



CONCORD WEST SENIORS CLUB

7575 Keele Street, Unit #5, Concord, ON, L4K 4X3
Telephone No.: 905-669-2012

June 9, 2010

Honorable Brad Duguid
Ministry of Energy and Infrastructure
900 Bay Street, 4th Floor
Hearst Block
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2E3

Re.: Petition to transfer ORC land to TRCA to protect threatened ecological niche, and restore rightful access of Concord West residents to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark and the Glen Shields community.

Dear Sir:

As you will appreciate from the attached memorandum detailing the existing, persisting and urgent problems adversely affecting the Concord West community *for over 15 years now*, we have come to you to request the help of your office in resolving these problems. We are turning to you because *only you have the required jurisdiction over the Ontario Realty Corporation (ORC)*, presently the owner of a plot of land (marked in red on the attached map) which (1) constitutes a threatened ecological niche and, at the same time is (2) the key to the solution of the problems presently affecting the Concord West community.

The simple solution to both the persistent problems presently affecting the Concord West community, and the threat posed to the ecological niche in question by the current plan to locate a GO Train parking lot there (as is detailed in paragraph b of page 5 of the Terms of Reference to the Concord West Urban Design Streetscape Master Plan Study – per the attached City of Vaughan Council Meeting Minutes of April 30, 2010) is to transfer the land in question to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (1) for purposes of its amalgamation with the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark, AND (2) to restore the rightful and presently denied direct access of the Concord West residents to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark and the Glen Shields community.

The undersigned come hereby to request you to effectuate the requested transfer.

Teresa Panezutti
Vice President
Concord West Seniors Club

per
Josephine Mastrodicasa
President, Concord West Seniors Club

Copy: Brian Denney
/Encl.

Josephine Mastrodicasa President 905-669-4015	Teresa Panezutti Vice-President 905-669-9337	Christina Postiglione Treasurer 905-669-2585	Julie Seemann Secretary 905-669-2790	Directors Mario Bonfini 905-669-4880	Giovanna Colavecchia 905-738-5403	Gabriele Di Norscia 905-738-0207	Wanda Foggia 905-669-6720	Natalina Miranda 905-669-1739	Gisela Walch 905-669-2756
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Background of the problem

1. Concord West community residents are denied their rights of access to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark, as well as to the Glen Shields community.

Since 1954 the residents of Concord West have had a right of easement for purposes of pedestrian and bicycle access to what is now known as the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark, as well as to what is now known as the Glen Shields community.

With the construction of Highway #407, this access was effectively denied to the residents of Concord West, leaving them boxed in between Keele Street to the west, Highway #7 to the north, the CN railway to the east and the 407 to the south.

Despite previous and repeated efforts by the Concord West community and its members to establish effective access, as is their right, to this day, the community remains without it. In 1992, before the construction of Highway #407, then Mayor and Councillor were requested to intervene on behalf of our community (see attached letters, attachments #1 - #7)), but despite their positive response no action was taken.

Again, in 1999 and 2002, efforts were made by the Concord Ratepayers Association to effectively re-establish the exercise of the community's right of easement, but no answer came from Mayor.

Not only has this situation not been resolved to this day – effectively denying the residents as to the Glen Shields community, but this has put an unacceptable burden on the quality of life of the residents of the Concord West community, especially on seniors who are unable to enjoy green space areas and nature trails traditionally available to them. Likewise, bikers, hikers and joggers do not have safe access to those public green spaces. This is intolerable situation that has now dragged on for over 15 years.

2. A threatened ecological community

Moreover, it has come to the attention of the residents of the Concord West and Glen Shields communities that the area marked in red on the attached map titled "Concord West Urban Design Guidelines" serves as ecological community for a variety of (attachment #8) threatened wildlife. It is ecologically part of the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark system and is the spring migration home of the chestnut-sided warbler, white-throated sparrow, herons and mallards, and may other bird species. It is also the permanent habitat of hawks, beavers and white-tailed deer (see attached pictures taken on the very land in question). More recently, our community members identified several families of deer (see attached pictures) living in the same red-marked area on the attached map titled "Concord West Urban Design Guidelines." The area in question is a plot of land presently owned by the Ontario Realty Corporation and is presently slotted to become a parking lot for GO transit.

