

ARMENIAN COMMUNITY CENTER DISCUSSION POINTS FOR DEPUTATION:

45 Hallcrown Place, The Armenian Community Centre, Church, Daycare & School

50 Hallcrown place Armenian Youth Centre

**HISTORY:**

The Armenian Community Centre was located at Avenue Road and Dupont St. In The City of Toronto in Early 1960s, and an Armenian Church had existed since 1940s at Younge and woodlawn Ave,

In mid 1970s the community was increasing due to influx mainly from the Middle Eastern countries and Europe, and the community members were actively looking for suitable plot of land to house the many community organization that were operating and plan for future expansions.

His worship Mayor Mel Lastman of city of North York suggested at the time to purchase the 2.5 Acres located at 45 Hallcrown place, as the developers of universal office site were planning a second 8 storey building similar to the existing, and the Mayor was not in favour due to the traffic congestion on Consumers Rd. So he encouraged the community to move to NORTH York, where we can build all community facilities, The Centre, the Church and the school.

## OPERATIONS :

The Armenian Community Centre @ 45 Hallcrown and The Youth Centre at 50 Hallcrown Place, are facilities to serve variety of organization other than the St. Mary Church, and the ARS school and Daycare, as they are operated as separate entities.

The Cultural, Sports, Youth, Women and Seniors organizations operate within these facilities as social and cultural and Christian Educational hub of the Armenian Community, living mostly within the surrounding neighbourhoods of Sheppard Ave East and Victoria Park Ave. North and South of Hwy 401.

We are proud to mention that our sports organization (HMEM) will celebrate its Centennial this year, it was established in 1918, and has 47 Branches worldwide with over 40,000 members. In Toronto the organization has 20 sports teams of different age groups, and they have the largest Canadian Boy Scouts/Girl Guides branch in Canada.

The Armenian Relief Society is 95 years old, with about 50 branches in 40 countries, and recognized as NGO by the United Nations, the only women's organization as such.

All organizations operate within the facilities, and beyond at rented spaces for youth and sports programmes. There are Gym Facilities, and 500 Seat Theater that caters to the communities and other Canadian cultural groups at large. The community is generally active within the Canadian Societies Socially and politically, and part of the Canadian main stream. Consumers next Study and the Public policy processes got the community involved somewhat after the fact, and is now trying to contribute as much as possible to the process. Although the Proposed

Secondary Plan has its merits, but the Community wants to see some adjustments, by weighing in on some of its Citizenship rights: the following are some of the proposed revisions and modifications to the proposed plan:

- I. The site should not be construed as Tall building site, particularly in close proximity to the Church, Hallcrown Place and Consumers Rd intersection. Provincial Policy Statement (PPS), clearly advocated intensification and mix use along Avenues, but the intention is clearly Low to Mid-rise buildings along Avenues. The OPA supports the planned communities along the same principles. The Proposed 83m high building will neither be practical nor will be fitting particularly to the lands on the south side of consumers Rd. Employment area where buildings are generally low to mid rise in character.
- II. The density is another issue. While we are in agreement to the recommendation for the east side, with recommended Townhouse development at the south end of the study area, yet density of 3.0 for mixed use parcels are comparatively high, particularly when facing traffic challenges for so long, even with the existing conditions. Our recommended density will be 2.0 for both mixed use and the Employment areas where 1.5 times the coverage is recommended to stay the same.
- III. Conceptually, Street walls (Podiums) are generally conceived as base building for tall buildings, The recommended street wall of 6 storey high, encourages Tall Building in the Mixed use area, which may be appropriate for major nodes along Higher

level Transit planned for Sheppard Ave East Corridor, however the Podium option should be left as Architectural choices during subsequent processes.

- IV. Furthermore, the implication of mixed use is not a residential development with some retail uses at the ground and may be second floor, as is the case for the large developments completed and underway along Sheppard Ave East. The intention should not even be retention of the existing footage of commercial uses, particularly within the boundaries of Employment Lands. The policy should emphasise the employment aspect of the neighbourhood, and even on mixed use sites the commercial portion should be at least equal to that of residential footage, blended into the existing commercial buildings in form and density.
  
- V. The traffic Congestion will was, is and will be an issue at Consumers Rd. Employment area even with the new Grid system proposed, there will be not sufficient exits from the envelop, especially if the intention is to increase the employment numbers by some 60-70% over the next 25 years. While Phasing in development may help, but it is not deemed to be economical in all cases. The new proposed road at the north of the ACC and St . Mary Church is a challenging proposal as it depends on exterior factors, MTO approval is required. However, this should not be used under any circumstance to divert the Consumers Rd. Traffic onto Victoria Park and 401 West; it should be used for local traffic resolution.

- VI. While it is generally agreed that more open spaces and walkable areas and cycling paths should be developed over time as the development proposals are rolled out, however these suggestions should be measured not to discourage the land owners from developing. The proposed Green Band and Cycling path along the Hwy 401 and Hwy 404 cannot be covering the complete non buildable areas. The widths should be just sufficient for Paths and Green areas.
- VII. It is generally believed that community Centres Schools and Cultural infrastructures are drain to the Economy. Not in the case of The Armenian Community Centre. The community of St Mary Church and the ACC organizations, under private sponsorship programme accepted cared and placed for gainful employment 3,500 Syrian Refugees just to Toronto (Montreal & Vancouver had their share) in the Last 2-3 years. This has saved the Governments Millions of dollars, and with our rough estimation is in the range of \$40 million.

We want to ask and appeal to the committee that although the secondary plan reflects a good compromise position, yet considering the Social and community importance of our sensitive neighbourhoods, Height of Buildings, Densities, root cause of congestions, equitable distribution of infrastructure capacities , particularly in Employment Areas be closely monitored and revised to reflect the neighbourhood and community concerns.

Thank you for your attention and I am sure you will consider incorporating some of our point of views.