

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM28.6	ACTION			Ward:17
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Uranium Processing Facility at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue - by Councillor Cesar Palacio, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

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

Recommendations

Councillor Cesar Palacio, seconded by Councillor Ana Bailão, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to further review the General Electric (GE)-Hitachi plant's operations at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue.
2. City Council request the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission to instruct the GE-Hitachi plant operators to provide full disclosure of its activities to Toronto Public Health.
3. City Council request Toronto Public Health to list Uranium as a priority substance, and to display the results of soil samples and air emission tests on its ChemTRAC database.
4. City Council request the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture to meet with General Electric Staff to establish a five-year plan to discontinue the production of Uranium pellets at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue, in order to find another manufacturing use that is compatible with the surrounding community while maintaining high quality paying jobs.

Summary

It is important to note that the GE-Hitachi facility which utilizes natural uranium in its manufacturing process is NOT regulated, nor licensed by the City of Toronto. Toronto Public Health does not track uranium as a priority substance or catalogue chemical emissions of this kind. It does, however, maintain a ChemTRAC database where it keeps a list of places where toxic substances are used –and this location at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue is not on it.

Elected Officials in the Davenport community have been advised by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission that the GE-Hitachi plant located at 1025 Lansdowne Avenue has been manufacturing ceramic pellets since the early 60's operating in a safe, responsible manner for more than 50 years, employing more than 50 people at the facility in high-tech and

administrative positions.

However, when the plant first began its operations, it was surrounded by other heavy industrial uses which have since given way to a large vibrant residential area known as the Davenport Village.

When GE shut down all its operations in 1981, the south-west quadrant of Lansdowne Avenue and Davenport Road, it left behind heavily contaminated vacant buildings and lands laced with PCB's and other toxic materials. The ensuing wasteland created real environmental concerns and an eyesore to the local community. It took us more than 20 years of hard work, vision and perseverance to clean up the lands – the Ontario Ministry of the Environment ensured rigorous compliance of the regulations before the lands were allowed to be incrementally redeveloped.

Only through community hard work and political leadership, were we able to transform the area into one of the jewels of Ward 17. For example, retrofitting the “Foundry Lofts” warehouse was worthy of a “heritage designation” award earlier this year –for its massive scale, breathtaking atrium, roofing shape and classical detailing. The spirit and character of the neighbourhood has changed to the point of attracting the highest quality of growth and rejuvenation. The level of gentrification within this new subdivision continues to receive accolades from the development community for its architectural design, which our community is very proud of.

Equally important, a number of Davenport Village residents would prefer the GE-Hitachi uranium processing plant consider relocating its operation to another appropriate location given the lack of land use compatibility, which is not in keeping with the spirit and character of this residential community.

Residents welcome factual information concerning this GE operation, and are concerned with negative media attention based on hear-say, hysteria, propaganda, and rhetorical questions as a substitute.

While the issue at hand is federally regulated, under the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, and the City relies on federal regulators to ensure safe operations, Toronto City Council can engage and act on resident's requests and safety concerns.

(Submitted to City Council on November 27 and 28, 2012 as MM28.6)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM28.6