



located in the heart of the historical Garment and Warehouse District

The Mayor's Executive Committee
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, M5H 2N2

Toronto, January 23, 2018

Members of the Mayor's Executive Committee,

I would have liked to present our case in person, but I am currently working on a Habitat for Humanity project in Central America, planned long before I knew of this committee meeting on a subject of such importance for us.

Le Sélect has been a downtown landmark for forty years. Originally located on Queen Street West, we moved twelve years ago to Wellington Street West, attracted by the heritage character of the district and its mix of blue and white collars. We bought and renovated a vacant building and reopened successfully in a neighbourhood we felt we could call home.

Twelve years ago we were paying some \$2,000 per month (two) in Municipal tax. In four years we will be paying \$20,000 a month (twenty), having just been reassessed. Needless to say that this is unsustainable. The so-called "highest and best use" which guides the assessment process means that the service we offer to Torontonians, the seventy five full-time and lasting jobs we provide are worth significantly less than if we were a parking lot being primed for redevelopment.

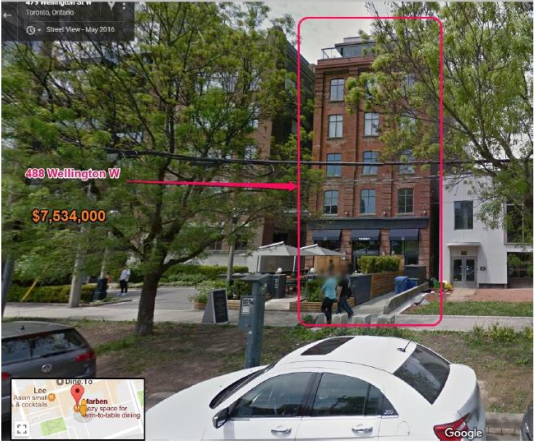
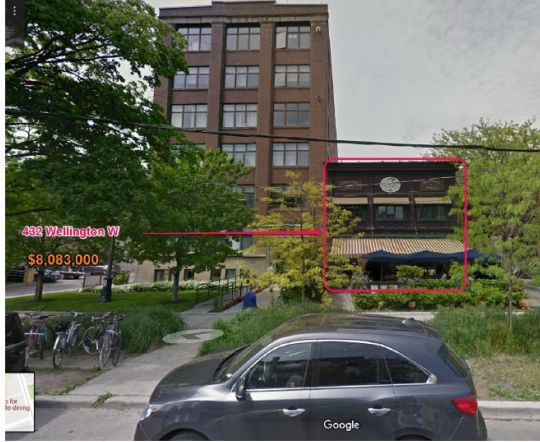
Some of our employees' length of service is measured in decades. Employees with ten, twenty and more than thirty years of service are not a rarity at Le Sélect; they are the norm. Where are they going to find equivalent work at similar remunerations when they are above fifty years of age? How do I explain to them that we will be taxed to our last cent and that once we become unprofitable it no longer makes sense to carry-on?

I am aware that a city is not static and that it evolves constantly. I know that no one is indispensable, that we are all replaceable. But our clientele, equally loyal and supportive, will miss us. Many of our guests have profound memories of our establishment. Some have been engaged here, have celebrated their weddings, childbirths, anniversaries, and remembered lost loved ones at wakes. Our walls are the custodians of their memories. Will those be better kept by the multi-story condo tower which will stand in our place after we fold and which the neighbours will no doubt fight tooth and nail as unwanted?

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Phase-in Assessment	3,786,250	5,218,500	6,650,750	8,083,000
Mill rate	2.520223%			
Municipal tax	93,667	131,518	167,614	203,710
SUMMARY			Tax increase	
Tax years	2007	2016	\$	%
Tax paid	31,276	60,131	28,855	92%
Tax years	2016	2020		
Projected tax	60,131	203,710	143,579	239%
Increase multiple for year 2020 over 2016			3.39	

Our patrons have voiced their support, offering to sign a petition which, in a short time, would garner thousands of signatures.

The inequity of the current tax system is highlighted below. How can one find it fair that a two-story building with a single occupant pays more in tax than a six-story building with a larger footprint, and thirteen tenants sharing a lesser tax?

<p>488 WELLINGTON STREET WEST Municipal Tax: \$189,857</p> 	<p>432 WELLINGTON STREET WEST Yearly Municipal Tax: \$203,692</p> 
<p>Lot size: 10,357 sq feet (22% more than 432 Wellington W) Six-story building Assessed at \$7,534,000 Multiple occupants: 13 businesses</p>	<p>Lot size: 8,500 sq feet Two-story building Assessed at \$8,083,000 (7% more than 488 Wellington W) Single occupant: Le Sélect Bistro</p>

I thank councillors Cressy and Wong-Tam for having listened to the plight of small-business owners in their wards, for their search of a solution, and I thank the Mayor's Executive Committee for treating the matter with the urgency it deserves and for making it a priority while our communities are still vibrant with life.

Yours truly,



Frédéric Geisweiller
Propriétaire
Le Sélect Bistro
432 Wellington Street West
Toronto, M5V 1E3

cc.: Councillors Joe Cressy and Kristyn Wong-Tam