

**Extracts from the City of Vaughan, Committee of the Whole (Working Session)  
Tuesday, March 5, 2013**

**Item 1.**

**Concord Go Centre Secondary Plan Study Status Update**

Presentation by Planning Alliance by Emma West & Diana Birchall

Report of the Commissioner of Planning with respect to the above.

Chair: Regional Councillor Deb Schulte

The Concord West Communication 'C1' [Response to Santoloco] was unanimously voted accepted by the Council in reference to item #1

Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco raises the issue of why the north west corner of Bowes Road and Highway #7 - ie, the west side of the railway tracks - are not included in the study area.

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**Deputation by Dr. Paulo Correa**

[City rules permit only a 5 minute presentation from deputants.]

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Good morning Madam Chair and Members of the Committee. I will see if I can make my commentaries in 5 minutes – please...

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Just for the record, state your name –

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** My name is Dr. Paulo Correa. I represent the Concord West Ratepayers Association. I'll try and go and recap by the order of what we have been discussing here, beginning with Councillor Racco's commentary. And I would like you to refer to this slide, I'll use this slide as my reference.

First off, in the 30th of January meeting, four out of the five working tables basically nixed that intersection that we're talking about in there. The rationale for this intersection, as was shown in Option 1, was really to provide access to the station, the pick up, Park and Go Ride as well as the parking lot. Well, in an Option where you move the station to the north, the rationale for the south side roads disappears. We understand from Mr. Santoloco, actually, that he has an easement, or perhaps even a regional road access in there to his property which makes that entire curve that is so wasteful, unnecessary. We presume that if there were development in here, you could perhaps accommodate just a one-way entry. The point that I'm making, that you can probably see from our website, from photographs that have been taken during rush hour on that curb, is that that's a classic urbanistic mistake. You're putting a major intersection that's signalized at a distance from the next signalized intersection that, I believe, is below the minimum regional distance, and you're doing it on a curve. I mean, this is really bad urbanism. The point that I'm making is: four out of those five tables [ed. at the Public Meeting of January 30] – and in fact, many of our documentations – have argued against that intersection. It's a bad idea. It will clog up everything. You're allowing development on the north side that was previously zoned for

Agricultural, to jump to very high density. I've heard anywhere between 20 and upward of 30 stories. I also understand that the developer is negotiating to buy land on the north side that leads to Ortona. And, if you're going to do a station in there, I'm sure you can push that traffic over to Baldwin and Rivermede – I should say Bowes Road, at that point. So, you have other options. There's very little limitation there. If you're going to allow this kind of high density up there, you must look for other options that make more sense. I've heard about an option that will go this way to Centre Street – a bit crazy because there is, in fact, not just a protected ravine but also a very special piece of woodlot. At any rate, this was, as I've explained to you - the rationale for it disappears, once you're placing a station on the north side.

I would also like to point out to Committee that it's not accurate, as Ms. West showed in here, to say that 3 Options were actually presented. There were 4 Options. What we're looking at in here as Option 3 is sort of a marriage between Option 3 and Option 4 that were represented at that January 30th meeting. Now, I want to point out that we made a presentation to the Steering Committee and in that presentation, there are elements that you should take into consideration. You're talking about the difficulty of commitment and are foreseeing the amount of years - Metrolinx cannot provide figures – all those problems. But yes, the essence of good planning is about anticipating those things that you don't know at present. And let me show you a few things in this Option 3 which do not match exactly what four out of those five tables voted for. In fact, it would be very nice to see a picture, slides of all of the five spreadsheets where people made their markings during that 30th of January meeting. The first one I want to point out to you is that trajectory B5, which lies south of Highway 407, was actually originally chosen by the Ministry of Transportation as the smartest and the cheapest trajectory. You know, the trajectory of having a transitway cut right across this land in here, and destroying it even in the process of building, it's so completely wrong. But understandably, if Option 1 was the choice, one could see why. In the Option where you place the station to the north side, as we have shown in our presentation to the Steering Committee, which perhaps I will present to this Committee at the next session, is to place the transitway station, the pick-up, park and ride in there and to have the transitway hug the 407 on the south side and cross over *only* there where the land is higher. That means that this land here is protected and there's no need for the transitway to cross the river *twice*. It crosses *twice*. Its overcrossing in there. Another inaccuracy that I should point out is that this area here, that I should point out is owned by Mr. Santoloco, the Storage, Concord Storage, is –