3. An unacceptable proposed Master Plan Study

In January 2007, in its adopted Pedestrian and Bicycle Masterplan Study, the City of Vaughan Repeatedly acknowledged the rights of access and circulation of all Vaughan communities. In February 2010, this Master Plan was approved. In contrast to this, and according to the Terms of Reference of the Concord West Urban Design Streetscape Master Plan Study presently under way, the plan is:

1) *To locate all pedestrian and bicycle accesses* to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark, as well as to the Glen Shields community *on the strip* (in yellow, see map) bordering on the sought side Highway #7. This means that the Concord West community will not have direct access to the ecoway. Instead, community residents will have to travel through the busiest traffic way in Vaughan in order to gain access. This is particularly onerous, if not impossible, for seniors.

2) *To locate* the facilities of a Concord GO Centre station so as to encompass *the same south side strip* (page 5 of attachment #2 of the Terms of Reference of the Concord West Urban Design Streetscape Master Plan Study, March 23, 2010).

3) *To locate a Concord GO Centre parking lot on the land marked in red which adjoins the Highway #407 to the south.*, This land actually falls outside of the jurisdiction of the Master Plan Study. This proposal is unacceptable to our community, which is already landlocked by vehicular traffic and pollution on all sides: from Keele Street to the west, the busiest roadway (Highway #7) to the north and Highway #407 to the east and south. Such parking lot will only add to the vehicular and heavy truck traffic.

All of the above three planning features of the Terms of Reference of the Concord West Urban Design Streetscape Master Plan Study, March 23, 2010 are unacceptable to the residents of the Concord West community.

It is unacceptable that the residents, and especially the seniors, of the Concord West community must be obliged to walk or bike through the traffic-laden Highway #7 south side access strip in order to reach the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark, as well as to reach the Glen Shields community, when the Concord West community used to border the lands of the said Greenway, and still does so on the red marked area of the attached map.

It is further unacceptable that the Concord GO Centre station parking lot be located south of Highway #7, rather than north of the same highway, or further north still on Rivermede Road. This will lock in our community with vehicular traffic on all four sides.

Finally, it is completely unacceptable that a precious, endangered wildlife resource be paved over with another car parking lot. In this day and age, this is **totally unacceptable**.

Solution to the existing Concord West problems

The simple solution to the problems of access, currently denied, of Concord West residents to the surrounding green spaces, and to the current threat posed to the ecological niche in the land adjoining to the east, the Concord West community is:

1) To request the Province of Ontario to transfer the land presently owned by the Ontario Realty Corporation to the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority for purposes of its amalgamation with the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark AND in order to restore presently denied and rightful direct access of the Concord West residents to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark and the Glen Shields community.

2) To provide the residents of the Concord West community direct access to the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark and the Glen Shields community by building an underground passageway located at the end of Rockview Gardens, that will run beneath the existing CN line. This should be accompanied by the proper fencing in of the CN railway line to protect the Concord West residents.

Concord West Seniors Club

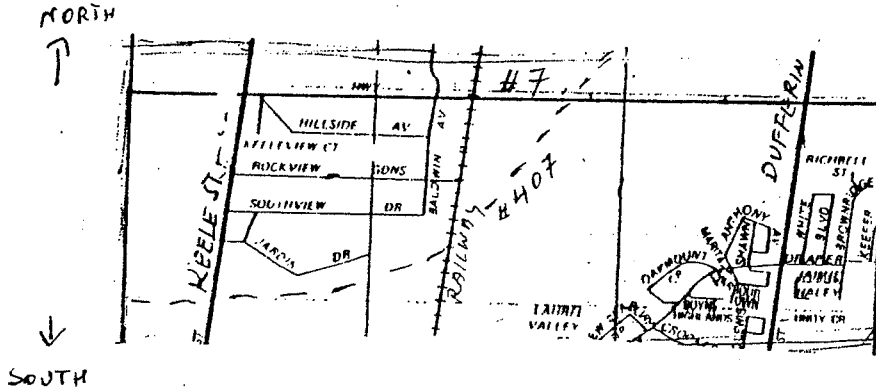
May 15, 2010

AKGh (1)

LETTER TO MAYOR & COUNCILLOR - 1992

Re: Hwy #407 at Concord West

As planned, Hwy #407 will soon be built to the South and East of the Concord West Community.



As shown on the map above, our community is completely surrounded by roads (ie. Hwy #7 and Keele St.) with heavy traffic and a functional railway. The only feasible safe exit for recreational pedestrians and bicyclers to and from the community, is across the railway track and along the Don River which connects to Glen Shields where a bicycle path finally begins.

