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THE RT. HON. ADRIENNE CLARKSON PC, CC, CMM, COM, CD

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

June 11th, 2013

RE: Proposed plans for the University of Toronto Back Campus

Dear Councillors,

I want to signal to you my concern about the Back Campus at the University of Toronto and the possibility of it being transformed into an Astroturf field hockey pitch. There are a number of reasons which I think are important in my strong feelings about this matter.

First, I am a resident of the Annex neighbourhood of which the University of Toronto Back Campus is a very important part. The green spaces on the campus like King's College Circle and the Back Campus are precious lungs for city dwellers. In the intense urban landscape, they provide ecologically safe and environmentally sound areas for the activities of all residents, not just students privileged to be at the University.

The back campus has always been used freely for sports of all kinds, family picnics and events providing natural terrain of grass and dirt which is a suitable background for these healthy activities.

57 years ago I came as a freshman to the University of Toronto and the Back Campus was an important part of my life then, both recreationally and for intramural sports. In the years since, I have always resided within 2 kilometers of the campus when I have lived in Toronto. This campus has been designated into three parts, one of which is heritage and the Back Campus is part of this.

I understand the desire to transform this area into a professional and elite sports compound, but I do not agree with it. This Back Campus has always belonged to the citizens of Toronto and it is tangibly a part of all our necessities as people living downtown.

Please do not think that the people who are opposed to the Back Campus simply do not want change. I think you can see from the kinds of people who are deeply concerned about this are among the thought leaders and innovators in our city. I feel that we would lose something very precious if we transformed the Back Campus into a defined space for specific elite activity.

I plead with you as City Councillors for Toronto to address this question, understanding that the Back Campus is part of the fabric of how we live together in this city. Its accessibility to everyone at anytime is the most democratic use of the space and must be preserved.

Yours sincerely,



Adrienne Clarkson