



APRIL 2020

VOL. 4

# Ratepayers Association NEWS & VIEWS

Your Voice in Our Community

## LOCAL NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS



100 Steeles Ave. W.



180 Steeles Ave. W.



2 Steeles Ave. W.

### Yonge-Steeles Redevelopments Come into Focus

**JORDAN MAX, SFRA VICE-PRESIDENT**

For months now, SFRA has been messaging about the pending redevelopment proposals. Well, in late February and early March 2020, the owners of 2 properties on the north side of Steeles filed their applications for redevelopment with the City of Vaughan Planning Department, adding to the one filed by the Gupta Group on August 24, 2018. Humbolt Properties has also launched its Conceptual design for 72 Steeles West (Moore's/Montessori) and 7040 Yonge Street (Galleria), with a similar approach.

What's common to all proposals are:

- An extension of Royal Palm Drive east of Hilda to Yonge
- high-rise residential buildings (facing Steeles)
- towers on top of podium (ranging from 25-65 stories)
- at-grade retail
- underground parking
- lower rise residential closer to Royal Palm extension side (northern end of property)
- an internal north-south access and service road, with east-west roads leading to underground parking and main building entrances, or courtyard.

What's unique to certain proposals? There's a new car dealership for 100 Steeles Ave W, and 2 Steeles Ave. W will have a subway station entrance, and a hotel. See page 2 for some relevant statistics for comparison (the number of stories includes podiums).

It is important to note that the Yonge-Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan approved by Council in 2010 allows for a maximum of 30 stories for the Gupta site and 22 stories for the Salz and Mizrahi sites.

For SFRA's take on these proposals, see Pam's article (pg. 8), and Enzo and my article (pg. 6). To see all of the submitted reports, go to Vaughan's Planit Viewer: <https://maps.v Vaughan.ca/planit/> and search using the Zoning By-law Amendment applications Z.18.028 for 2 Steeles Ave. W., 19T-20V001 for 100 Steeles Ave. W., and Z.20.005 for 180 Steeles Ave. W..... Continued on Page 2.

### Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program in Thornhill

**ALANNA MACKENZIE, SUSTAINABILITY COORDINATOR, SNAP**

The City of Vaughan (City) and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) have brought a Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP) to your neighbourhood. The SNAP is about neighbourhood revitalization to make our communities more sustainable and become more livable. We look for urban renewal opportunities such as flood risk reduction, energy and water conservation, tree planting and natural heritage enhancements, Improving walkability and accessibility, recreation, and even arts and culture.

Continued on page...8

## Yonge-Steeles, Continued from page 1

### 100 Steeles Ave. W. ("Yorkville North" Plaza) – Salz Corporation

Building	# stories	# residential units	Retail space (m <sup>2</sup> )
Block 1 (car dealer)	5	n/a	12,718
Block 2 (Tower 1)	56	652	1,203
Block 2 (Tower 2)	61	637	
Block 3	24	244	n/a
Block 4	24	232	n/a
<b>Total</b>		<b>1765</b>	<b>13,921</b>

### 180 Steeles Avenue West - Mizrahi Developments Inc.

Building	# stories	# residential units	Retail space (m <sup>2</sup> )
Tower A	44	818	1,690
Tower B	34		
Tower C	50	867	1,583
Tower D	30		
Tower E	25	179	n/a
Tower F	25	216	n/a
<b>Total</b>		<b>2040</b>	<b>3,273</b>

### 2 Steeles Avenue West - Gupta Group

Building	# stories	# residential units	Retail/office space (m <sup>2</sup> )
Tower 1	52	584	1,990
Tower 2	52	512	
Tower 3	65	782	
Hotel (in podium)	5	198	14,032
<b>Total</b>		<b>2,088</b>	<b>16,022</b>

## Sustainable Neighbourhood Continued...



*Attendees at the SNAP workshop on January 26, 2020 adding to the Thornhill timeline.*

The Thornhill SNAP study area is located between Bathurst Street and Yonge Street and between Hwy 407 and Steeles Avenue (map is available online at [trca.ca/snap-thornhill](http://trca.ca/snap-thornhill)). This neighbourhood was chosen for a few reasons: flooding is an important concern, there is room to improve community connections, and opportunities to reduce water and energy consumption.

