

CONDOLENCE MOTION

Moved by: Councillor Adam Vaughan

Seconded by: Councillor Gord Perks

The Mayor and Members of Toronto City Council are deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Paul Sannella on December 12, 2010.

Queen Street West lost a big part of its creative history this weekend when Cameron House co-owner and visionary arts patron passed away.

Paul Sannella was a fixture behind the bar at the Cameron House on Queen Street West. In 1981, he and Anne-Marie Ferraro and friend Herb Tookey took over the dilapidated hotel and re-imagined it as a live/work space for local artists and an intimate music venue for the emerging Queen West scene.

Many local acts like Blue Rodeo, Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet, Jane Siberry, Molly Johnson, the Leslie Spit Trio, Gordie Johnson and Handsome Ned played some of their earliest gigs in the cozy back room, and some even lived upstairs.

Many artists and musicians actually paid for their rooms with their creative work, which fostered an artistic community unique to the building. The sprawling musician collective concept may have been popularized in recent years by the likes of Broken Social Scene, but Cameron House veterans will tell you that it was taken for granted back in the early days of the Toronto indie scene.

Over the years the surrounding neighbourhood changed greatly, but the Cameron House has continued to embody the innovative ideas originally championed by Sannella and his partners.

It's rare that the owner of a bar would leave such an important legacy behind, but then again, the Cameron House was never ordinary.

The City Clerk is requested to convey, on behalf of the Members of Toronto City Council, our sincere sympathy to Paul Sannella's family.

December 16, 2010