



Comments by the Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Association Concerning the Notice of Public Meeting and invitation to comment on the Official Plan Amendment (new Secondary Plan) relating to “Mimico-by-the-Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community”

Date: March 27, 2013

RE: **Notice of Public Meeting dated April 9, 2013 – Official Plan Amendment
Application No.: 103514 STE 30 TM**

Attention: City Clerk – Rosemary Mackenzie, Etobicoke York Community Council
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Matthew Premru – email – mpremru@toronto.ca

Pursuant to the Notice of Public Meeting and invitation to comment on the Official Plan Amendment (new Secondary Plan) relating to “Mimico-by-the-Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community”, the Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Association (MBTLBIA) makes the following comments.

The Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Association’s boundaries are within the “Village Heart” Revitalization Plan along Lake Shore Blvd West. Our executive and other BIA members have been active and attended all the prior consultation meetings organized by the City’s consultants since 2006. We affirm that there has been ample opportunity for all residents/business owners to have input into the consultative process over the past few or more years. The area under study is not unique and lessons learned (both positive and negative) can be sought from looking at the Humber Bay Shores region immediately to the east. Some of the negatives include traffic congestion, inadequate lay-by parking, minimal animal amenities (at Condo property sites), high-rise population density concerns, and minimal ground level green space on building sites. There are obvious benefits from development as well; for instance, Section 37 funding (if applied within the area) for parkland and other community enhancements.

Mimico by-the-Lake is an old, established neighbourhood with many appealing areas as well as many sections in a state of disrepair. The latter encourages or appears to be related to crime, graffiti and loss of pride to maintain properties. Similar problems exist everywhere but there are opportunities for change; namely the 20-20 Revitalization Plan.

These challenges for any area undergoing revitalization would have resulted in progressive planning in other mixed-use communities bordering on Lake Shore and the Lake – e.g., Bronte, Oakville, Port Credit, Burlington, etc. These village-style neighbourhoods have been revitalized resulting in quality residential living and robust commerce. So the time has come for Mimico by-the-Lake area to undergo quality revitalization. MBTLBIA supports the efforts and final recommendations relating to “Mimico-by-the-Lake Project 20/20: A Perfect Vision for our Community”. In particular, we support any project that reasonably improves the streetscape and attracts commerce and creates a framework to encourage investment and employment opportunities in the area.

We wish to draw to your attention an area of concern. The 20-20 Revitalization Plan is stated to provide for the expansion and improvement of waterfront parks. At the foot of Mimico Avenue and Lake Shore Blvd West, the Amos Waites Park is becoming a popular and busy hub with Mimico Square events. The swimming pool, pedestrian access to the Linear Park extension both to the east and west, a proposed dingy ramp at the foot of the linear park for visiting boaters (750 boats in Mimico harbour with 1000 boating visitors per summer), a proposed splash pad for children and the 20-20 Revitalization plans for Mimico by-the-Lake prompt BIA/residents' need for a successful facility and vibrant Mimico Community square.

In looking at principles that make a vibrant community square, a 2005 Study concluded the following essential elements;

- ✓ image/identity (e.g., link to lake and yacht clubs, Board walk and business, residential HBSCA and central Mimico communities),
- ✓ attractions (e.g., band shell, children's amenities, programmed activities),
- ✓ central location reaching in all directions (stop light at foot of Mimico Ave., transportation links, amenities (lighting, seating, public art, unobstructed pedestrian pathways, shade areas, washrooms, waste receptacles, parking, etc.),
- ✓ seasonal strategy (art displays, skating, concerts, swimming, cafes, X-mas tree lighting events),
- ✓ easy facility access (Mimico Square is on the main road and waterfront path with adjacent stores nearby),
- ✓ a structural facility for community shareholder use (meetings, police stop, events, classes),
- ✓ municipal and community volunteer activity management (BIAs, ratepayer/resident committee, City support staff, maintenance/safety, policing station need), partnership funding (BIA, film/art projects, markets, City).

So it is clear that Amos Waites Park has many natural attributes inherent in its location and the redesigned development to date (cement pad, band shell, pool, lake access, etc). Hence the BIAs recommendation; consistent with effective planning, to consider all elements in making the park all it can be. Amos Waites Park/Mimico Square will represent the “Village Heart” with a neighbourhood draw to the Lake.

As stated our BIA has been actively engaged in the Mimico 20/20 Revitalization process over the past 7-8 years; and as a result, we've concluded that creating a vibrant Mimico Square is essential to the growth of our community. We consider that the physical premises at Storefront Humber (SFH) could be an asset to the *entire* business, resident and visiting community. We value the in-house services

provided by SFH but, naturally, have to consider the future use of such a strategic facility as a benefit to all in the community. With the plan for SFH to expand because of physical need, it seemed that SFH has outgrown its space needs and requires larger premises? This is why - with the building lease of a publically-owned asset coming due in 2016 - we needed to propose alternatives before rather than after 2016 when the building would be locked into another lease. We propose that the facility described could be used as a community centre – this was a recommendation arising from 20-20 revitalization public consultations.

To affirm the significance of the Amos Waites Park by the City, the following is taken from the **AMENDMENT NO. 197 TO THE OFFICIAL PLAN OF THE CITY OF TORONTO** document; Amos Waites Park is a “central recreational and social focus for the community, complementary to the Village Heart. This may include the expansion of the public park and enhanced park facilities and programming”. The park stated to be the “primary community social and recreational hub” and “priority consideration shall be given for new investment in facilities and programming as well as opportunities for further parkland acquisition”.

The Mimico Residents Association has shared their recent on-line survey results; namely, that there is good support for the 20/20 plan to be approved in its current form, that the number of rental housing units in Mimico should not be increased, and that any replacement rental units should be located on or close to the original site. We support these consensus opinions.

It has been stated by certain factions opposing the new Secondary Plan that any development along the waterfront will create a wall or obstacle to the Lake. In its current historic form, that wall has already existed up to present time – a wall of 50-plus year-old, low to mid rise buildings abut with parking lots bordering along the shore. There is no access to the Lake from Superior Avenue eastward to Grand Harbour (Fleeceline Avenue). Even with the addition of the Linear Park, access points to the Lake from Lake Shore Blvd are still limited (accessible at Superior and Amos Waite Park). We feel that the 20-20 Revitalization Plan will create more people-friendly, right of entry points to the lake.

We are not in favour of seeing high-density, tall-rise towers of the type seen along Park Lawn and Humber Bay Shores. We are in favour of quality mid-rise re-development recommendations consistent with infrastructure capacity. That said and despite the best of planning, we have concerns over the ability of the Ontario Municipal Board to counter any community or City Planning recommendation (e.g., Park Lawn hi-rise tower development). In this regard, we support the private members bill sponsored by MPP Rosario Marchese, namely Bill 20, Respect for Municipalities Act (City of Toronto), 2013, which underwent first reading in January that proposes exempting Toronto from the jurisdiction of the Ontario Municipal Board.

In Summary:

The Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Association supports the Amendment to the Official Plan including the new Secondary Plan for the Mimico-by-the-Lake community (Application No. 07 103514 STE 30 TM). Since 2006, there has been ample and reasonable opportunity for public input into the consultative process. Specifically considering our above-mentioned points and supportive comments, we urge that the 20-20 Revitalization Plan be approved.

Dr. Maureen Henderson
Chair, on behalf of the Mimico-by-the-Lake Business Improvement Association



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