The Thornhill SNAP will align municipal objectives with resident interests. The program aims to identify innovative solutions to community risks and challenges. Solutions could be things like: improving paths and public parks, renovating institutions, helping neighbours meet neighbours, or helping homeowners improve their own energy efficiency and protect their homes from floods.

On January 26, 2020, residents came together with municipal staff in a full day workshop to identify motivating themes for the neighbourhood and project ideas. The SNAP team will be announcing new community engagement opportunities to work jointly in the design of integrated projects for the neighbourhood.

To find out ways to get involved, get in touch with the SNAP team or learn more about the Thornhill SNAP, visit [trca.ca/snap-thornhill](http://trca.ca/snap-thornhill)

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## SFRA'S HISTORY

2015

Gallanough Park storm water issue brings community together

2016

Registered with Vaughan as a Ratepayers Group

First AGM and general elections held

2017

SpringFarm (Sobeys) Plaza development proposal defeated

2018

Missing Link, Yonge Steeles Corridor, Promenade Redevelopment

2019

Third issue of the SFRA News & Views Published and delivered to 8500 residences



## Gallanough Resource Centre: Community Run Non-Profit Family Library

ESTHER BOBET, SFRA DIRECTOR & LINDA ORRIELL, GALLANOUGH



Long-time Springfarm residents may remember the Gallanough Library and the successful battle waged by the community in the late 1990s to save and preserve it. It was closed by the Library Board in 1996. The community rallied and worked with Vaughan City Council and the Public Trustee's Office to save the Gallanough Library.

On November 8, 1999, the library reopened as Gallanough Resource Centre and today it continues to serve the Springfarm and Thornhill areas as a community library for all ages. The Gallanough is also home to Northwood Montessori Preschool, which has partnered with Gallanough since it's beginning.

Visit the Gallanough and you will find 36,000+ books and DVDs available to borrow. Check out latest acquisitions & look up items in the catalogue at [www.gallanough.com](http://www.gallanough.com)

Children's programs include twice weekly story times as well as Summer programs. For the adults, there are two book clubs that meet monthly, with a choice of evening or morning groups. Gallanough's artist-in-residence, Manizhe, will guide you through the process of creating your own masterpiece at Paint Night on the 3rd Monday of each month. At Crafty Fingers Club on the 4th Monday of each month, all ages can create art and craft projects.

Join the Gallanough- the annual family membership of \$12 per year gives you free access to the library collection and most activities, with a nominal charge for some activities. The library is located at 1 Brooke Street and is open Sundays 1-5 pm, Mondays & Wednesdays 2pm - 8pm, Tuesdays & Thursdays 10am - 5pm.

You can also support the Gallanough through your donations. Gallanough accepts current books and DVDs/Blu-rays in good condition. Financial donations are also welcomed - visit [www.gallanough.com](http://www.gallanough.com) for more details.

The Gallanough Resource Centre - pay a visit, join, participate, enjoy!

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Shira Rocklin, Editor [sfranewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:sfranewsletter@gmail.com)

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**THE SFRA EXECUTIVE WISH YOU  
AND YOUR FAMILY THE VERY  
BEST DURING THIS STRESSFUL  
TIME. PLEASE STAY SAFE.**

## What Does “Community” Mean in a Pandemic?

**JORDAN MAX, SFRA VICE-PRESIDENT**

[Editor: opinions expressed below are the author's alone]

“Don't it always seem to go, that you don't know what you've got  
'till it's gone...”

- Joni Mitchell, Big Yellow Taxi

As I write this article, we are in week 3 of Social Distancing to reduce the spread of the COVID-19 Pandemic, with no immediate sight in end. As difficult as this pandemic is for all of us, it has been especially hard for those people who have lost jobs, whose businesses are barely hanging on or working in alternate ways, who are on the front lines in hospitals or other essential services (such as grocery stores and pharmacies), as well as seniors or empty nesters who cannot be with their family members in person. They need our empathy, understanding, and assistance.

We are painfully aware of our temporary and unprecedented separation from communities. What can we do? Perhaps we need to reinterpret what we mean by community.

Community is not only about where we live or work, but rather, the interactions and relationships we have and share with others, whether it's based on interests, faith, causes, ideology, etc. And perhaps it's during this pandemic that we realize which communities we miss the most. And there is still opportunity to not only continue those community interactions and relationships (albeit not in person), but to deepen those relationships and make interactions more meaningful.

