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Date: 6/11/2013 4:06 PM
Subject: TE24.83: Letter of Support for Heritage Designation
CC: <talktoCityManager@toronto.ca>, <clerk@toronto.ca>
Attachments: TE24.83_Letter_of_Support_UTGSU.pdf

To: The Mayor and Council of the City of Toronto
Re: TE24.83: Proposed Heritage Designation for Back Campus

Please find attached a letter of support from the Graduate Students' Union, at the University of Toronto (UTGSU), in favour of the the motion regarding the designation of Back Campus at the University of Toronto as a heritage site within the City (item TE24.83).

Respectfully,

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Graduate Students' Union, University of Toronto - Fighting For Our Members Since 1919.

"Revolution." She answered decisively. "We can't have education without revolution. We have tried peace education for 1,900 years and it has failed. Let us try revolution and see what it will do now."
- Helen Keller, Why I Became an IWW.



GRADUATE STUDENTS' UNION

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
LOCAL 19, CANADIAN FEDERATION OF STUDENTS

Dear Mayor Ford and Councillors of the City of Toronto,

The University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union writes to you to inform you of our position regarding the redevelopment of Back Campus. At the March 28th Meeting of our General Council – a body of one hundred and forty-four graduate students representing fifteen thousand members – we passed a motion to oppose the planned Back Campus changes for the Pan Am Games. Given poor consultation with our members, graduate students of the University of Toronto have again chosen to defend open access to a well-utilized, heritage space.

This is not the first time that the University has tried to develop the Back Campus space with little to no community or campus consultation. In the 1890's, the University attempted to develop the field for building space, but students themselves paid to maintain a green commons for posterity. Since then, the University has continued to attempt develop its space consistently throughout the decades. In the 1990's, the University attempted to replace the field with an underground parking lot and an Astroturf playing surface above, but graduate students again defended the space from development.

And let us not forget that in 1997, following years of strife regarding University expansion, the City forced the University to consult with it via a Campus-Community Committee. The very same committee's members raised alarm at the current redevelopment of Back Campus this past November. As well, we have learned that even those in Governing Council were not given adequate time to consider this project, being swiftly handed documents during an *in camera* session of said body.

Members of Governing Council could not consider the long history of Back Campus, from its early days serving as the home of 'K' Company to its use as a training ground in the First and Second World Wars. If more time had been given, it would have been clear that members of our community have used the space for sport of all kinds, bringing together the various colleges since the University's founding.

This past holds true today as students and community members continue to use Back Campus for everything from Orientation to intramural women's rugby. In fact, those same rugby players stand against the development of the field – its proposed water-based surface will be unsafe for contact sports and unsuitable for other casual use.

The Graduate Students' Union believes that this development neither respects our heritage nor looks towards a future we wish to see for our University. While we believe in the spirit of sport and competition, we believe this project is not in the best interest of the wider needs of our campus community. On behalf of our members, we urge Toronto City Council to support the designation of Back Campus as a heritage site.

Regards,

The Executive Committee of the University of Toronto Graduate Students' Union