

Seek Early Public Participation During Yonge Street-Richvale Corridor Study

Early public participation in the study on the South Yonge Street corridor — an area defined as 600 feet east and west of Yonge Street from Markham-Vaughan Roads to Highway 7 — was sought by Richmond Hill Planning Committee at a public meeting held November 15. About three dozen people from the area concerned were present to hear the purpose of the study and to express their opinions on it.

The meeting was chaired by Ward 4 Councillor David Stephenson, chairman of the planning committee, who stressed the importance of such a study in controlling future growth and development in the area.

The study will look into existing use of the land and probable future development so present and future councils can make decisions in response to applications in light of the policies which will be developed as a result of this study, Planning Director Hesse Rimon explained.

He reported that the Region of York, the Province of Ontario and the neighboring municipalities of Markham and Vaughan had been notified of the study and to date no comments had been received from any of them. He also reported that Municipal Planning Consultants, Mt. Pleasant Road, Toronto, had been selected from eight firms.

CATALOGUE DATA
Project Director Edith Ganong reported that Municipal Planning Consultants are still in the stage of cataloguing information and outlining how they think the study should proceed. "The outcome of our study is not just a report to be placed on a shelf but will eventually lead to an official plan amendment. An official plan is a legal document, which specifies how a piece of land is to be developed," she explained.

MANY PROBLEMS
"There are many problems to be solved," continued the planning consultant. "We can't put more people into the area until we know what and when services will be available. Yonge Street is a provincial highway. Hillcrest Mall is going to make a great difference in this area and there are proposals for development in the Civic Centre at the corner of Yonge and Vaughan Road. We are studying existing buildings — are they in good condition, are they serving their purpose? Also to be studied are existing design, transportation, roads, the relationship of this area to the rest of Richmond Hill and to its neighbors and economics. We will be studying the facilities available, what are lacking, etc. Then we will sit down and think, analyze the data we have compiled, determine what are the problems, then develop a land use plan and a physical design plan — what it is going to be, and how it will look."

END OF JANUARY
Later she told the meeting that she expected a preliminary report would be presented to council by the end of January. "Then there will be a gap while council considers that report and a final report will be prepared, taking about a month."

Frank Boden, 5 Oak Avenue, asked for a clearer definition of the study area and was told by Mrs. Ganong that what will be involved is a study of how Yonge Street will function as an arterial road, how the uses on either side will relate to the overall picture of the town, what strikes you as you drive up Yonge Street.

Charles Clark, also of Municipal Planning, added, "What is the future of this area, will it retain its identity. It's a residential, shopping area at present, it's the people's main street. We are still in the research stage and what we want to know is what is your feeling — do you feel crowded in, do you find it easy to shop? etc."

OFFERS HELP
Bus Vermuelen appearing for the town's Civic Improvement Committee report that that committee had worked on the improvements of Yonge Street from Markham Road to Elgin Mills along with the town and provincial staff. The committee had also approached owners of properties with suggestions on improvements in appearance and almost all the poorer ones had been improved, he said. The committee also helped in the design of sidewalks, parking, overhead lighting, street furniture, etc., and he offered the same co-operation in this study.

"It has been said that we have been in the habit of

period of two to five years before they are available and so an interim policy on how to handle applications as they come in will have to be included in the official plan. It's not all that complicated. Basically we are looking at the long range land use policy. The purpose of this meeting is not to make decisions since we are not in a position to make them yet. We are asking you if you think we have missed anything or if we are going in the wrong way," explained Mr. Rimon.

Mrs. Mary Watts of Spruce Avenue, representing the BAIF Task Force, expressed the deep concern if citizens about the difficulty of crossing Yonge Street on foot or in a car, which has increased as traffic has increased because of new developments in the area and elsewhere. "It will increase more as BAIF fills up. Now there is talk of Yonge Street being widened again, and if this is done it will lead only to a bottleneck at Markham Road, because of parking on both sides. The only traffic lights are at Carrville Road. A recent survey in this area showed that most shopping traffic is going south because of the difficulty of getting into the northbound lane and of proceeding through Richmond Hill. Are we going to have more lights?"

"This is a provincial highway and these questions are a matter for discussion between the municipality and the Ministry of Transportation and Communications," Mrs. Ganong replied.

VIEW OF HILL
Mrs. Watts also reported intense concern that the view of the Hill will be drastically changed through high rise apartments and commercial buildings being permitted on Yonge Street. "Such buildings tend to close one in, a very distressing feeling," she said.

Mrs. Ganong stated that this could be controlled by requiring deep setbacks. "I don't visualize single family residences on Yonge

Street," continued Mrs. Watts. "Is the land zoned commercial?"

"Some of it is agricultural," replied Mrs. Ganong.

"The absence of long range policies in the two townships in which the area lay before the coming of regional government has created a mixture of development along Yonge Street," Mr. Rimon pointed out. "And we have inherited that mixture. We are conducting this study to determine in what ways we should control development in the future to give a pleasing appearance and provide the type of development which will be best for the area and for the whole municipality."

DESIGN CRITERIA
"We will be suggesting certain design criteria," stated Mrs. Ganong, "which will look at the scale of buildings from the street."

Mr. Rimon then pointed out that for the past two and a half years "all kinds of applications have been received by the town from this area. The town hasn't permitted any development in this area in the last two years and has deferred all applications until this study is completed. The consultants' report can only make recommendations for the future. We can't make anything that exists now fade away, it will remain as a legal non-conforming use."

Charles Foster, representing a piece of land in the Observatory Lane area, offered co-operation of his principals with the municipal staff and consultants. "We know that our land gives a good view of the observatory, a landmark, and we are deeply concerned that that remain."

