

Restrict Hill Core Height To 50 Feet

A height limit of 50 feet for buildings within the historic core of Richmond Hill, except when an 80 foot setback is planned when the height may be increased to 80 feet, was recommended to the Municipal Board last Friday. This decision was reached after two and a half hours of discussion at a meeting of the whole council as planning committee March 6.

50' IN CORE
The historic core was described as that area of the old town bounded by Markham Road - Vaughan Road in the south; Church Street in the east; Wright Street-Dufferin Street in the north; Hall Street - Elizabeth Street (and its southerly projection to Vaughan Road) in the west.

The restriction will not apply to portions of the area described which have lower height limitations because of zoning.

In residential zones throughout the old town height limits proposed are: RM6 - 100 feet, RM5 - 80 feet, RM4 - 60 feet, RM3 - 38 feet, RM2, RM1, R2, R1, 35 feet.

35-100' COMMERCIAL
In commercial zones heights will be restricted to 35 feet in highway commercial, neighborhood commercial and district commercial and to 80 feet in general commercial - residential and general commercial, except where the setback of the main building is at least 100 feet from the Yonge Street lot line when the limit of height will be 100 feet.

45' INDUSTRIAL
A height limitation of 45 feet will be applied to all areas zoned industrial.

Chairman David Stephenson reported that a public meeting on the question of height restrictions had been held the preceding Thursday evening and that several citizens had given input. A meeting of council as a planning board had been held Tuesday evening at which agreement on the proposed limits had been reached.

OMB REQUIREMENT
Councillor Andy Chateauvert explained that when Bylaw 66-71, the new zoning bylaw for the old town, was submitted to the OMB some objections were received because it contained no height restrictions.

"The board said it would like to see height restrictions included, no more onerous than those in Bylaw 1000. Our planning director has to go back to the OMB Friday with some proposals," he said.

SPIRES AND TREES
Mr. Chateauvert also noted that the unique feature of Richmond Hill of the hill-top crowned with church spires rising from the tree tops had been pointed out to council, not only by members of the Citizens' Advisory Group, but by BAIF planners and the consultants on the Yonge Street Study, who all had claimed that these historic and aesthetic features should be preserved and not be hidden. "This provides a visual landmark for the focal identity of the town. As far as I am concerned a limit of 50 feet attempts to retain this. Under that height limit you can put up a five storey building, which is not unecomic."

"Aesthetically there may be people who want to keep it as it is," stated Norm Smith, realtor. "But I am interested in putting up a building of a stature that will help revitalize the downtown core of this town on land that we have amassed." He claimed his firm had been unable to carry out its plans because of a freeze on Yonge Street development.

"The churches and church steeples are signs of distinction associated with Richmond Hill and these height limitations have been planned around these," stated the chairman. "Last Thursday evening the citizens presented this quite graphically."

SOMETHING BETTER
The new Official Plan for the old town of Richmond Hill was developed and passed in 1967," recalled Regional Councillor Lois Hancey. "Then development of a zoning bylaw to implement that Official Plan was begun. It was the concern of planning board, council and consultants that something

better than existing development controls must be devised in relation to Yonge Street and apartments where practically the whole lot is covered with the building and asphalt parking spaces with little landscaping and green area. We have lots of examples of these. Consultant Max Bacon suggested a formula that would permit the area of the lot to govern the building height. At that time the historic significance or aesthetic significance of the church spires on the hill were not discussed. It was realized that revitalization of the Yonge Corridor was needed and that private enterprise could be encouraged to brighten up the area."

"Now at the OMB hearing evidence was given that some recognition should be given to the unique aspects that establish a centre for Richmond Hill which is easily identified. The board apparently was impressed with the evidence given and in its wisdom asked for height limits."

NO FREEZE
Mrs. Hancey told Mr. Smith that she could recall no freeze having been placed on the area. "We have been trying to meet the standards of 66-71. To the best of my recollection when this bylaw was prepared the prime concern was to encourage revitalization of the Yonge Street core and come up with some better formula with which to control the development."

"It was to encourage redevelopment," agreed Chairman Stephenson. "What we have to weigh up is whether we have height restrictions or are we going to turn it into a slum."

Regional Councillor Gordon Rowe warned that he still don't know the impact of the Hillcrest Mall and may find that we have to have a major redevelopment in the core. "We may be locking ourselves in."

"The view we're talking about has been changing over the years and will continue to change," said Councillor Graeme Bales.

WANTS 100' LIMIT
Realtor Len Pugh stated he did not see how council could conceptually plan an isolated area. "We've been acquiring property on Yonge Street. We don't want pie in the sky, we are just saying give us what we have under Bylaw 1000 (100 feet). A 100 foot building costing more than a million dollars is not going to downgrade the area." He said he had not been present at the previous public meeting since he was holidaying in the Bahamas and besides did not read the local newspaper. He had learned of the proposal indirectly that day and in three hours had come up with five official objections.

