enhance the physical linkages within and between Urban Character Areas, as well as to the surrounding neighbourhoods. Although vehicular movement is accommodated, the emphasis of the Urban Design Framework and supporting Guidelines is on greatly improving the pedestrian experience, with respect to convenience, safety, comfort*



*and visual appeal. In doing so, a culture of walking can be encouraged and nurtured so as to support transit use, stimulate foot traffic within and from surrounding areas, and create a vibrant street life ... while enhancing the sense of safety and security."*

After reading through so many of the documents that the City of Vaughan has published and posted on its website, it is evident that Vaughan has a clear vision for *our* future. As we continue to move through this process together, I would hope that the City truly takes into the consideration the needs of *all* of its residents and follows the guidelines that it has put into place after careful thought and investigation by its professionals.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Gail Blackman

██████ Eddy Green Court

Thornhill, Ontario

L4J 2S5

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Photos: Walkway between Tansley Road and Clark Avenue:



Walkway looking north



Walkway looking south



Opening in Walkway walk adjacent to Aish Hatorah