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Subject: Committee of the Whole (Working Session)

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COMMUNICATION
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ITEM - 1

Item 1- Vaughan Civic Centre Resource Library – Ward 1

I read the Vaughan Civic Centre Resource Library report with much interest and am including my thoughts for tomorrow's discussion. I am sorry I will be unable to attend however I am hoping that one of my colleagues will please get the answers to my questions before voting on this important issue. Several questions jumped to mind which I will identify below. The two most significant issues I have with this Vaughan Civic Centre Resource Library are the design and the potential cost. I was also wondering what type of project management process will be implemented for this project.

The report indicates that there are no economic impacts associated with the recommendation because the recommendation is just to receive, however the report clearly identifies that there has been a cost consultant estimate that identified a need for an additional 2 million dollars for construction. The report indicates that the tender will indicate alternate and provisional items that might contain the budget excess, however any funding shortfall will be addressed in a future report. The report does not mention any contingency. This is beginning to look a bit like the past process with the current City Hall. I am not happy just moving this along when we clearly have a design that is not traditional and may end up costing us even more than the construction cost estimate. We are already impacted from the cost overruns on the current City Hall and do not have excess funds to throw at this project. We should not be moving this forward until we have a good understanding of the cost of this project and what it will take to manage to budget and ensure we have the funds available, including a contingency, otherwise we should significantly change the design to be more cost conservative.

I have several issues with the design. I thought we were designing a Civic Centre campus on a linear design with the showcase building being the City Hall at the east end of the promenade. I fail to see how this building has a design that optimally integrates the facility into the Civic Centre complex (as mentioned in the Financial Considerations section). What elements integrate the facility? It seems to me that the design is a higher financial risk design because of its unique features. Should we not have been looking for a more conservative design to ensure that it would come in at, or under, budget because of our recent extensive City Hall overrun. I am also struggling to see how this design fits in with the design guidelines for the Maple Heritage district. If we are forcing other developers to adhere to the guidelines; why not us? Should we not be leading by example?

I would like to know what the Design Review Panel issues were with the design. I noted in the report that the panel was supportive overall, but I want to know what their issues were.

I am concerned with two design features that I believe may be problematic. I can't be sure from the schemes provided, however I believe that having so much glass west and south facing will be problematic even though the glass is sloped in to provide an overhang. We should be including glass coatings that block the summer heat rays and keep in the internal heat in the winter. This type of coating will add more cost to the construction but will save heat and air conditioning costs over the years. I have recently had new windows installed in my house with the coatings and it works wonders. I am also concerned about the open centre garden section. This is a very energy wasteful element. If the area was an enclosed atrium with large plants it would make more sense and could be used year round. This will probably add more cost upfront but will save energy costs over time and be a more useful space.

Overall I am very concerned with this design and do not see how this is in keeping with the vision for our Civic Centre Campus or how we can continue to support this design knowing it is already over budget, with a more risky design, and apparently no contingency. I personally cannot support this, especially given the past experience with the Civic Centre.

Sincerely,

Deb Schulte

Local and Regional Councillor

City of Vaughan