

Vaughan Committee of the Whole, September 13, 2011

Item #33: Concord Go Centre Secondary Plan Study; Approval Of Terms Of Reference

[The document referred to in the text is at
http://www.vaughan.ca/vaughan/council/minutes_agendas/committee_2011/pdf/CWA0913_33.pdf]

Deputation by Dr. Paulo Correa

Good morning (or good afternoon) Madam Chair, Honorable Mayor Bevilacqua, and all members of Council. You already know that I am Dr. Paulo Correa of 42 Rockview Gardens. I'm here representing two organizations: the Concord West Ratepayers Organization and the Concord West Ad Hoc Committee. I would like to make some comments regarding the terms of reference that are being proposed. First of all, however, I would like to register a point of complaint on the part of the community - we did not receive any notice whatsoever about this meeting. The information was transmitted to us by a private person who had received notice or has somehow been in touch enough to know the meeting was coming up - and I think that we must put a stop to this. The Concord West Ratepayers Association represents the only community in the affected zone. It is a pretty straightforward thing to make sure the ratepayers association is informed of everything that has to do with this item or others that might be of concern to the community - so, once again, I would like to register our dissatisfaction with the fact that that has not happened.

Now, I would like to essentially address some of the points in the proposed terms of reference. I intend later on to talk to Commissioner MacKenzie about other details - but I'm going to summarize. In essence, as you know, the dispute is not about the community or the businesses surrounding the community being in opposition to the construction of a GO/Metrolinx hub. This is not a 'not in my back yard' syndrome, and all of you members of this Council know this very well, since you passed a resolution - in effect, a unanimous resolution - supporting the positions of this community. However, as I go through this document, I find, in two places, language that is highly

objectionable - because it's not clear. It neither leaves the door open for an evaluation of alternatives nor does it commit to what this Council has already decided beforehand. And I'm drawing your attention to Part D - the pages are not numbered in this document, so I cannot tell you what page this is. It happens to be page 2. But Part D, the second ball point, it says there, and I read "the station will be located on the Barrie Go Rail Line in the vicinity of Highway 407" - that's OK, "vicinity" is vague enough - "abutting the east side of the track." Well that's no longer vague enough. That's actually a clear designation that it has to be located on the south side. Again, on page 4, under the description regarding the southeast parcel - and I read again - "the most southern portion of the parcel is owned by the Ministry of Transportation, and largely consists of vacant open space that is zoned for agricultural use. It is also the location of a future station in support of the 407 Transitway, as identified in a 2011 approved Ministry of Transportation Environmental Assessment." Now, I have two comments. One is that, as you know, this is *not* mostly an open space: there is a huge woodlot, and as we have drawn already to the attention of Council, even what appears in the EPR is not correct as to the dimensions of this woodlot. Furthermore, as you know very well, we are in a situation of dispute with the present decision of the Ontario government; and despite efforts by our MPP, Peter Shurman, to get a motion at Queen's Park approved, so that this land could be transferred to TRCA, that has not happened. In fact, the McGuinty government hasn't even accepted to have a meeting with us, including the Minister, Kathleen Wynne. Now, aside from the fact that this is highly undemocratic, it's much worse than that, because all of you are aware, both from our website as well as from deputations I've made to you before in Council and Committee, that no environmental study has actually been conducted on these lands. So as a matter of fact, this study is one of modelling, is a study based on projections, ilations, conjecture - but not a field study. So I suggest to you that on this business of location, either you, gentlemen and ladies, stick to your guns and tell unequivocally the Ministry that the location will not be on the south side - as your resolution of February actually stated - or that, if you are going to put in language that permits some form of an alternative evaluation, that this language be clear, and that it be dependent on the

presence of a study. Now, I know, Madam Chair, that my time is approaching; I do have a couple more things to say. Given the fact that I am speaking for two organizations, I don't know if Council wants to give me a supplement or not. [Council makes no objection to giving Dr. Correa another minute.]

You know very well that the land I am talking about is a land that has a number of considerations that have not been properly assessed. Particularly, I would like to mention to you that this is not just the green space of the Concord West community; this is actually a critical piece of land for the maintenance of the Bartley Smith Greenway. At that point, the Greenway narrows down to half the width of this Council chamber. Don't look at what's marked in here; go up on the locale, look at the fences and look at the geography. Furthermore, this land abuts the confluence of the two major tributaries of the Upper Don: the major trunk, and the major western tributary that actually collects also from the eastern tributary; and it also technically is part, or part of the this land, of the floodplane. Moreover, as you know, protected species, not just the Blanding's turtle, but others, have been indentified in there; in fact, Sierra Club is here to speak to some of that today. So I would like you to note, very clearly, that this is not an acceptable location for this community - and for the businesses around this community; and I don't understand why we persist in considering this alternative, other than through the fact that the Ministry wants to impose it. Thank you.