This pandemic has also created a community of common experience and challenge. We may be spending a lot more time with our spouses and children than we thought possible – including homeschooling and working from home. That presents its own challenges and opportunities, to share, support, laugh, commiserate, and solve.

We are fortunate to be living in a digital age where communication can take place in many formats: phone, text, social media, video chats and video conferences, and even with group-based activities such as “watch parties” and trivia nights made possible by digital platforms. We are heartened to see that neighbours have been helping neighbours by picking up groceries or medications for them, or even just waving hello when passing by, with 6 feet of distance. It's not too late to start.

Take advantage of the various online tools to stay connected. There are online fitness, recreational, entertainment & social programs through Vaughan, [www.vaughan.ca/services/recreation/pages/resources.aspx](http://www.vaughan.ca/services/recreation/pages/resources.aspx) and online courses and webinars & youtube videos.

While there is no substitute for in-person activity, let's commit to using this time constructively to build and deepen our communities (or even start some new online communities). It's also an opportunity to explore or learn how to

use Facebook, WhatsApp or Zoom. Let's try to spend a little more time on the phone or video chat with our friends, family, neighbours or others to share what we're feeling, listen and get to know people better. Or perhaps to check on those neighbours we don't know so well and who are probably feeling a bit isolated.

We will eventually emerge from this pandemic and return to normal, or the new-normal. The question is really, how we come out of it. Did we make conscious choices to maintain our mental health? Did we reach out to others to connect? If we can improve the frequency and quality of those connections, we will emerge with stronger and more resilient communities in the future, and be better people and citizens for it.



**A new neighbourhood social media tool has become popular in our neighbourhood! There is a lively online community of 897 of your neighbours and growing!**

**Visit NextDoor.ca to join the Crestwood-SpringFarm-Yorkhill neighbourhood.**

## Governing During Covid 19

**ALAN SHEFMAN, WARD 5 COUNCILLOR**

I am writing this on April 4. There is a good possibility that much of what I write about here will be outdated by the time you get to read this article. Everything is changing so rapidly.

I was originally going to write about the significant redevelopment taking place throughout and around the Spring Farm area, with Yonge and Steeles and the Promenade areas being the most noteworthy. Now I wonder just how much of a delay we will see for the projects being planned. I am also very concerned that the Yonge Street Subway extension will be delayed for years because of the funds that would have been directed to transit are now being spent to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Just a few weeks ago we all read about the terrible events in China as that country fought COVID-19. Who would have thought that it would land like a slow moving hurricane in our country and in our neighbourhood? .... Continued on next page.

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## Share your vision of your neighbourhood!

The City of Vaughan and Toronto and Region Conservation Authority have brought a Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program (SNAP) to Thornhill and are inviting residents to share their vision for their neighbourhood. We need help to co-design an action plan and integrated projects, such as parks and trails revitalization, greening of streets and enhancement of community life.

Visit [trca.ca/snap-thornhill](http://trca.ca/snap-thornhill) for more details



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Continued from page 4....

I could not have guessed that over the last three weeks the City of Vaughan would have to go into Emergency Operations with our staff and Members of Council working non-stop to transform virtually every service and facility to our new and evolving norm. This has included first asking people to not use our parks playgrounds and tennis and basketball courts, to shutting those facilities down, posting signs and in some cases cordoning them off with yellow tape. Failure to comply is met with fines up to \$10,000! Our community centres and city hall are closed. Our staff are working from home wherever possible.

Our goal is very simple, to do our very best to ensure that our key services to our residents are maintained at the highest level possible during the fight against the virus. Our goal is to get back to normal as soon as possible.

I am asking all residents of Ward 5 – Thornhill to be kind and respectful to each other and to follow the rules around social distancing.

Keep yourself informed of what is taking place locally – subscribe to my electronic newsletter, W5 Update and to the City of Vaughan newsletter.

Please call my office (905-832-8585 x8349) or Access Vaughan (905-832-2281) if you have any questions or concerns.

Subscribe to W5 Update, the Electronic Newsletter for the Residents of Ward 5 <https://ward5.vaughan.ca/SubscribeCityUpdate> eNewsletter at [vaughan.ca/CityUpdate](http://vaughan.ca/CityUpdate)

## Crestwood Committee Formed to Address Yonge & Steeles Redevelopments

**JORDAN MAX AND ENZO MINGHELLA, CO-CHAIRS**

**Question:** What do you get when you combine four massive high-rise mixed commercial-residential projects being redeveloped in less than a decade, a major intersection, four governments and agencies, a future subway station, and a low-rise neighbourhood?