**Regional Councillor Schulte:** Can I just interrupt... It's over 5 minutes. I know you've been very committed to this, and I want to give you some time, but we need to wrap up –

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** I'm going as fast as I can and I do have other points that I'm not going to make that are just as important for the planning as the points I'm making –

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** One more minute, OK?

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** All of those four out of five tables, actually, Ms. West, asked that this part in here to be either a natural extension of the residential zoning and the residential neighbourhood that I belong to. So - no midrise, but residential on both sides in there. And therefore, also, no need for that road in there.

Another point I'd like to make is that, indeed, as Councillor DiBiasi mentioned, OPA 660 considered the zone to the east of that station. And we're not opposed to the development of proper transportation infrastructures, but you have to consider, indeed, that you should be building parking in height and located either there or, in fact, inside of this development. I mean, the City can extract its own pound of flesh if you're giving such high zoning in there – you know, some contribution to the infrastructure and to the parking. And in height, not in extension, not surface parking.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** I know. You have so much –

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** You know it's not right that you're putting us under this pressure when the developers and planners and you have so much time to talk about this.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** I know, and one of the nice things is that you have been incredibly involved and active in terms of the Stakeholder Committee – so a lot of this work that you're doing and the important comments that you're making are being fed in through that. You also did give us a letter and I'm sure, I'm hoping that you follow up with this deputation in writing so that we have all of the facts that you haven't been able to say. Let me just hear from the Mayor.

**Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua:** Thank you. Is it questions?

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Well I just – yeah, I think we should move to questions and maybe in the questions you can expand on some of these things.

**Mayor Maurizio Bevilacqua:** Yes. I mean, my question is – if you had more time what would you tell us?

[laughter]

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** There you go!

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Thank you.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** And I appreciate that.

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Thank you. I appreciate that, Mayor Bevilacqua. I would tell you the following. I would tell you that I would like to see a map, and, in fact, perhaps this Option 3 would be developed so that we can see the trajectory of the river and the tributary. That zone in there and that crossover – that's right over the river valley of one of the tributaries. So, not only have we said this is the natural boundary of the residential but, if you make that residential, the crossover of the river disappears. It makes no more sense.

Then I would like to tell you the following too. That what was the most important element that led the Ministry of the Environment to reject our appeal was the connection between the Transitway station and the GO station, which was deemed to be 380 meters. Too long, over the 300 meters. Well, you know perhaps people should be walking and there would be

less cardiac problems, if people walked more, even when they commute. That's a five minute walk, ten minutes perhaps, which you could actually use to promote commerce in this development. But the point I'm making is this: you can anticipate, and you should, in my view – tell the Region and the province that you know the B5 trajectory, crossing over at that point, would allow the placement of a transitway station at Centre Street and Highway #7, which is really where it should exist. And if that station turns out to be of no interest in the future, well, you know, you have done your bit of safeguarding the proper planning with anticipated timelines. And likewise, I remind you that the Big Move previously didn't even contain any notion of a Concord Go station. So, if you want to safeguard, that's the way to do it. You can place it to the north side.

