

Greetings to the City Clerk, Toronto Councillors, and Mayor Tory,

Re: Maintenance of Jean Augustine Park Pond (EY25.34) – City Council Consideration on November 7, 2017

My name is Randy Barba and I am a resident of the rapidly expanding Humber Bay Shores neighbourhood. I am very active in our community and sit on a variety of local committees and boards – even creating and chairing one – and I thank you all in advance for considering the following:

I am writing today to express my opposition to the proposed feasibility study for an ornamental fountain in Jean Augustine Park, as well as my opposition to the capital project and expenditure in general. I am requesting that EY25.34 be retracted for further consideration of alternate options for the site – notably a children’s playground. Similar fountain projects referenced in the report reached capital costs of over \$1 million, let alone their long term operating and maintenance costs. Recent playground projects throughout Toronto have an average capital cost of around \$350k, representing a far cheaper option that is in fact desired by and needed in the Humber Bay Shores community.

Like many young families moving into condos throughout the City, I have a young daughter and am eager to live and grow my family in Humber Bay Shores. I am passionate about complete communities and family infrastructure, and Humber Bay Shores has been left behind in that regard. We have thousands of units with a population expected to exceed 30,000 residents at full occupancy, yet we have no playground, no school, no community centre, and no plans for any of them. The majority of families in our community are not within reasonable walking distance to a playground, and that is not acceptable in a community of over 20,000 people. We do not need an ornate and prohibitively expensive fountain, we need improved community infrastructure.

I would also like to formally take issue with and make Council aware of the false claim on page three of the report from the PFR General Manager on the matter, which states that the “community [has] requested that the pond be converted into an ornamental feature.” The Humber Bay Shores community has not been consulted on this project since I moved here over three years ago, and references to consultations done on this issue appear to date back to the mid 2000’s. Times and demographics have changed dramatically since then, and a better understanding of the needs and desires of the community should be assessed and obtained before suggesting the fountain is a community supported project. In the mean time, that line should be retracted from the report or at the very least ignored.

A new playground in Jean Augustine Park would be a more cost effective and needed capital investment in our area. It would provide accessible play to countless kids who currently lack access to it, and it would serve the long term needs of a growing and diversifying community. I hope Council will consider all of the above in addressing this item at the upcoming gathering of City Council: I encourage council to vote for postponement of this study at the very least, and at best vote to amend the proposal to also study the installation of a playground alternative.

Thank you again,
Randy Barba