

DEPUTATION REQUEST

SPECIAL REGIONAL COUNCIL

SEPTEMBER 17, 2020

Subject: Request to convert lands to non-employment uses

Spokesperson: Tom Rasky

Name of Group or person(s) being represented (if applicable): Portage Landowners Group

Brief summary of issue or purpose of deputation:

Request to convert lands to non-employment uses and to recognize its location as a transitional area from the VMC to the employment use zone

OFFICE OF THE REGIONAL CLERK

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The logo for Millway, consisting of a black square with the word "Millway" in white text.

Millway Ventures Ltd., PO Box 30029 RPO Downsview, Toronto, ON M3J 3L6

September 16, 2020

Re: Application V24 - request to convert lands to non-employment uses and to recognize its location as a transitional area from the VMC to the employment use zone.

I am co-owner of 190 Millway Ave., a property that is part of the Portage Landowners Group application (V24), which requests to convert our lands to non-employment uses and to recognize its location as a transitional area from the VMC to the employment use zone. Presently, this conversion is not supported by York Region's staff and I would like to respectfully point out why I feel this decision is misguided.

The staff essentially cites two reasons for non-support. They are:

1. The conversion will put pressure to allow conversions in adjacent parcels.
2. The conversion will destabilize the area

One major key to the success of the Vaughan Municipal Centre is that the newly built bus terminal and TTC station make part of the VMC a Major Transit Station Area. Under Ontario's "A Place to Grow" initiative, a Major Transit Station Area is generally defined as the area within an approximate 500 to 800 metre radius of a transit station, representing about a 10-minute walk. It should be noted that that the TTC stop and bus terminal are not located centrally within the VMC but rather on the north end. This has pushed the transit station area radius beyond the VMC and onto our Portage Landowners Group lands. Of all the requests for conversion, only our group, as well as our direct neighbor at 201 Millway, are in the position of being within the Transit Area and not being supported. This fact alone refutes the first concern of the staff. Simply put, there are only a tiny number of properties that are within this well-defined Major Transit Station Area that could conceivably apply on these grounds in the future.

Furthermore, according to both "A Place to Grow" and York Region's own report by its Chief Planner, planning is to be prioritized for strategic growth areas which include Major Transit Station Areas. These areas have been identified as the focus for accommodating intensification and higher density mixed uses, precisely what our application seeks. The second point the staff made – that our proposal will destabilize the area – is unfounded. What is actually destabilizing is the current situation, where the radius of intensification of the Major Transit Station Area is truncated abruptly at the north end of the VMC, with large 55 storey towers going up on the south side of Portage Parkway and single storey factories on the north side of the street. A proper transitional area would respect the intensification mandate of the Province and Region around the transit hub, and by doing so, stabilize the area.

It is for these reasons, plus the important fact that the City of Vaughan is supporting our application, that we ask that staff and Council also support us.

Tom Rasky
President
Millway Ventures Ltd.