



October 17, 2023

North York Community Council

Re: Agenda Item NY8.11; 2135 Sheppard Ave. E.

Dear Councillor Members,

The application you are looking at today for 2135 Sheppard Ave E should not be looked at in isolation.

It is part of the ConsumersNext secondary plan, that was informed by an extensive report prepared by an outside consultant. That process involved interviewing 2000 people, conducting multiple studies, and took over two years to complete.

This report has 3 primary goals, which are to:

- Encourage investment in the employment lands to maximize their full employment potential
- Improve amenities to support residential growth, and
- Manage this at a pace aligned with the promised higher order transit that predicated the report, and sparked interest in redeveloping this area.

**There are three locations of significance identified in the report. One of them is the entrance way into the business park, which is where 2135 Sheppard Ave E is located.**

The role for 2135 Sheppard was never intended to just be a retail space for a grocery store, amongst a cluster of condo towers. Its role is much more significant than that.

**Its role is to bring this whole project to life.** It was to introduce excitement at the entranceway to signal transformational change. It was to change the existing dull persona of the area, to provide something of value to attract people to the area, and most importantly, to signal and spur on existing employment land owners to upgrade their buildings and attract new employers.

**It was to be the catalyst to accomplish what similar business parks** in Markham and Mississauga have successfully done, as noted in the consultant's report. An 11-storey mixed residential condo at THIS location doesn't achieve any of these things.

**The failure to force this applicant to spark interest in this area,** and be true to their original commitments **has resulted in real lost opportunity.** The city's 2021 employment survey shows **\$4.8 billion was spent in the last few years in other employment areas in the city, but no investment here at all.**

In 2014, when this **applicant secured original approval,** they expressed full commitment to the important role assigned to this location. They negotiated greater height and density for 3 mixed use residential towers, **by committing to consolidating all their required retail portions of those buildings under one roof - a 4-storey high-end mall** that would make a big impression at the entranceway to the business park.

Click below for Tribute's Original Mall Brochure

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AEH3eF8K6JtfW2Z0w\\_6GflAYTp-pjkth/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1AEH3eF8K6JtfW2Z0w_6GflAYTp-pjkth/view?usp=sharing)

This 4-storey high-end mall commitment enabled them to move forward with construction. **But once the 2 towers were built and the 3<sup>rd</sup> underway, the applicant re-applied in 2019 to replace the mall with an 11-storey mixed residential tower,** which is the decision before you today.

Hidden inside the business park area is **an applicant that complied with the role** that was asked of them. They completely **changed the ambiance and vibe, by constructing a complex of restaurants with outdoor seating and colourful landscaping.**

**It has proven its economic success**, having survived throughout the entire covid period. It is like two different worlds from what has been created in the interior, and what 2135 Sheppard is proposing for its significant spot.

It would be short-term thinking to allow any construction on this corner that doesn't serve to welcome and entice new employers into the area. **Any build form here should be no higher than 4 storeys.**

**The issue is, no one seems to have overall responsibility for the success of the ConsumersNext Plan, as it touches four different departments, and none are following the guiding principles, or monitoring current status against stated goals.**

**Decisions for individual applications like this one need to be considered through a wider lens with a broader perspective.**

**An 11-storey tower cannot be undone and there's only one chance for making a good first impression.** This entranceway requires and deserves something better than what is proposed.

Thank you,

Susan Wakutz  
President  
Pleasant View Association