Daily, residents from this community cross the fields in order to reach Glen Shields in the hopes of using their facilities (ie bicycle paths, walking paths, parks, etc.)

Upon completion of Hwy #407, Glen Shields will no longer be accessible to our residents and thus the Concord Community will be cut off from those Glen Shields facilities available to us now.

As of this moment, the Concord Community itself does not provide bicycle, or walking paths. In essence, seclusion is inevitable due to the construction of Hwy #407. We, the residents of Concord West urge you to consider and plan to provide us either an under-pass or over-pass crossing Hwy #407, in order to allow the link to remain open.

Yours truly

Teresa Panezutti

TERESA PANEZUTTI
54 ROCKVIEW GRDNS
CONCORD, ONT.
L4K-2J6
669-9337

LORNA D. JACKSON
MAYOR



26
CITY OF VAUGHAN
CIVIC CENTRE
2141 MAJOR MACKENZIE DRIVE
MAPLE, ONTARIO L6A 1T1
(416) 832-2281

February 3, 1992

Ms. Teresa Panezutti
54 Rockview Gardens
Concord, Ontario
L4K 2J6

Dear Mrs. Panezutti:

I understand that Mr. W.E. Robinson has responded directly to you regarding your enquiry about a walkway system to cross Highway 407.

Our Recreation Department is planning for future walkway systems across the City which, in general, would follow the valley systems. These walkways would cross Highway 407 generally in the areas where structures are required to carry the highway across the valley.

Discussions will be arranged through the Recreation Department with the Ministry of Transportation of Ontario with respect to maximizing opportunities for these walkway connections across the highway.

I trust this answers your question. If there is any further information that you require, please let me know.

Yours truly,

Lorna Jackson
Lorna D. Jackson
Mayor

:hr



RECEIVED
FEB 14 1992
OFFICE OF
MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
CITY OF VAUGHAN

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 12, 1992
TO: MARIO G. RACCO
COUNCILLOR
FROM: G. DORIS HAIST
COMMISSIONER OF RECREATION & CULTURE
RE: AVAILABILITY OF GLEN SHIELDS FACILITIES
FOR CONCORD WEST RESIDENTS
OUR FILE: MP-18

Thank-you for your letter requesting information regarding the above noted subject. It would seem that Ms. Teresa Panezutti has written directly, not only to the Mayor but also to other members of Council and individual staff. My Parks Planning and Development Manager has also received a copy of this letter. He responded directly to Ms. Panezutti on January 6, 1992, (please see attached). Also enclosed, are copies of letters to the Mayor and Ms. Panezutti from Mr. Bill Robinson, Director of Engineering.

I am also pleased to inform you that Mr. Robinson and Mr. D. Lunardo, Manager of Parks Planning & Development have arranged a meeting with the Ministry of Transportation (see attached notice) to discuss pedestrian underpasses associated with the proposed Highway #407. We shall be pleased to keep you informed once more information becomes available.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact myself or Domenic Lunardo.

G. Doris Haist
per G.L.

G. Doris Haist
Commissioner of Recreation & Culture

DL/cg

c.c. Mayor and Members of Council
Scott Somerville
John Stevens
Bill Robinson
Domenic Lunardo



MARIO G. RACCO
Councillor (Ward 3)

February 17, 1992

Mrs. Teresa Panezutti
54 Rockview Gardens
Concord, Ontario
L4K 2J6

Dear Mrs. Panezutti:

Further to your letter, please find enclosed a copy of a memorandum from Doris Haist, Commissioner of Recreation and Culture, with regard to the availability of Glen Shields facilities for residents in Concord West.

The enclosed is self-explanatory, and I understand that Mr. Lunardo has responded directly to you.

When I receive further information, I will be pleased to forward same to you.

In the meantime, should you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call me.

Sincerely yours,

for Mario G. Racco
Councillor

/rf
Encl.



MEMORANDUM

January 29, 1992

Ms. Teresa Panezutti
54 Rockview Gardens
Concord, Ontario
L4K 2J6

Dear Ms. Panezutti:

RE: Highway #407 at Concord West

Your letter regarding a walkway connection across Highway No. 407 in the area of your community has been referred to us for follow up. We have discussed the matter with the Recreation Department and understand that they have responded to you in this regard.

This matter is being followed up with the Ministry of Transportation. Highway 407 plans include a bridge across the West Don River and we expect that there may be an opportunity to accommodate pedestrian traffic under the highway at this location.

