

**York Region Planning Department
DEPUTATION JUNE 11th, 2008
O.P.A. #661**

**Good afternoon Chair,
And Members of the York Region Planning Department**

My name is Ron Moro, and I live at 61 Tasha Court, and my family was actually the first purchaser of a home in the first residential development south of HWY #7 off Kipling 18 years ago.

The community has grown and flourished over the years to become a tightly knit community of 441 families that due to the surrounding geographical features are virtually land locked. In any event, the community has flourished and in fact, we host one of the largest street party's in Vaughan each year. This opportunity to be part of a vibrant community was only possible because of the careful strategic planning and re-development of the previously designated farm land. It was the vision of great politicians, planners, and proud developers that provided us the opportunity to establish our roots and raise our families in a growing city. So I'm a strong supporter of reasonable and safe development otherwise our community would not of existed.

But, in today's world we are all faced with different challenges; increasing fuel prices, increasing population growth, and the need for affordable housing for our youth and seniors if we want them to remain in Vaughan. So I'm in favor, as I think you are all in favor, of the Provincial mandate to re-develop in order to foster intensification and establish in the long run a higher order of public transit. Our community has supported safe and reasonable intensification projects within the OPA #661 corridor. For example,

- the three storey townhouse development just east of Bruce Street**
- the development of the cosmetic hospital lands under a Special Policy Area**
- the proposed development of two ten storey buildings on existing commercial designated lands**

If we all agree with the Provincial mandate, then we all must also agree with the simple planning recommendations outlined by the Province when implementing new Official Planning Amendments.

The City of Vaughan Planning Department and the City of Vaughan Council have recently approved modifications to the OPA #661 which I think that the vast majority of the neighborhood supports. Having said that, we are of the opinion that the Provincial basic planning requirements have not been fully satisfied, which ultimately will threaten the safety and stability of our community.

Firstly, do not disrupt existing stable low density properties. Two low density properties have been included for re-development. This will establish an undesirable precedent which will lead to future challenges requiring decisions by the OMB.

Secondly, ensure that there exists a continuous parallel east-west collector road 200m north and south of the proposed Avenue Seven as an alternative route for the inevitable traffic congestion. Kipling Avenue does not extend to Steeles, as a result there is no continuous east-west collector road off Kipling Avenue, furthermore, in all likelihood funding will not be made available to construct such an extension

Thirdly, ensure there exists a transit node, ie. east-west and north-south public transit.

There is no existing north-south public transit on Kipling Avenue.

Fourthly, the Hierarchy of Centres chart clearly indicates that a critical piece of the intensification puzzle is the construction of a higher order of transit, ie. Light Rail Transit.

The stretch of HWY #7 between Rainbow Creek to Bruce Street has unique geographic features and as a result the construction of the LRT may not be feasible, as such, a critical piece of the intensification puzzle will be missing from this area.

If you take the time to tour our neighborhood, you will clearly acknowledge the unique geographical features along this stretch of the proposed Avenue Seven, which do not exist anywhere else within the OPA #661 corridor;

1) This is the only stretch of HWY #7 that is reduced to two lanes in each direction, resulting in a bottleneck of traffic congestion.

2) The Kipling & HWY #7 intersection is small and geographically irregular, actually sitting on a winding section of road with several hills before and after the intersection. In fact, the Province has not listed this intersection as a key location for intensification.

It is my understanding that no level of government is planning to allocate funds to adjust the unique geographic features of this intersection or this stretch of HWY #7. The 441 families residing south of HWY #7 off Kipling will forever remain land locked and the existing traffic congestion will worsen over time, and actually it will securely screw a cork into the bottleneck. Our stable neighborhood will be disrupted, and the safety and wellbeing of our family members will be threatened if emergency services are ever delayed responding to a call.

A few questions have to be asked:

- Why has the northwest quadrant of the Kipling & HWY #7 intersection been limited to a four storey height whereas the southwest and southeast quadrant, where the greatest challenges exist have not been equitably and fully protected with similar maximum building height restrictions?**
- Has there been a comprehensive study of the effects of intensification specifically for this stretch of HWY #7 been prepared?**
- Has a tertiary plan been completed?**
- Do we want to create another Yonge & Sheppard? New residents may be required to sign an agreement acknowledging traffic congestion. Or do we want Vaughan to remain “The City Above Toronto”.**

We respectfully request that York Region support the modified OPA #661, but at the same time address the concerns of our residents and the recommendations of the Ward 2 Sub-Committee to fully satisfy the planning principals as recommended by the Provincial mandate.

1) That all existing low density designated property be protected by the residential boundary line

2) That the unique geographical features and limitations of the stretch of the proposed Avenue Seven between Rainbow Creek to Bruce Street be recognized, and that it be designated a Special Policy Area. Whereby intensification is limited to a maximum building height which is very sound and reasonable.

This further modification will truly strike a balance that will support and not jeopardize intensification goals or future transit initiatives, while at the same time being sensitive to the existing 441 stable residential properties that are virtually land locked.

Once again thank you for allowing me to address the York Region Planning Department on the modified OPA #661. We remind each of you that this modified OPA has only been adopted by the City of Vaughan, it is not carved in stone.

Thank you!!!!

**Ron Moro
(905) 850-4658**