

Councillor Rae - FW: Mutual Street park

From: kent darling
To: Kyle Rae <councillor_rae@toronto.ca>
Date: 8/11/2010 4:11 PM
Subject: FW: Mutual Street park

To: councillor_rae@toronto.ca
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Date: Tue, 16 Jun 2009 14:57:36 -0400

Dear Councillor Kyle Rae:

I propose that the Toronto city park on Mutual Street, between Dundas and Shuter Streets be named **Arena Gardens** after the historic building that once stood there.

The park is in the Garden District and is close to both Allen Gardens and Maple Leaf Gardens. The jewel of the park is a beautiful flower garden, cherished by the community and meticulously maintained by the City Parks Department. The park has maturing oak, maple, and spruce trees, a children's play area, and a water fountain for dogs.

Hidden by shrubs, there is a Toronto Historical Board plaque with the following:

On this site, the Arena Gardens, at the time Canada's largest indoor facility, opened 7 October 1912. It became the new home of Toronto's first professional hockey team, the Toronto Arenas, later renamed the Toronto Maple Leafs. Besides hockey, other sports, including bicycle racing, curling, boxing, wrestling and tennis used the space. On 10 June 1925, the building held the inaugural service of the United Church of Canada. Remodelled to include roller skating facilities and renamed the Mutual Street Arena in 1938, it hosted the Glen Miller Band in 1942 and crooner Frank Sinatra in 1948 as well as the city's first boat show in 1954. The Arena was extensively remodelled in 1962 and renamed the Terrace. It was demolished in 1989

In the Toronto Star, Jim Proudfoot wrote:

Before long, people will dwell at Cathedral Square and they'll have no idea, most of them, that their homes sit precisely where so much of this city's history took place. A Stanley Cup was won there and the Maple Leafs started out there. Foster Hewitt broadcast his first hockey game there. Sammy Luftspring fought there and Frank Sinatra sang there. The Harlem Globetrotters entertained there and Torchy Peden rode his bike there.

The current working name, Cathedral Square is secular and has no historical reference. It was the name of the cancelled condominium development originally proposed for the site.

Naming the park **Arena Gardens** references the historic significance of the site, the garden and the Garden District.

Sincerely,