

Corktown Residents & Business Association
351 Queen Street East, P.O Box 82522
Toronto, ON M5A 1T8



Executive Committee
City of Toronto

September 9, 2012

Dear Councillor McConnell,

Re: Executive Committee Item EX22.5 – Commercial/Private Events in City Parks

I have expressed recently to our local Councillor's office our community displeasure with a number of occasions this summer in which access to Sugar Beach and the waterfront promenade in front of the Corus Building were closed to the public for private or controlled events. This is public space resulting from hard-fought battles over many years to increase public access to the waterfront which is a resource which should be available to all Torontonians, not just those who buy special access to it.

Now I have been made aware of this item on the September 10, 2012 Executive Committee in which a Pilot Project is proposed to allow Commercial/Private events in specific parks which will close off those locations to the public for periods approved by the City. Of particular concern to us is the inclusion not only of Sugar beach but also Sherbourne Common in this pilot.

I do not know the cost to produce these spaces, and I have no doubt the current administration is of the view that these costs must be recovered. But these are public funds used to create public spaces which should be regarded as "sacred", only for the use of the public at all times and for which they were intended. Every City-builder and planner will tell you of the absolute necessity to have spaces in cities which are reserved for the exclusive use of the public, open at all times, available for public enjoyment at all times.

The City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto have done extremely well to create these spaces to preserve public access to the water and they have a high destination profile, for local residents, for residents from other parts of the City and for visitors to the City. My recent personal complaint followed being refused access when in the company of two visitors from the UK – the response from my visitors was none too complimentary!

At the very least, these two locations should be removed from the Pilot and any further consideration of Commercial/Private use of public parks.

Regards,

Larry Webb
President, CRBA
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cc: CRBA Board
Councillor Pam McConnell