

Ministry of
Transportation



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February 1, 2011

Ms. Sandra Yeung Racco
Councillor, Thornhill/Concord
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive,
Vaughan, ON
L6A 1T1

RECEIVED

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WARD 4, COUNCIL OFFICE

Dear Councillor Yeung Racco:

RE: 407 Transitway from Highway 400 to Kennedy Road Environmental Project Report

We are in receipt of your letters of October 28, 2010 and January 23, 2011. We hope that this letter will help alleviate the community as well as your concerns while allowing the project to embark on its strategic initiative in implementing regional transit for the benefit of all.

The Ministry of Transportation has been planning and protecting land for the 407 Transitway over the past two decades. The Planning/Preliminary Design Environmental Assessment study was initiated by the Ministry in March, 2007. The study has been carried out with the participation of City of Vaughan staff and has included presentations to Vaughan Committee of the Whole prior to the two sets of Public Open Houses. The Plans for the Concord Transitway station were presented at these occasions.

Following completion of this phase of the study which incorporated the extensive stakeholder and municipal input and discussion, MTO issued a notice on August 29, 2010 that the EA was being transitioned to the new Transit Project Assessment Process to begin the statutory six month process period. As required under the governing regulation, the notice of completion was issued on December 23, 2010 and the 30 day consultation period commenced, ending on January 24, 2011.

The technical advisory committee (called the Technical Resource Group for this project) included representatives from a number of agencies including the City of Vaughan, the Town of Richmond Hill, York Region and the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. These agencies participated regularly in meetings and presentations (six to date). In addition, as

mentioned, Public Information Centers were held for the project nearing the end of both Planning and Preliminary Design phases. The final public information centre was held in June of 2010 and was attended by representatives of the City of Vaughan.

Prior to these Open Houses special presentations were made to the Committee of the Whole of the City of Vaughan. These presentations, in May of 2009 and June of 2010 had shown the 407 Transitway Concord Station as a preferred station location.

The current proposed station location was first identified in the 407 Transitway Overview Study, 1989. Accordingly, property for the station has been protected for since that time.

Concerns with regard to the 407 Transitway Concord Station were first raised by the Concord West Community Association in July 2010. Since then, we have been engaged with the association and have met and exchanged correspondence related to their concerns. We have reviewed its proposals, assessed them both from an environmental, social and technical perspective, provided alternatives that were more feasible, practical and indicative of the objectives and evaluated them. This full assessment and evaluation was concluded in December 2010 and submitted officially by letter (MTO letter dated December 8, 2010) to the association and included in full detail in the Environmental Project Report.

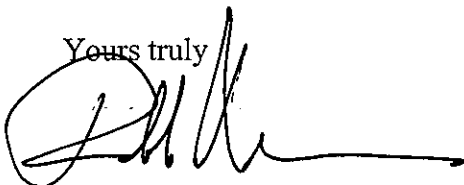
While the station could not be eliminated from its current location south of Highway 7, as requested by the association, as this would have compromised the objectives of this project, the Ministry of Transportation did commit to providing a safe and direct access through a grade separated pedestrian facility across the CN Railway to the valley lands and to improving access to the Marita Paine Park Trail via the new river crossing as requested in your letters.

A further meeting was held with the association on January 10, 2011 to review the design and address any additional concerns. It was evident at that meeting that the community maintains its interest in relocating the station to north of Highway 7. The review of this option was clearly evaluated in the EPR and found unacceptable as it does not fulfill the requirement of seamless passenger transfers between the Transitway, GO Barrie Rail line and York VIVA services identified in the Metrolinx regional transportation network.

We are aware that the City of Vaughan has embarked on an official plan process for this area. The Ministry of Transportation looks forward to working closely with the City on this plan to help meet its objectives.

I trust that this clarifies our position.

Yours truly

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Robb Minnes', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robb Minnes
Project Manager