

Attachment



ANDREW PATON, Q.C.

181 University Avenue
Guardian Tower
Suite 2200
Toronto, Ontario M5H 3M7
Tel: (416) 644-1288
Fax: (416) 644-1289
Email: apaton@qclaw.ca

April 23, 2009

VIA EMAIL: councillor_nunziata@toronto.ca

Councillor Frances Nunziata
c/o City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen Street West, Suite C49
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Dear Councillor:

**Re: Society of Portuguese Disabled Persons Building Fund
("The Society")**

Please be advised that I have been retained by The Society to make an application to the Legislative Assembly of Ontario for Private Legislation to allow the Council of the City of Toronto to pass a by-law exempting The Society's property at 2295 St. Clair Avenue West, from taxes for municipal purposes, other than local improvement rates since the purchase of the property

I know you are familiar with the work of The Society. Many individuals with disabilities in the community are often housebound. Unfortunately, they are faced with too many limitations and no physical channels available to allow them to integrate with the rest of society. As such, The Society was formed to help stimulate social activity for the less able.

The Society was formed by a group of businessmen in the Portuguese community who saw the great need for a centre that could offer services in Portuguese to those for whom the English language is another barrier to access. They discovered this especially through their meetings with The Society of Portuguese Disabled Persons of Ontario which has been in existence for approximately 20 years, completely made up of volunteers provided assistance to individuals living with disabilities and their families with support and guidance. There was no fixed address where the volunteers could meet and provide the necessary services.

In 2001, a group of businessmen in the community got together to help this group and formed what is now The Society. The first of many projects was to provide a refurbished special needs bus to transport individuals with disabilities to a great variety of community events which had previously been unattainable for them. Next was to build a centre for all disabled persons regardless of ethnicity. The Society purchased the property at 2295 St. Clair Avenue West and began construction in April of 2004. The total cost of this project is approximately \$5,000,000 and thanks to the tremendous support from corporations, community businesses, families and the hard work of many volunteers, The Society was able to build this centre at no cost to the government, until 2007 when The Society obtained a grant from the Provincial Government to assist the centre in purchasing some necessary equipment.

The Society celebrated the grand opening of the centre on June 23, 2007. The centre is now open from Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm and offers a variety of programs for people of all cultural and ethnic backgrounds with disabilities and provides support to their families. Through various programs, clients continue to learn social skills by group participation build greater independence, self-esteem and facilitate integration within the community. These programs help to develop strong leadership skills which will empower clients to be active and productive members of society.

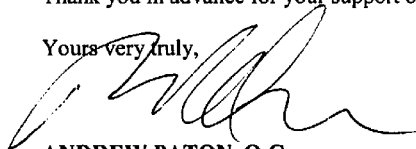
You should also note that The Society is a registered charity, and having no on-going government funding is constantly needing to raise funds for their many programs.

The purpose of this letter is to ask you to provide your support to The Society in obtaining the Private Legislation. In this regard, I would ask you to please take the necessary steps to introduce a Motion at the appropriate Committee of Council such that the Council of the City of Toronto express its support of The Society in seeking Private Legislation to provide for an exemption from property taxes.

The writer and representatives of The Society would be pleased to attend before Committee to provide all necessary information to the Members and answer any questions.

Thank you in advance for your support of this very important undertaking.

Yours very truly,



ANDREW PATON, Q.C.
AP/ph

cc: The Society