We will continue to pursue the matter in cooperation with the City's Recreation Department staff and will keep the Mayor and members of Council as well as yourself informed.

Yours very truly,

W. E. Robinson, P. Eng.
Director of Engineering

WER/inb

cc Mayor L. D. Jackson
Regional Councillor Michael DiBiase
S. C. Somerville, C.A.O.
G. W. Todd, P. Eng.,
Commissioner of Public Works and Utilities
G. D. Haist, Commissioner of Recreation and Culture

Concord West Ratepayers Association
1999-06-04

10 (6)
1999

**To Her Honour - Madame Mayor Lorna Jackson,
To our elected representative Mario Racco,
And to all other members of Vaughan City Council:**

We last wrote Council on this matter several years ago (*1992 in fact – copy of original letter from that time attached*).

Our concern at that time was the anticipated segregation and isolation that would occur in our community after the construction of the ETR Highway 407. We requested some means of continued access to areas traditionally available to us – the green spaces, parks, walkways and bike paths contained between and shared with the Glen Shields community. We also wanted the continued interaction and familiarity between the members of that community and ours (*Concord West*).

Our request at that time was very simple – don't cut off and isolate our community by denying us access to recreational facilities traditionally available to us, and still available to other Vaughan residents in the Glen Shields community.

We were denied our request at that time, and although the passage of time has shown our fears were valid, we have attempted to manage as best we can.

The open fields to the East of our community were the traditional access between our communities (*please see map included*). They have continued to be used for that purpose, so much so that there are prominent routes and footpaths leading through from one side to the other. It does however require walking a section of large boulders placed next to the Don River creek under the ETR highway. This has eliminated access for all but the physically fit. Still it is heavily used as evidenced by the footpaths.

In order to access the fields to or from our community it is necessary to cross over a Railway right of way and 2 sets of tracks. Some time ago (about 2 years), the Rail authority erected a large locked gate at the East end of Rockview Gardens. This provided no further prohibitions to pedestrians, merely preventing motor vehicles from entering onto railway property, and we were unconcerned about it.

Recently however, the developer of a 23 home subdivision on the North side of Rockview Gardens between Baldwin Ave. and Hartley Court has erected fences around his development and up to the railway gateposts. **THIS HAS TOTALLY ELIMINATED ANY ACCESS TO THIS GREENSPACE AND THEREFORE TO THE RECREATIONAL FACILITIES FORMERLY SHARED WITH GLEN SHIELDS.** It is obvious from the construction erected, that this closure will be **PERMANENT**.

We have managed as best we could for as long as we could. There are 243 homes in our Community with another 23 being built as this is written. We have no sidewalks out of

Concord West Ratepayers Association

2002-11-03

12 (7)
2002

**To His Honour –
To our elected representative
And to all other members of**

**Mayor Michael DiBiase,
Mario Racco,
Vaughan City Council:**

We last wrote Council on this matter several years ago (*1992 in fact*) as well as again in 1999 (*copy of that letter attached*).

* Our concern throughout was the anticipated segregation and isolation that would occur in our community after the construction of the ETR Highway 407. We requested some means of continued and safe access to areas traditionally available to us – the green spaces, parks, walkways and bike paths contained between and shared with the Glen Shields community. We also wanted the continued interaction and familiarity between the members of that community and ours (*Concord West*).

* Our request at that time was very simple – don't cut off and isolate our community by denying us access to recreational facilities traditionally available to us, and still available to other Vaughan residents in the Glen Shields community.

At that time our request was ignored, and although the passage of time has shown our fears were valid, we have attempted to manage as best we can.

* Since we last wrote regarding this matter, 2 new subdivisions have been built adding some 45 residences to our locked-in community. A large fence has been built by the developers around these homes blocking access to the open fields to the East, (and also preventing children from crossing the rail lines).

As responsible citizens and parents, we concur with the need to ensure the safety of our children, and applaud efforts to do so. In fact the Ratepayer's Association has been active in requesting that the railway gateposts are properly secured and locked. It has been necessary for us to monitor the gates and fences due to unknown persons attempting to access the green belt and removing or damaging locks and fences.

* The open fields to the East of our community were the traditional access between our community and Glen Shields, (*please see map included*). They have continued to be used for that purpose, despite the attempts to keep children from crossing the rail lines. There continues to be evident prominent routes and footpaths leading through from one side to the other. It is obvious that the measures being used in an attempt to keep our children safe, are being defeated by the residents' desire to access the greenbelt.