Mr. Pugh also stated that a large pharmaceutical company is planning on locating in Richmond Hill and could be discouraged by these limits. When pressed for further details, he said he had been sworn to secrecy and was not at liberty to give them.

Des Ellard of Don Little Ford stated his company owned four acres of land outside the historic core and suggested that owners of Yonge Street frontage be given more time to consider the proposed height limits.

READ LOCAL PAPER
"We have learned the hard way that you have to read the local paper if you want to know what is going on at council and at planning," stated Dawn Osmond, a member of the Citizens' Advisory Group. "If you are a citizen of the town and want to know what is going on you must read the local

paper. It is being demonstrated that architects can create the same density with low-rise as with high rise and make it economically viable. Cutting down on height doesn't necessarily mean financial disaster."

John Hughes, a solicitor representing the owners of the take-out plaza opposite Leventdale Road, stated that one of the fundamentals of democracy is to balance the interests of a variety of people. "Our only area of contention is the reduction of the 100 foot limit to 80 feet and we feel we are unfairly dealt with, that the 100 foot limit is adequate to protect the interests of the town. The difference isn't

going to preserve the spires for those who wish to view them. The town should preserve the height limit in effect when the property was purchased. It seems to me you are obliged to do it by the board's ruling that the height limits be no more onerous than those contained in Bylaw 1000.

A citizen noted that a height of 100 feet is allowed when the setback is 100 feet from the Yonge Street lot line.

COULD OPPOSE DEFERRMENT
Mayor William Lazenby asked Planning Director Hennie Rimon if a deferment of Friday's hearing would be possible. The latter agreed

that he could ask for a deferment but warned that other parties might object "and the board's decision is usually based on the weight of the arguments."

Mrs. Hancey warned that deferment would benefit only a special group and could well put the whole of Bylaw 66-71 in jeopardy. Following a 10-minute break Councillor Chateauvert proposed the amendment to the 50 foot limit to allow a height of 80 feet with an 80 foot setback, which was carried. The motion as amended was then approved and the committee went into a brief council meeting to approve the amended motion.

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TOPS Queen Crowned

Mrs. Mary Neal of Langstaff Avenue was crowned "Queen for 1973" of TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) at St. Gabriel's Anglican on March 5. Mrs. Neal joined TOPS in January, 1972, and has maintained a weight loss of 80 pounds for eight months. She is also "high loser" for 1973. She will now represent the local group at Provincial Recognition Day in Sarnia in June.

On the same program certificates for weight loss were awarded to Mrs. Madge Nicholson, runner-up to the queen. Mrs. Pat Sealey, winner of Division 5, Mrs. Gayle Platt, runner up of Division 5, and Mrs. Pat Ritchie, runner up of Division 4.

TOPS is a non-profit organization that provides moral support for people trying to lose weight. New members are always welcome. For further information call Pat Russell at 445-7178.

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DOUGLAS MEHARG Announces Saving

President Douglas Meharg, FRI, of the York Region Real Estate Board recently announced a saving of \$500 to vendors on sale of a \$50,000 property in any community within the jurisdiction of his group.

As of January 1, 1974, the Multiple Listing Service commission fee was reduced by one per cent by the board, in order to create a better service to the selling public.

Mr. Meharg explained that MLS is a vehicle whereby the owner may expose his property to all realtors in York. Some 550 members subscribe to this service.

A point by point primer on how to lose your driver's licence.

It's actually quite simple. All you do is accumulate fifteen demerit points and lose your licence for thirty days. Do it again and lose your licence for six months.

In this province, it definitely pays a driver to score a big fat zero. Ontario's demerit point system is designed to convince the poor driver to drive properly. Drivers who do not improve are then taken from the road because they're a menace to pedestrians and to other drivers.

But the system is not at all unjust. It's aimed at telling the driver where he's gone wrong and giving him plenty of time to correct his faults.

For instance, When you've accumulated six points, you'll be notified and urged to improve your driving.

When you've got nine, you'll probably be asked to attend a private interview and re-do your driving test.

At fifteen points, you'll lose your licence for thirty days and drop back to seven points. Get fifteen again and you won't drive for six months.

However, your record won't be

indelibly marked. If you drive for two years without a traffic conviction your points are erased and your slate is clean.

