

June 29, 2020

Attention: Mr. Christopher Raynor, Regional Clerk – Regional Municipality of York

I am writing in opposition to the motion brought before York Regional Council on June 25, 2020 by Mayor Frank Scarpitti regarding the mandatory wearing of masks in all indoor spaces and in crowded outdoor spaces where physical distancing is not possible.

I oppose the mandate to wear masks for the following reasons:

1. The community expects politicians to act in a manner consistent with medical supporting facts, not based on feed-back from personal interest groups.
2. Making the wearing of masks mandatory may adversely affect the health of individuals who suffer from underlying medical conditions that prevent them from breathing freely through masks. It is important that such individuals remain free to make personal decisions based on direction and advice provided by their own medical professionals.
3. Imposing the mandatory use of masks looks like nothing more than an attempt by Council to address the concerns of individuals who are not completely informed as to how to properly manage the virus.
4. Some doctors and nurses are cautioning that people often wear their masks improperly placing themselves at greater risk. They don't wash their hands before putting mask on or after removing them. It is not unusual to see someone pull a mask down below his or her chin to speak or just catch their breath, and then pull it back up...the mask has now been contaminated and it is around their mouth and nose;
 - a. People will often keep a mask in their car "in case they need it". It has been sitting on the car seat or in their console...and they think it is okay to put it on their face. Is that sanitary or preventative? The mask is beyond contaminated at this point and it is impossible to know if those wearing cloth masks are washing them after each use.
5. Who will be policing the mandatory wearing of masks? Will the Region be hiring additional By-law Enforcement Officers at the taxpayers' expense?
6. I am concerned that this initiative might well give rise to some form of vigilante behaviour, or at least to disputes among citizens who have differing views on the advisability of wearing masks.

I strongly suggest that the report on mandating masks to be presented to Council on July 9, 2020 be tabled to provide an opportunity for further input from the community.

In closing, I urge members of Council to pause and not react so quickly before infringing on the rights and freedoms of our citizens in a manner that is not by any means the subject of medical consensus.

Debby Rossi, Vaughan Citizen