

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM25.7	ACTION			Ward:27
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Directing Staff to negotiate the acquisition of 11 Wellesley Street West from Infrastructure Ontario for park purposes - by Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Government Management Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Kristyn Wong-Tam, seconded by Councillor Paul Ainslie, recommends that:

1. City Council direct the City Manager, the Director, Real Estate Services, in consultation with the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation, the Toronto Parking Authority and the Ward Councillor, to negotiate with Infrastructure Ontario and the Ontario Government and report back to the October 18, 2012 meeting of Government Management Committee on the results of negotiations to acquire 11 Wellesley Street West for parkland purposes.

Summary

The lands known as "11 Wellesley" are located at 11 Wellesley Street West and are bounded by the streets, Wellesley, Breadalbane, St. Luke's Lane and Bay (rear).

The entire 2.10 acres of land was originally donated in the late 1980s by the provincial government to construct a new ballet and opera house designed by world renowned architect Moshe Safdie. Construction was supposed to begin in 1991 and when the Ontario recession set in the subsequent year, all funding by the three levels of government was withdrawn. Specifically, \$65 million from the provincial government, \$88 million from the federal government and \$20 million from Metro Toronto, and the project was terminated.

The site has remained abandoned for 20 years with a brief appearance as a temporary skateboard park.

Recently, Infrastructure Ontario and the Ministry of Finance have deemed 11 Wellesley as surplus land and ordered the sale of the land, despite communication from the Ward Councillor, the local Member of Provincial Parliament, numerous community and local resident groups to retain the site and convert it into much needed parkland.

The Medical Officer of Health in his November 21, 2011 report, "Improving Health and Health Equity through the Toronto Parks Plan 2011" identified that parks help promote health for all by: reducing risk factors for chronic diseases, promoting mental health and well-being, promoting social cohesion and improving environmental quality.

Ward 27 is the second most populous ward in the City of Toronto and with more high-rise development than any other ward, the area of interest has exceeded the provincial growth targets set out by the Province.

This area of the City is in the lowest of the five levels of existing local parkland provision as set out in Map 8B of the Official Plan. The percentile measurement for this area is 0.06ha/1000 population. This area is also in a Local Parkland Acquisition Priority Area characterized by high growth and subject to development pressure. This priority area is ascribed as a "Major Change Area."

(Submitted to City Council on July 11 and 12, 2012 as MM25.7)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM25.7