

# Pandolfo development in south Aurora approved amid worries from neighbours

**By Brock Weir**

After nearly three years of debate and discussion, Aurora Council signed off on a new subdivision development at the south end of Town last week, and some area neighbours remain less than happy about it.

Known as Pandolfo, the development, which is slated to be built on the west side of Yonge Street just south of Ridge Road, is planned to include 29 new homes, along with open space and trails. But Ridge Road residents continue to express concerns over the impact the subdivision will have on their own community.

The primary complaint stems from access to Ridge Road from Yonge Street. When construction gets underway on the new subdivision, Regional authorities call for an access road to connect the new area to the old and, in anticipation of the Bus Rapid Transit route down Yonge Street, limiting Ridge Road access to Aurora's busiest thoroughfare.

According to one neighbour appearing before Council on behalf of his fellow residents, concerns still linger in the air around access to their street. Further discussions needed to be had on options before the plan went forward, he argued, citing residents that would have to go far out of their way in order to access their own driveways if coming in from Yonge Street.

He also sounded the alarm on what he said the neighbours believe to be possible run-off issues from the new development.

Developers on hand at the meeting, however, rejected the idea there had been 'insufficient time' to consult with the area, and Council, about the plan.

'That has been before you for three years,' said Quinto Anibale, on behalf of the land owners. 'There have been three public meetings, three community meetings, and it has been considered by Council three times. The matter has been discussed to death. There has been adequate opportunity for public input. Public input was considered by both staff and my client, changes were made as we went along, and the public was listened to.'

In addressing the concerns raised last week, Mr. Anibale said there would be sufficient stopping distances on Ridge Road from all directions and a planned, fully signalized intersection with the main entrance way to the new development would be a plus. All options were considered to maintain access on Ridge Road, he added, but limiting access was at the request of the Town and the Region.

Council ultimately shared the view presented by the landowners, arguing it was time to get down to business.

'I had full appreciation of the difficulties residents were speaking about, so the Region went to look at it, the developer looked at it, and the solution to the problem was, instead of having residents of Pandolfo using Ridge Road, the residents of Ridge Road could use the road through Pandolfo to get to Yonge Street with a signalized intersection,' said Councillor Evelyn Buck. 'I can't see any other solution to the problem. There is absolutely nothing that can be done to correct that exit onto Yonge Street from Ridge Road.'

'I understand why the residents don't want to hear that. They have always used it, they are used to using it, and they don't see any reason why they should have it changed. Traffic increases horrendously and even those who have not been here as long must have an appreciation of how the traffic has grown on Yonge Street. Those problems will not go away by themselves. There have to be decisions made that will correct those problems.'

Councillor John Gallo, on the other hand, said it was important to balance full communication with residents while weighing the amount of time this project has been discussed.

'We haven't gotten to this point on an easy road,' he said. 'I typically side on the perspective of giving full exposure to the residents and giving them full opportunity to communicate their perspective on these types of things, particularly if there are changes, and I

am trying to balance that with an application that has been before us for a long, long time.?

With the application before Council for the amount of time that it has, there comes a time when no new information can come forward ? and that time was then, according to Councillor Paul Pirri.

?I think all the residents' concerns have been addressed,? he said. ?At some point they continue to be brought up. I think it is wise to be sceptics sometimes [in wanting more information] but there comes a point in time when all the information has been shown, there are some people who just don't want to believe it, they don't want to trust it and they don't want to move forward.

?We have gone through this a number of times, looking at the cold, hard facts of this application, and I would have a hard, hard time denying it.?