
Subject: FW: Finance, Administration and Audit Commi

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COMMUNICATION	
FAA -	<u>February 29/16</u>
ITEM -	<u>5</u>

From: Richard Lorello <rlorello@rogers.com>

Sent: Wednesday, February 24, 2016 10:52 AM

To: Bevilacqua, Maurizio; Carella, Tony; Iafrate, Marilyn; DeFrancesca, Rosanna; Rosati, Gino; Racco, Sandra; Di Biase, Michael; Shefman, Alan; Ferri, Mario; Abrams, Jeffrey; Steven Delduca; MacKenzie, John; Kanellakos, Steve

Reply To: Richard Lorello

Cc: Noor Javed; Adam Martin-Robbins; Craig, Suzanne

Subject: Finance, Administration and Audit Committee, Report No. 4 - Item # 5

COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH VAUGHAN OFFICIAL PLAN 2010

Good morning Mr. Abrams, Members of Council and City Staff

Please post my comments as a matter of public record regarding this item.

I am writing to you to express my deepest concerns and outrage regarding the costs incurred to date related to the 2010 Vaughan Official Plan. It is now public knowledge that the taxpayers of Vaughan have paid \$18 million related to the 2010 Vaughan Official Plan and the costs continue to mount. I am asking for a review of this process that the review be held in conjunction with the province of Ontario.

As you are aware the Vaughan Official Plan 2010 is yet to be approved by higher levels of government and is under constant appeal at the Ontario Municipal Board. As a result there is no end in site to these costs. The development community, the City of Vaughan and the Province of Ontario all share a responsibility in what is now considered to be a broken planning process where official plans are not only disrespected, but leave the taxpayers with the outrageous costs at the local level and sky rocketing debt at the regional level. Vaughan residents are reaching a boiling point and have stated to myself on many occasions that this is completely unacceptable and irresponsible and cries out for questions to be answered.

The Vaughan Official Plan 2010 is not just a planning document. It is a Vision of our city going forward. The process engaged many residents and stakeholders. Compromises were made through the development process of the Official Plan that were agreed to and enshrined within the official plan at great cost. Yet we continue to see our Vision cast aside and replaced with the very undesirable development that is coming before council to date.

The Vaughan Official Plan, much like other official plans across the province continues to be treated and viewed as documents that are not worth the paper they are written on.

Residents continue to see that the official plan fails to protect many aspects of their communities that they hold dear, such as our heritage districts and natural heritage networks. Residents continue to be threatened by development that is not compatible within their existing neighbourhoods in which they have lived and enjoyed for decades. Residents continue to see reckless development, approved by Vaughan Council, such as development over known and contaminated brownfields.

That said we now wake up this morning to the deeply disturbing City of Vaughan report that taxpayers will pay in excess of \$18 million for a document that fails to protect our interests and where costs continue to mount.

Let us bear in mind that the development community continues to disrespect the Vaughan Official Plan, putting forward development applications that more times than not, far exceeds the height and density outlined in the Official Plan and threatens environmentally sensitive lands governed by Greenbelt and Oak Ridges moraine legislation.

Let us also bear in mind that Vaughan Council continues to approve development that exceeds the height and density outlined in the official plan and continues to entertain development on environmentally sensitive land with motions aimed at undermining provincial Greenbelt and Oak Ridges Moraine legislation. All of this is costing us millions and fails to protect our interests. Why is this allowed to persist?

Last week, I watched in horror as Vaughan Council moved forward with a motion to approve the original Schedule 2 of the Natural Heritage Network which is part of the Vaughan Official Plan. This was done even after a scathing letter http://www.vaughan.ca/council/minutes_agendas/Communications/CL0216-16_C10.pdf sent from Municipal Affairs and Housing stating that the City of Vaughan was not in compliance or conforming with Ontario planning legislation by not adopting staff recommendations with respect to the updated City of Vaughan Natural Heritage Network.

This was also done after the deputy city manager of planning, John Mackenzie stated emphatically that the schedule in question was flawed and must be replaced with a modified schedule that was more accurate and arrived at after substantial consensus of the development community, thus avoiding millions in OMB appeal costs to the taxpayers of this city. Mr. Mackenzie also stated that moving forward with the original schedule would compromise his planning code of ethics. Yet 6 members of Council defied Mr. Mackenzie's professional recommendations.

If the deputy city manager of planning felt that adopting the original schedule would be unethical, does that not imply that those 6 council members who voted in favor of approving the Natural Heritage Network schedule behaved unethically by recklessly disregarding the advice of the City's professional planners and adopting a document known to be flawed and inaccurate? It is my opinion that 6 councillors should be the subject of a code of conduct investigation by the City's Integrity Commissioner.

With all of this in mind, is it not reasonable to understand how Vaughan residents have lost faith and confidence in Council's ability to act in the public interest on planning matters? Council has an obligation as stated in the Municipal Act to act in the public interest.

**Sincerely
Richard T. Lorello**