TERMS OF REFERENCE
Mr. Rimon, on request, then gave the terms of reference for the study which is to produce the basis for guidelines for future development in the area. To be studied are services and utilities, transportation, community facilities, development patterns, recreation,

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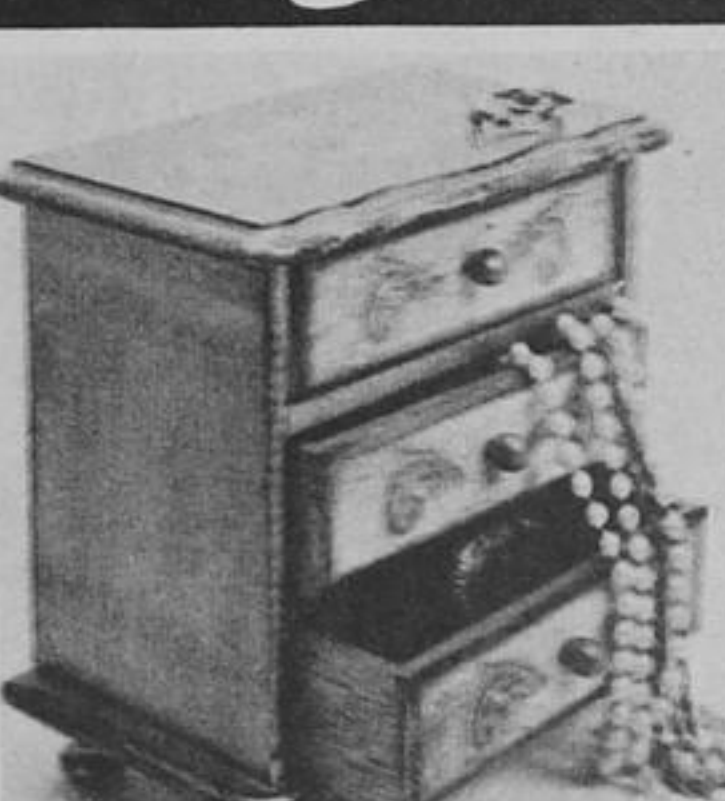
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commercial and industrial land. Overall land use patterns will be proposed and generalized policy statements concerning visual aspects of development will be developed along with specific recommendations about the physical aspects of development and relationship of buildings one to another and the transportation function of the highway.

Concern was also expressed that Yonge Street not be allowed to become a string of "gas stations and hot dog stands."

Deryck Evelyn of the North Richvale Ratepayers' Association felt that no plans for development should be entertained until the plans for sewage disposal are completed and capacity known.

HOW LONG?
"How long is this study going to take? And what are the plans for the corner of Markham Road and Yonge Street?" Mrs. Jessie Grainger of 130 Yonge Street South, Richmond Hill, wanted to know. Mrs. Ganong then stated that the final report would be ready about a month after council approves or amends the preliminary report.

In response to a question she replied that the study would include pedestrian movement and would be making recommendations on sidewalks.

Another representative of the BAIF Task Force reported two areas of major concern — the view of the Hill and traffic.

Former Councillor David Schiller wanted to know how

this study fits into the Region's official plan, pointing out that no one wants to travel on Yonge Street at any time, because of traffic density, that the area is not community oriented and that the speed limit is excessively high, there are no sidewalks and pedestrians have to contend with snow and slush. He also noted that the speed of development has yet to be indicated and should be slowed down considerably.

"It is council's decision to develop its own plan," stated Mr. Rimon. "We would prefer to tell the Region what we want and not have them tell us what they want," added Mr. Stephenson.

UNDERPASSES
Mike Burnie of Carrville Road suggested a solution for pedestrian crossovers could well be underpasses — something imaginative.

Mrs. Watts again brought up the problem of pedestrian crossing reporting that Falconbridge Laboratory, located on Yonge Street at Roose-

velt Drive, has had one employee killed and two injured as they attempted to cross Yonge. "They have applied to the province three times for traffic lights at that intersection and have been turned down three times."

Further meetings will be held December 6 and January 17.

buildings for heating purposes.

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He said that when Richmond Hill had talked about a domed stadium complex at Langstaff, they were asked how they would heat it.

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The Richmond Hill Councillor said also that, even though he had taken his wife with him to the convention and paid her way, he was able to return \$50 to the regional treasurer on his own transportation advance by going at an earlier time.

Mayor Lazenby, who brought back a quantity of brochures from his trip for the councillors to peruse, said they might also be interested to know that the oberburgemeister in Germany — comparable to the regional chairman — was elected for 12 years, while the burgemeister — comparable to a municipal head — was elected for four years.

"Oberburgemeister" Garfield Wright acknowledged the information with a smile.

York Region's Yellow Jackets Were Big Attraction In Munich

Those yellow jackets worn by York Regional councillors may have some use after all. Richmond Hill Regional Councillor Gordon Rowe, who, along with Mayor William Lazenby, recently returned from Germany where they took in the international convention in Munich, plus a bit of the local scenery, said the jackets brought them immediate recognition from the floor of the convention.

In that huge gathering, it was easy to distinguish the two Canadian representatives, Mr. Rowe said.

Although not elaborating on the Munich convention, in which they were inundated with papers and meetings, Mr. Rowe said a subsequent trip to Nuremberg proved especially beneficial.

He said the city had an automated garbage system — only 18 people were necessary to run it — which burned 900 tons of garbage an hour.

There were no odours, and so far as smoke emission was concerned, it was 99.3 percent pure.

Also, the steam that resulted was sold to

buildings for heating purposes.

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