Lastly, I would like to say the following to you: it's not clear what Ms. Birchall referred to as the desires of the 'future community'. We have no idea what are the desires of people yet to come, that don't live there right now in this place. We know what our community has been fighting for – and it's not fighting for its property rights or anything else. It's fighting for things that should be the values of all Ontarians and all Canadians – which is the protection of this river valley, and the maintenance of that space as being part of the Bartley Smith [Greenway]. And in fact, I would like to see all that area green, not just that little corner in there, you know. No. Anyway, if I had more time and patience I could extend my comments. I would appreciate if you have any questions, I would be very willing to answer them - please. Thank you very much.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** OK. Thank you very much. And we do. Regional Councillor Rosati –

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** Thank you Madam Chairperson. My question is – do you agree with the process that we're following and the additional opportunities that you will have, that we can have input from you and working with our staff as well as our consultants –

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** We have had misgivings with the process.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** Yeah, yeah, that's what I'm trying to establish. That there will be plenty of opportunities and, obviously, that you are going to be always involved. But the question is do you agree that we plan as much as we can?

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** I certainly do.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** - so that they have to react to what we plan and not the other way around?

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** My view on that is totally proactive. I think that, you know, we have a good Council. This Council passed a resolution 3 years ago that was perhaps not as clear as perhaps it should have been but, I think, clear enough; the commitment of our Mayor is very clear; Deb has also been very clear. I think that we should go ahead. But when you go ahead, you have to do it right. If you leave things out of place – it will all fall back upon your heads. You know.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** I agree. We want to do it right. That's why it's going to take this time. But my concern was more that we are all on the same page, that we plan as much as we can. Sooner rather than later.

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Absolutely.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** That's fine. Thank you.

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Thank you.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** I actually have a quick question. You mentioned misgivings, and I don't want to put you on the spot – but obviously, it has been a big issue for us to ensure that your community has been involved and has the opportunity to participate – are the misgivings something that you are looking for, uh, a change going forward in what we're doing?

**Dr. Paulo Correa:** Let's say – I didn't come here to complain, and the problems that have arisen, one way or the other, either with the help of the Mayor or the Commissioner of Planning, Mr. Mackenzie, we've gone through them – but, what I see here today, in a sense, is an extension of those misgivings – because this Option 3 is not representing faithfully neither that meeting of January 30th, nor, truly, what I would consider the proper planning of this Option. There are a lot of things in this Option, from the Transitway to the density on the south side, to the location of the parking, and so on, including the exits from the northern development that just don't reflect neither that meeting nor what we have been fighting for.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** OK. It looks like Ms. West would like to just respond – if we could –

**Ms. Emma West:** If I could just make one point of clarification – that the 3 demonstration Options that we're showing here are an illustration of how the different layers come together, so, as I explained previously, each of these categories has an Option underneath it, or, 4 Options underneath it, those are the Options that we are in the process of evaluating; we're not picking one of the 3 demonstration plans, we're pulling all of the analysis together from the input and from the technical analysis that we're doing to prepare the preferred plan. It's not that we're picking one of the 3 demonstration Options. We just layered them together so you can see how they work together.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** OK. I think that's very helpful, because clearly it's an issue. There have been some good questions raised by the deputant, and I'm hoping that we will give, I mean, I think they're quite detailed, so it's probably not the right time for us to go through all of that right now. But I know that you have another stakeholder workshop and I would like to see some sort of formal response to the issues that have been raised, so that we can see them as well. And you get back to the deputant and the community, if you could please. OK, so, Dr. Correa. Thank you very much. I think there was one more deputant that wanted to speak. I saw hands up back there, so – please come forward, fill out a form and let us know your name and who you're representing. And just before Dr. Correa goes, I really do want to thank you for the amount of time, thank you and all of your community for

the amount of time you have dedicated to this. I think it's a sort of tribute to your commitment and I can't thank you enough for what you're doing and all the information you're bringing forward. It is clearly having an effect because look at what's going forward even though at first we thought we had to be dictated by Metrolinx, it's clear that we're not taking that position and it looks like it's working. So, thank you. Sorry about that. Please –