**Answer:** Yonge & Steeles.

This area is on the verge of a major transformation – four potential 30+ storey high-rise redevelopment projects in close proximity to each other;

- the Gupta Group project at the northwest corner of Yonge & Steeles
- the Humbolt Properties project at 72 Steeles West (Moore's/Montessori) and 7050 Yonge Street (Galleria)
- the Salz Corporation (Westdale/DREAM) project at 100 Steeles Ave. West (Yorkville North)
- the Mizrahi project at 180 Steeles Ave. West

What will these project changes mean for this already traffic-congested area of Ward 5? What is the cumulative impact on local roads, traffic, sewage, water and electrical infrastructure? Shadows and wind effect? Variance with the Council-approved Yonge-Steeles Corridor Secondary Plan? Demand on local schools and community facilities for the estimated 9,600 new residents? What kind of housing types will be built, and how affordable will those housing options be? What kind of internal roads and green space will be designed? How will the four projects relate to each other? How will this sync with the new Yonge Street Subway extension station at Yonge & Steeles? What about the potential traffic chaos over many years of construction (think Eglinton Crosstown)?

**What do the nearby residents on Crestwood and Pinewood Avenue feel about these changes? And how will their voices be heard at City Hall?**

These are only some of the initial questions that the SFRA has been raising with the City, Councillor Shefman, and the four developers. To ensure the SFRA can effectively represent local residents' interests at Vaughan City Hall, we invited the local residents of Crestwood Avenue to an initial meeting last November, and shortly afterwards formed a Crestwood Committee of individuals who volunteered to work with us to address these issues. The Committee members are Teresa Bacinello, Carlo DiPanfilo, Ara Movsessian, Ashley Manoharan, Victor Manoharan, Paulette Novacco, Silvano Novacco, Chester Ray, and Shep Trubkin. Its overall purpose is to provide SFRA with community advice on the development of Yonge & Steeles, and other current local issues.

On December 18, 2019, we invited Councillor Alan Shefman to meet with the Committee to hear their questions and concerns. He indicated that the City would be forming a Yonge-Steeles Group to work with local residents and the developers. This has not yet happened, but things are heating up.

On February 19, 2020, the Salz Corporation (Westdale/DREAM) submitted its proposal and accompanying reports and studies to the City. On February 27, 2020, our Committee received a presentation by Humbolt Properties, and on March 4, 2020, a public open house was held to explain their project to the community. On March 5, 2020 the Mizrahi gave its submission to the City. A March 30th meeting with the Committee was postponed due the COVID-19 situation, and will be rescheduled when it is safe to resume face-to-face meetings.

We are fully expecting that there will be public meetings at City Council (Committee of the Whole) in May or June this year on the Salz and Mizrahi projects, and SFRA plans to be ready to speak up on our concerns. The Crestwood Committee is currently working on a survey of local residents to better understand their questions, concerns and needs, and is "rolling up its sleeves" to work through the redevelopment issues.

There is a tremendous amount of work lying ahead of us in the next several years to try to come up with a neighbourhood plan that works for residents and developers alike. Stay tuned for more information as this story unfolds.

### About the SFRA

The SFRA represents our community in Vaughan from Centre St. to Steeles Ave. and Bathurst St. to Yonge St. – about 8,500 households. We are registered with the City of Vaughan, work closely with our councillor, city departments, and are privy to information about new development proposals, parks, storm water, roads and much more. We are a very mixed neighbourhood – single family homes, townhouses, apartments, condos and many businesses, with a variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

### SFRA Mandate

- To promote a strong sense of community
- To represent the collective welfare of SpringFarm area residents and in matters pertaining to the community which includes measures to improve the community, legislation and good government.
- To regularly seek input and direction from SpringFarm residents and collaborate with other relevant associations and organizations.

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## Change is Coming - Will You Manage It or Will It Manage You?

