



*Sandra Yeung Racco
Councillor*

January 23, 2011

Mr. Robb H. Minnes
Project Manager
Ministry of Transportation, Central Region
Highway Engineering, Toronto/Durham
4th Floor, Building D, 1201 Wilson Avenue
Toronto, ON, M3M 1J8

Dear Mr. Minnes:

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

Further to my letter of October 28, 2010 expressing the concerns raised by the affected community, please accept this letter as my submission in relation to the Final Environmental Project Report, but more specifically the Transitway station at Keele St./Hwy. 7, adjacent to the Concord GO Barrie Station.

As you are quite aware, there is an existing subdivision of approximately 285 homes located at the southeast corner of Keele Street and Highway #7. Furthermore, there is an extensive trail system and green space (the Bartley Smith Greenway / Langstaff Ecopark) that exist just to the east of the GO Barrie North-South line. The proximity of the proposed Highway 407 Transitway station, along with the intermodal hub with its massive parking lot and the anticipated commuter bus activities, will negatively impact on the existing residential component, as well as on the neighbouring green space and valley lands.

It has been the wish of the Concord West community to protect the Bartley Smith Greenway/Langstaff Ecopark from future development in this area. They have requested safe access to this green space from their community and the large proposed transit terminus will surely impede on the community's ability to utilize or access this natural environment.

Please understand that this Concord West neighbourhood has been in existence longer than any of the surrounding homes and industries in the area and when the area was developed, this neighbourhood became uniquely isolated from the others. Therefore it is imperative that we be sensitive to the established residential component and take extreme care when considering what development should be placed in this adjacent area.

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I must express my extreme disappointment that my request to the Minister of Transportation and the Minister of Environment for an extension of reasonable time to allow the community and the City of Vaughan to submit comments went unanswered. As you are well aware, the completion of the Environmental Project Report did not occur until Thursday, December 23, 2010, just 2 days before Christmas and in the middle of a major holiday. With the imposition of the 30 day review period, it has made it impossible for our City staff to have the opportunity to review the report in depth and to bring forward a formal report to Council for consideration before the deadline date of January 24, 2010. This has led to many unfounded accusations thrown onto the part of Council members not taking a strong position when in fact, we have not had the opportunity to receive comments from staff nor had a fulsome discussion with all members of Council on the matter.

A Secondary Plan is required to be completed for this area, and as such, I am making a formal request for MTO to commit to working closely together with the City of Vaughan and the Region of York during this phase and address all concerns raised by area residents, as well as by Council, and amend the 407 Transitway Environmental Project Report as needed based on the approved secondary plan. Additionally, I would request that during the design process stage, that the City and area residents be consulted and kept in the loop through community meetings.

I thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this ambitious project. I hope that the comments raised by myself, by City staff and other Members of Council, as well as all the comments brought forward by the Concord West Residents Ad Hoc Committee, the Concord West Seniors Club, and the Concord West Ratepayers' Association be taken seriously into consideration. We recognize the importance of this Environmental Assessment Study and understand that it is an integral element of the Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe (2006) (Growth Plan) but please ensure it is done with sensitivity with the existing community in mind.

Should you require further information or clarification on any of the above, please feel free to contact me directly.

Respectfully yours,



Sandra Racco
Councillor, Concord/Thornhill North
"For the Community"

Cc: Hon. Dalton McGuinty, Premier of Ontario
Hon. John Wilkinson, Minister of Environment
Hon. Kathleen Wynne, Minister of Transportation
Hon. Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism and Culture
Greg Sorbara, M.P.P. Vaughan
Bill Fisch, Chair, Region of York
Maurizio Bevilacqua, Mayor, City of Vaughan

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Gino Rosati, Regional Councillor, City of Vaughan
Michael DiBiase, Regional Councillor, City of Vaughan
Deb Schulte, Regional Councillor, City of Vaughan
Marilyn Iafrate, Local Councillor, Ward 1, City of Vaughan
Tony Carella, Local Councillor, Ward 2, City of Vaughan
Rosanna DeFrancesca, Local Councillor, Ward 3, City of Vaughan
Alan Shefman, Local Councillor, Ward 5, City of Vaughan
Clayton Harris, City Manager, City of Vaughan
Bill Robinson, Commissioner of Engineering Services & Public Works, City of Vaughan
John Zipay, Commissioner of Planning, City of Vaughan
Andrew Pearce, Director of Development & Transportation Engineering, City of Vaughan
Grant Uyeyama, Director of Planning, City of Vaughan
Bruce McGregor, Chief Administrative Officer
Brian Tuckey, Commissioner of Planning & Development Services, Region of York
Mary-Frances Turner, President, York Region Rapid Transit Corporation
Khaled El-Dalati, Consultant Project Manager, Delcan Corporation
George Ivanoff, Senior Environmental Planner, Ministry of Transportation
Grant N. Kauffman, Consultant Environmental Planner, LGL Limited
Lorna Zappone, Project Officer, Ministry of Environment
Loy Cheah, Director of Transportation Planning, Region of York
Dr. Paulo Correa, Chair Concord West Residents Ad Hoc Committee
Josephine Mastrodicasa, President, Concord West Seniors Club
Maria Bacchin, President, Concord West Ratepayers' Association