**Mr. Phil Levine:** My name is Phil Levine. I'm an urban planner with IBI group and we've been the planners for the Concord Floral lands since 2006 and continue in that role on behalf of Liberty Development. In the interest of brevity, I'd like to just highlight one or two points which would be of concern to ourselves which we'll put in writing to the Committee as opposed to take up any more time than is necessary today. The first is access. These lands need access to the north from Highway 7. There are a number of alternate secondary access points being examined by Liberty to the north across to Runnymede as well as to the west across the tracks. But it's integral to the development of these lands that they do get safe, appropriate, all-directional access from Highway 7. Secondly, we'd be as interested as everybody else on the Committee as to how the discussion about parking and the extent of it required by Go and the Transitway operation which is a longer term piece of infrastructure can be accommodated in the structure. We'll try to articulate our position on those items in writing as opposed to taking up any more of the Committee's time but I just wanted to highlight those two as being crucial to the whole approach that Liberty is taking viz a viz its lands. It has been participating in the process – Madam Chair, I would tell you that this is not an easy process. There's a lot of different views and the people conducting the process are really doing a wonderful job. We may be causing some of the problems [laughter] and I fully acknowledge that, only in articulating what we think is good planning. But the process is moving well and it's been comprehensive and I think all views are being put on the table. There may be a point where people have to agree to disagree. But from my perspective, we complement the process as it's been carried out so far.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Well, thank you very much for that. And these processes are all about finding a reasonable compromise, so –

**Mr. Phil Levine:** Agreed.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** So, it's tough. So, you have to bring your thoughts forward as do all the other stakeholders. And then, it is the tough job of Staff and the Consultants to come up with some compromise that makes sense; that the City can live with. So, we just open the floor to questions? Does anyone have any questions? OK, well thank you for talking about putting that in writing, so that we can then have a formal response. Thank you. Is there anyone else that would like to come forward on this item and speak? No? OK. So now I open the floor to comments. Actually, at this point I can ask if there's any questions of Staff that the Committee would like to ask regarding the deputations – 'cause there is that opportunity. No? OK. So comments. Councillor Racco?

**Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco:** Thank you. Well, I'll move first of all to recommend Staff's recommendation -

**Voice:** Second

**Councillor Sandra Yeung Racco:** I thank the Consultant and Staff, you know, and of course, our community for participating in this process. It is a very important process and certainly a lot of the time given by the public is important, so the comments are also very important and have to be taken into consideration. I would like to have seen the 4th Demonstration Option that the public had asked for, or the community had asked for, because that would have given us a better sense of where they wanted to go as opposed to how you had just sort of pulled it together. And I hope that may be in the next round when you do that to give us a more clear picture of what the community is actually looking for rather than sort of a mish mash of what you think is the things that they want to see. I also believe that, while I hear clearly from Dr. Correa his justification of not having a signalized intersection on Highway #7 there, I also believe though that we need to somehow find some solution to that. I don't believe that just having entrance to the north side whether we can or not going over the trail rail lines is the right option because if that piece of land is supposed to have office and commercial and residential in there, and if you're trying to make that very sustainable where you want people to come in and shop and so forth, you can't put the entrance to the back of the property because then you will end up having nobody going there at all. So you need to find a way, I don't know which is the way, I'm not the expert on it, but you need to find a way where people can get into that northern part and be able to access there, in a proper way. So, I'm going to leave it with you to work with York Region Staff or whatever Staff you need to, to try to find a proper way of doing that. The other thing that I have heard and I think Regional Councillor Schulte alluded to – I did hear from GO, and I think it was just a few weeks or a month ago when we had our meeting with Metrolinx, they are considering there a double track, a two-way, all day train and, if that's the case, I think that you need to, when you're planning, take all that into consideration, as well as also the land that would be needed, because, if they're going to go into double track, you need lands on the east side or whatever to take away to be able to allow for that. So, those are things that you also need to take into consideration. And then, of course, I really think, and I said it from the beginning, and I'm not sure, I still don't understand why the northwest corner of the - I guess that would be Bowes Road and Highway #7 - was not taken as part of the study: it should have been. I know you're saying that we're talking to them but there's a difference between just talking to them and actually bring that piece of property into part of the study, because you've got the three corners but then you leave out the fourth corner. It doesn't make sense to me at all. I mean that is all sort of interactive. They all play together and you need that; and you also need to consult with, and we need to hear from, those landowners on that side to see what is it that they want to see as well. So, I'm not sure if it's too late or not, but I think if it's not too late, I think you need to bring that forward. They need to be part of that entire study on that. As far as what Dr. Correa mentioned with regards to the parking and the moving of that, I want you go further and take a look at that - from what he has said or mentioned of their Option, I want to hear justification of why it cannot be done - is what I want to hear - because he has stated very clearly that they want a transit hub to be further east of where it is right now and I need to understand why it cannot be done. What are reasoning behind it wouldn't be able to do that. And, other than that, I think it's a great public process and it's ongoing and I hope that you can continue and I look forward to the final report back. Thank you.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Just before I go on to the next speaker, I would like to ask the Commissioner to just speak to that. Is there a point in making a motion to try and