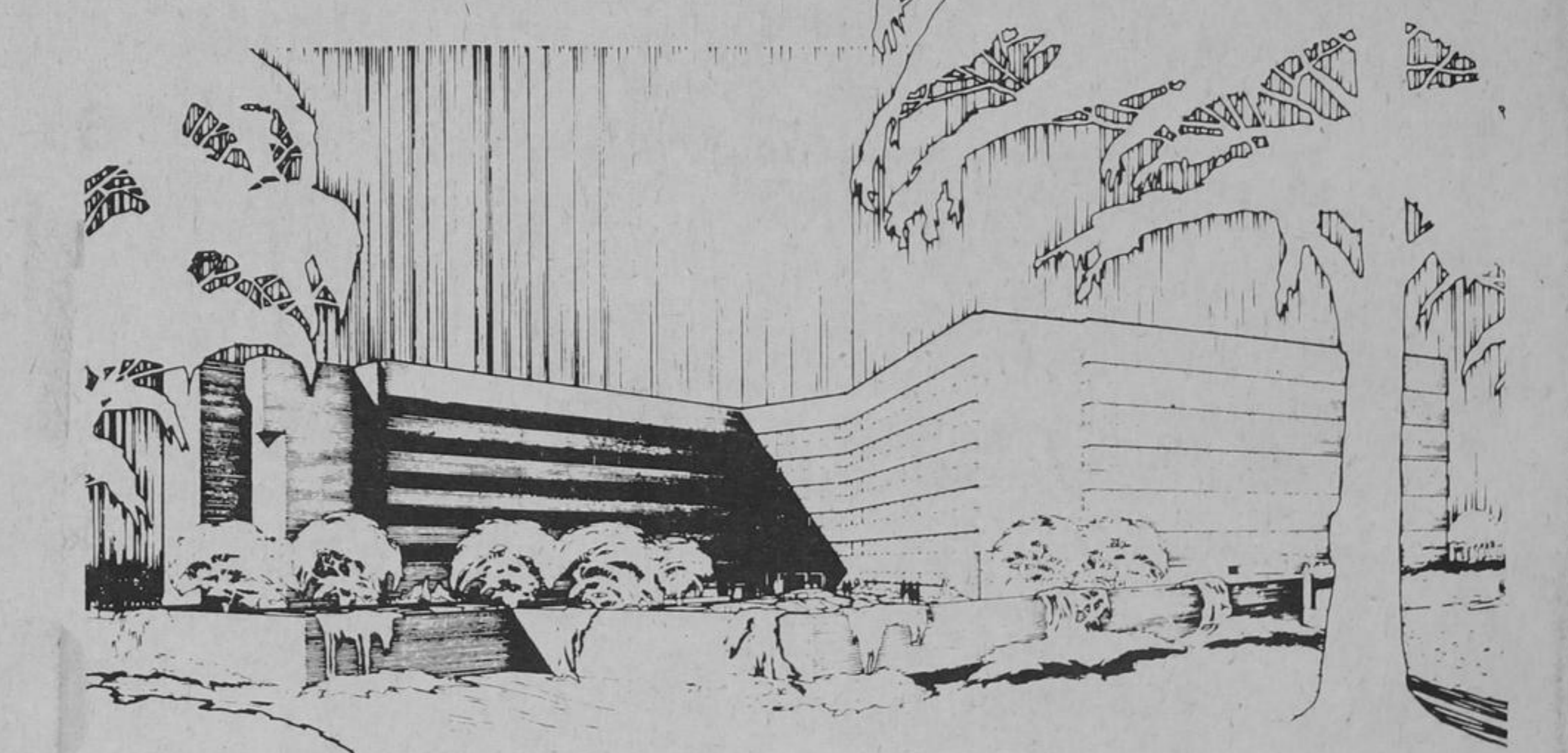
How Demerit Points Accumulate:

7 points	Failing to remain at scene of an accident (Highway Traffic Act)	
6 points	Careless driving	Exceeding speed limit by 30 m.p.h. or more
5 points	Driver of bus failing to stop at unprotected railway crossings	
4 points	Exceeding the speed limit by 20 to 29 m.p.h. Failing to stop for school bus following too closely	
3 points	Exceeding speed limit by 11 to 19 m.p.h. Driving through a crowd of people Failing to yield right of way Failing to obey a stop sign, signal light or railway crossing signal	Failing to obey directions of police officer Failing to report an accident to a police officer Improper passing Crowding driver's seat Wrong way on one-way street or highway
2 points	Failing to lower headlamp beam Improper opening of vehicle door Prohibited turns Towing of persons on toboggans, bicycles, skis, etc. prohibited	Failing to obey signs other than those mentioned above Pedestrian cross-over Failing to share road Improper right turn Improper left turn Failing to signal Unnecessary slow driving

The whole point is to score nothing, keep your record clean and drive happily ever after.

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