There are now approximately 287 homes in our Community. We have no sidewalks out of our community, and therefore no pedestrian access. It is extremely dangerous to attempt to use a bicycle to access our community (have any of you driven Highway 7 near Keele St. lately?. This is the most heavily used intersection in Vaughan). This means

Concord West Ratepayers Association

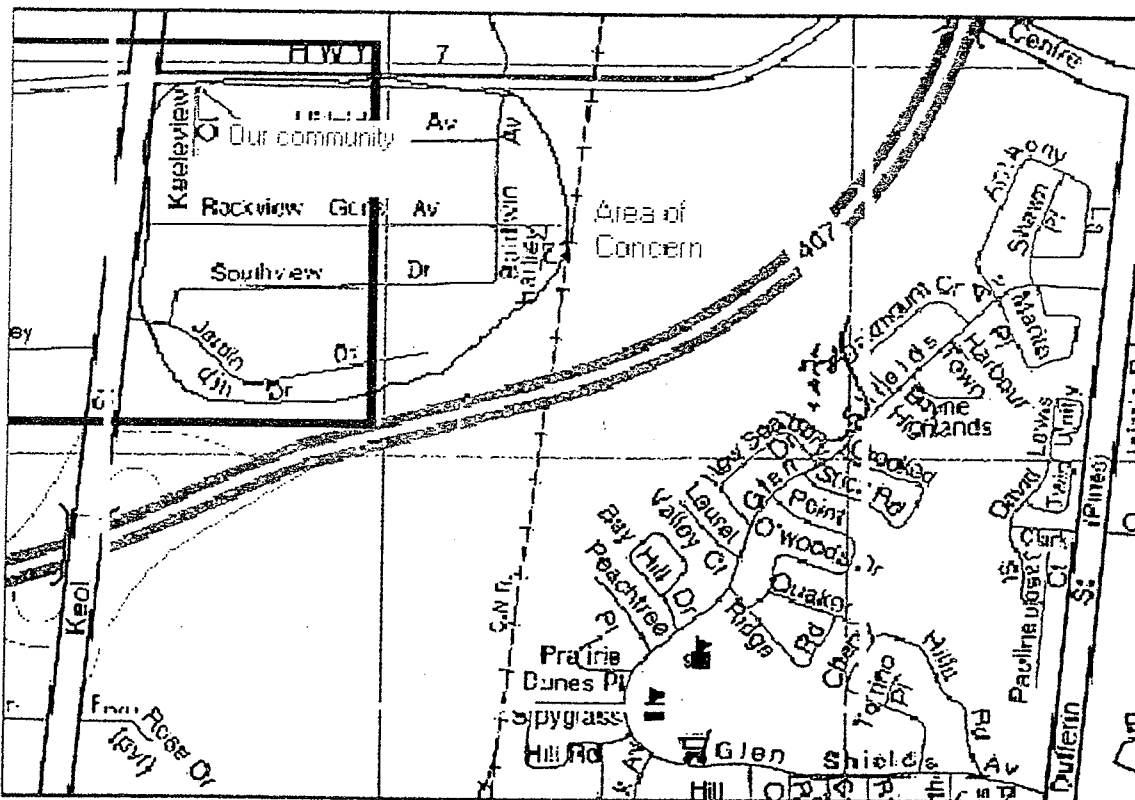
2002-11-03

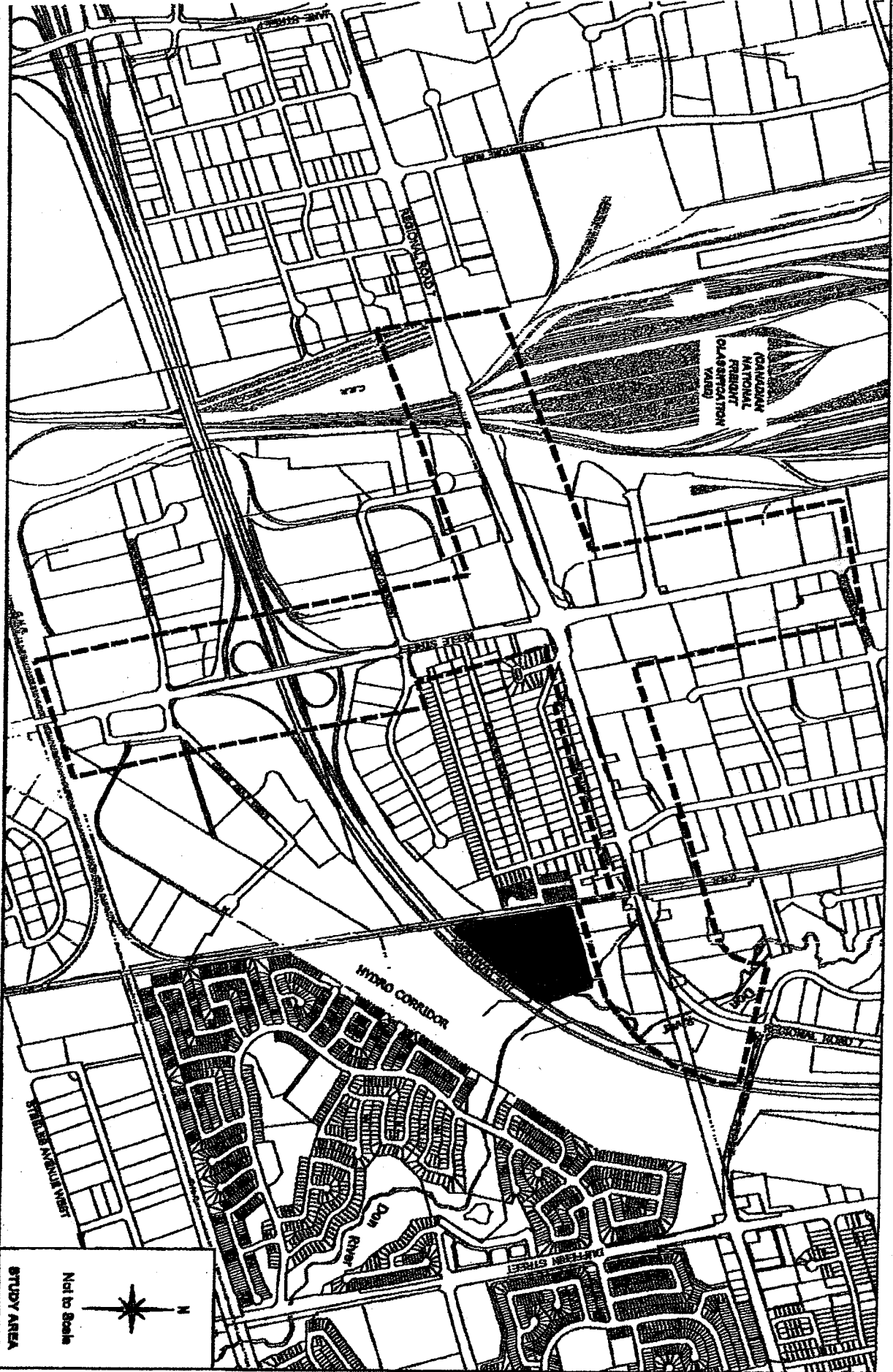
the ONLY access to our community is by motor vehicle. We have NO environmentally friendly options available to us.

This is unacceptable, and in our opinion intolerable. This matter is extremely important and urgent to us as a community, and we are once again requesting it be addressed by Council. We understand that at the Annual General Meeting of the Concord West Ratepayers Association, there will be an environmental speaker attempting to involve the residents in planting of trees and shrubbery along the 407 and addressing other issues along the West Don River. How ironic that we will be asked to participate in an environmental program for an area to which we are continually denied any access at all.

Ideally, and civically most beneficial would be a walkway all residents could use (including the elderly or those handicapped residents in the newly approved long term care homes placed in our community). At a minimum we require a means of *safe passage* to cross to the other side of the railway lines. It would be irresponsible to isolate our community and deny us our traditional access to the PUBLIC green spaces, PUBLIC walkways, PUBLIC bike paths, etc. when the solution would be beneficial not only to our community, but to the residents of Glen Shields, and any other Vaughan residents that the increased area and facilities might attract as well.

We are formally asking by means of this letter, as an Association – *The Concord West Ratepayers Association*, representing over 500 voters in our community, that Council and our elected representative meet with our Board of Directors and seek a solution to this long standing problem as soon as possible.





Concord West Urban Design Guidelines

Applicant: City of Vaughan
 Location: Part of Lots 2 - A
 Concession: s 3 & 4

Map/plan/General Map: Streetscape/Commercial Inter: Streetscape



The City Above Toronto
 Development Planning Department

Attachment

File: 14.03
 Date: March 3, 2010