increase the space? Is it too late for that? What's the thinking about that suggestion? Cause, if we were to do it, now would be the time to do it.

**Commissioner of Planning John MacKenzie:** Through the Chair – to Regional Councillor Schulte and I guess to the question posed by Councillor Yeung Racco, the inclusion of, uh, the Committee through Council can direct us to add land into a Secondary Plan Study Area; at this point is appropriate, or even at a later stage, if we went to a public hearing. I think the key thing is that we have, again, been consulting with this owner, there may need to be some additional funds allocated to examining some of the issues present on those lands. We have a certain budget envelope and we have to look at the scope of the study to include those lands and there would have to be some additional consultation with the owner. The owner, uh, one of the interesting things is that the owner may not want to be included or they may want to be included. We don't know that because there hasn't been any formal correspondence to date, except that they're monitoring the outcome of this because they understand that there may be some implications related to engineering, civil issues present in the area. So, those are a couple of things that I wanted to raise for the Committee before they made a motion or considered making a motion on this point.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Not to dwell on it too long, but as you've been going through the process, you know, sometimes it is clear by going through the process, that it would be advantageous for the process to expand. I'm looking to Staff to basically say whether it is or it isn't, and I guess what I'm hearing now is it's not clear whether it is or isn't advantageous to do the expansion. But I think maybe we'll leave it out there, that if you feel, based on the work that you're doing, that it would be advantageous, then we would ask that you would come back and ask Council for that approval to do that, because we spend a lot of money on these and if there's lost opportunities because we didn't pick the original boundaries right, I mean, we look to you guys to tell us what would be the right thing to do here. And I know that we are in some sense in a hurry to make sure we have something decent to go forward with, with the applicant, and we would like to be ahead of the game and come with a plan. But I also think we want to do it right and there's a lot involved in here, and so I just wanted to leave it with Staff and the Commissioner, that if he feels there is some need, that he comes back and lets us know so that we can take action. OK? So, I think the next speaker was actually...

**Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase:** Actually, if I could Madam Chair, just to this point that we're discussing, perhaps, if they are coming back with any report, they should look not only at that northwest corner that they have identified but all the way to Bowes Road, because, if there's any access or anything to Bowes Road, it should go to Bowes Road. Yes, just right to the west -

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Yeah.

**Regional Councillor Michael Di Biase:** They should look at that whole area.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** So, we'll leave that with Staff to let us know if they want to make a change. OK. Regional Councillor Rosati.



**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** Thank you. Actually, what I was going to suggest is that Staff be directed to come back with a report exploring the possibility and the implication there too – because we don't know whether it's really beneficial or not, so let them tell us. Consult with the landowner perhaps and bring us that option and what it means. I would be prepared, a friendly amendment – a mover can include that. And that's it –

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Does somebody want to sketch that up? I guess we don't really need that -

**Ms. Diana Birchall:** I just need a clarification on the area that you want us to look at, so if you could just describe that?

