

HERITAGE FUNERAL CENTRE

o/o 2041430 Ontario Inc.

November 3, 2015

EMAILED

Mayor and Members of Council,
City Hall,
100 Queen Street West,
Toronto, Ontario,
M5H 2N2

Attention: Ms. Marilyn Toft, City Clerk

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Council:

Re: Costco store – Application to Re-zone 42-46 Overlea Boulevard

I am the owner of the Heritage Funeral Centre located at 50 Overlea Boulevard which is a fourth generation family business. Ours is a large facility with its main entrance on Overlea immediately adjacent to the proposed Costco driveway and a secondary access to Thorncliffe Park Drive. Heritage handles up to 8 events a day and often has upwards of 1,000 mourners (100 cars) present at a funeral. Ready access to Overlea is essential for my business. I respectfully ask that you send the application back to staff for a more rigorous review for the following reasons:

1. Transportation staff admit there will be “a significant impact to the transportation network in the area which will occur as a result of Costco” and acknowledge the roads are at capacity. Transportation staff also indicates they will try and work with me to alleviate Heritage’s traffic issues. However, this is after the fact and means the cost will not be borne by the developer.
2. As noted, Heritage does generate large funeral processions that need unimpeded access to Overlea. However, the Costco proposal means funeral processions will have to cut through cars queuing to turn right into Costco from the HOV lane to get to the through lane. It will be impossible to maintain a procession under these circumstances.
3. Overlea is an important TTC corridor with 7 bus routes carrying some 65,000 passengers daily.
4. Transportation believes simply lengthening traffic light times on Overlea will solve the traffic problem. While this will help east-west traffic flows, it will delay north-south traffic trying to get onto Overlea from places such as the Leaside Business Park. This also further overloads the Don Mills and Overlea intersection.
5. After much debate, Council and staff supported strengthening the function of employment areas in the new Official Plan. This and other development proposals will diminish policies 4.6.1 and 4.63 that test the placement of big box stores in employment areas.

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6. It is clear that staff have no hard line when assessing the impact of a proposal such as the Costco store but hope that negative impacts will somehow will be managed away. This is striving to achieve the lowest standard and leaves the city extremely vulnerable at the OMB.
7. There is no plan to accommodate the 9% annual growth typical of Costco's Canadian stores and the impact that growth will have on the transportation network. Given the traffic profile of Costco's other Toronto operations, it would appear traffic projections have been underestimated.
8. The current Costco proposal (625 spaces with a gas bar) does not have enough parking with or without a gas bar. By contrast, the Scarborough Costco has 784 spaces plus 145 overflow parking spaces on a neighbouring lot for store that is over 15% smaller. Overflow parking will be a huge issue for surrounding businesses like mine.
9. The retail contagion from the Costco store has not been examined. How are we further ahead if smaller retail stores lose business even as far away as Bayview, Eglinton and Danforth Avenues as a result of this development?
10. Why would the East York Town Centre continue to have small stores serving local residents when it can make more having upscale tenants who will market to the Costco members?

In conclusion, it is disappointing in this process that the city's review process appears not to have more rigour and set the bar higher. In this case, it leaves the local councillor reduced to the unenviable position of having to settle with the timing of building the gas bar after the rest of the development or fear losing the whole thing at the OMB anyway.

While there have been attempts to alleviate area transportation issues caused by a Costco store, there have been no attempts to ensure that Heritage will not be adversely affected.

I thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,

Per Glen L. Day