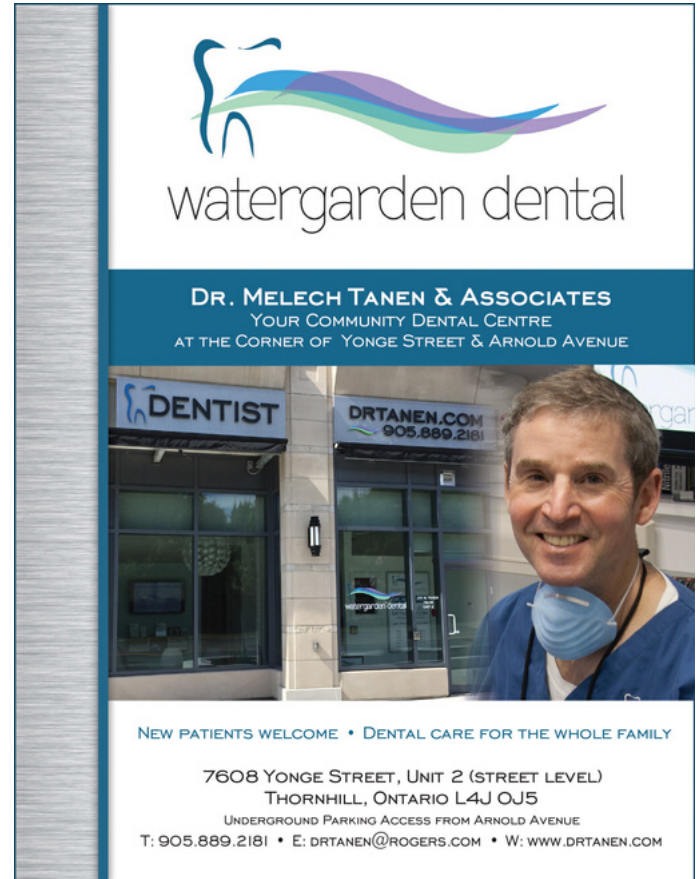
There is much discussion and many differing opinions about the residential intensification drive mandated by the provincial government, especially in the 905 area. That has made people in York Region, especially Thornhill, wary of how their lives will be impacted.

There is little doubt that the community in which we live will change within the next few years from mainly single family homes to skyscrapers of 60 storeys and more. Who could have foreseen such major changes, especially along the Yonge/Steeles corridor? Even the City's Official Plan (OP2010), developed just 10 years ago, gave approval for building heights in that area of 12-15 storeys. Now the City is receiving development proposals of 62 storeys, with densities of more than 5x what is allowed in OP 2010.

What seems to be even more troubling is that the majority of the proposals are for mainly residential units.

It is true that Vaughan, especially Thornhill, has become unaffordable for most people. However, the fact that the majority of new builds along Yonge and Steeles are slated to be residential raises some concerns:

1. Growth must be linked to infrastructure. The infrastructure in Thornhill was built for suburban single family homes, not 60 plus floor skyscrapers that house thousands of new residents. One concern that must be addressed is - can the City's existing wastewater system handle the gray water from thousands of new sinks, toilets, washing machines or is the current system outdated? There are many more.
2. With an expanding population, the Yonge/Steeles area will need additional amenities such as theatres, daycare centers, grocery stores, public swimming pools, professional offices, etc. It will not need an over abundance of retail, restaurants and coffee shops. It would be good to know if the various developers are working together to create a cohesive landscape while offering a diversity of amenities.
3. Housing should be built near employment opportunities. New developments should be a mix of residential, office, commercial and perhaps light manufacturing. Higher densities should be encouraged near job opportunities and that is the best way to develop a well rounded community. If the new development proposals do not create long term well paying jobs then Thornhill will become a warehouse for people who must travel distances to work.
4. Should new residential developments be condo or rental? Thornhill has become unaffordable for many people so if we want housing that people can afford some project models must be changed to include rental. That in itself will change the dynamic of our community.
5. Some developers are proposing to build in Greenbelt areas near our community. Greenbelts do not have the infrastructure to support new developments. This should not be allowed to happen.



These are some of the challenges facing our community in the now. Times are changing and you have an opportunity, before it's too late, to influence change. The SpringFarm Ratepayers Association has been working with our local councillor Alan Shefman, the City's planning department and developers to ensure our community's voice is heard.

It is up to you. If you want to have input into what is happening in our community, tell us what you think and get involved. You can contact the SpringFarm Ratepayers at: [springfarmra@gmail.com](mailto:springfarmra@gmail.com), check out our website at [www.springfarmra.ca](http://www.springfarmra.ca) or find us on Facebook.

Pamela Taraday-Levy, President  
SpringFarm Ratepayers Association

## CONTACT US!!

Please reach out to us. We want to hear about your ideas.

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