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Well, I think that the intent here is not for us to describe it but for Staff to come back and let us know what would be appropriate as this thing has evolved, so that if they need to include some additional land to make it make sense, that they then come back and let us know.

**Commissioner of Planning John MacKenzie:** Through the Chair – I think what we have heard a lot about today is the infrastructure issues and the transportation, so I would like to have the opportunity – and it's mostly related to the northern piece and connections to the east, potentially to the north, the east and west of that site, so I would like to have some more discussion with Commissioner Jankowski [ed. Paul Jankowski, Commissioner Engineering and Public Works], and Director Pearce [ed. Andrew Pearce, Director, Development/Transportation Engineering], others, about that issue and as well, there is a pretty significant natural heritage resource with the valley, that we would have to have some more discussions. So, a direction to that effect would be fine. We could come back with something at a future Committee.

[some unintelligible table comments about whether a motion is needed...]

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** I think Regional Councilor Rosati is writing something –

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** Well, if he doesn't need us –

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Do you need it or not?

**Commissioner of Planning John MacKenzie:** Oh yes, I think we need direction. I just wanted to be clear that my sense of what the Committee is looking for is to examine a possible extension of the study area on the northern side of Highway #7, to the east, potentially to the north and west.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Yes. OK. Thank you. Are there any other speakers around the table before we call a vote? If there are no other speakers, before I call the vote, I just want to make a couple of other quick comments myself, if I could. It really speaks to – you know, this is a very challenging area with a wonderful opportunity, but uh, for so many things, to enhance the area for the existing community and any future residents, but it

is a difficult area because its surrounded by industrial lands, transportation corridors and that important natural space. So, what I want to make sure, as we're moving forward, I think, I dropped some articles on my colleagues' desks which is titled, I think it was a couple of days ago, it came out on the weekend in the Globe and Mail 'Buildings in Search of Community' and it was in the Globe and Mail and it's talking to the boom of condominiums downtown and the fact that you've got all these wonderful buildings but people don't have a lot around them that make it nice places to live. And I think that's really so important. This area, while it's part of a continuum along Highway #7, it is a little complex unto itself in so many ways with all the surrounding pluses and minuses, transportation corridors, greenspace, industrial lands that we need to be very careful and make sure that as we move forward that we are providing that sense of community here – not just with the parks but with community amenities and maybe, you know, a library's going to be down the way in the Vaughan Metropolitan Centre. But there needs to be something here that people can really get a sense of place here. So. I know that's what you're trying to do with parks. It might need to be just a little bit more than that, so... And I know you're working on it. And the other one is that I want to make sure that, I know that with the heavy infrastructure required here, it's going to drive the cost up for the developer and that's going to be a push for more FSI and more height, and I think that while we are interested in some high density here, I do not want it to rival, my personal feeling is that, I don't want it to rival Vaughan Metropolitan Centre and end up – then we get a schizophrenic community where we have a whole bunch of these places fighting against each other to be our centre. So, I want to make sure that's in mind as you're moving forward on this. And I think that's an issue we have in so many areas. OK. So call the vote. Oh – sorry, the amendment please.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** OK, if I may – I'm trying to keep it simple. I would say that Staff report back on the issue of including additional land (Bowes Road and Highway #7) as part of the ongoing study.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** Just with Commissioner, is that ample?

**Commissioner of Planning John MacKenzie:** Through the Chair – I think it would also include – I think that's correct from Bowes Road to the current study area, but I think we would also want to say to the north and east of the study area.

**Deputy Mayor and Regional Councillor Gino Rosati:** OK. That's fine.

**Regional Councillor Deb Schulte:** And the mover and seconder are OK with that. OK. All in favor? OK. Anyone against? That passes. Thank you once again to everyone. That was a good, long discussion but very fruitful. Thank you.