



Mimico Lakeshore Network
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June 17, 2013

To the Councillors of Etobicoke-York Community Council:

We are writing on behalf of the Mimico Lakeshore Network, an umbrella group that brings together ten different community groups that have concerns relating to the Secondary Plan for Mimico-by-the-Lake.

Our group submitted comments prior to the Statutory Public Meeting of April 9, 2013, and proposed amendments to the draft Secondary Plan being considered by community Council at that time. It is not our purpose to repeat what was said then; we merely note that it was our desire to limit building heights and densities to “mid-rise” proportions in all of Mimico-by-the-Lake, and to require more units suitable for large households than will be called for in the Secondary Plan now being proposed. It appears that we were heard but not heeded, and it is with considerable disappointment that we anticipate the adoption of height limits ranging up to 25 storeys. Such a height is excessive in itself; but moreover, it is to be feared that individual developers will attempt to negotiate exceptions to this limitation, even when a Secondary Plan is in place.

Our purpose now is to affirm that we nevertheless support the adoption of the Secondary Plan for Mimico-by-the-Lake, subject to some observations we would make on the latest amendments to the plan found in the staff report for action.

We note that transit improvements have been added as a potential Section 37 community benefit “to be considered where appropriate”. While transit improvements are to be welcomed, we wish to assert that in general, transit improvements should be funded by means of revenue tools other than Section 37 funds. When Section 37 monies are used, it will mean that transit improvements are being bought at the cost of accepting buildings of a greater height and density than would otherwise be allowed.

We support the designation of certain older buildings and gardens in the Mimico Estates as heritage assets, and encourage Community Council to adopt the amendment to Section 6.1 of the draft Secondary Plan (Special Policy Area 1) which would limit the maximum building height in that area to 25 storeys, in line with the other areas included in the Secondary Plan.

Lastly, we welcome the reaffirmation of the Rental Replacement policy, and urge Community Council to avoid weakening it in any way.

In sum, it is our view that the Secondary Plan for Mimico-by-the-Lake, in the form now being proposed, would be beneficial to our community, despite the fact that some of the major changes we advocated have not been included. We anticipate that when decisions have to be made about new development in Mimico, the City's planning staff will be called upon to reconcile the needs and values of the current residents with the pressure of market forces, provincial government policies on land use, and the interests of landowners and developers. In such a context, a Secondary Plan will provide the planners with a set of tools with which to respond to applications for new development in a way that is more likely to lead to a satisfactory outcome. It will be the landowners and developers who initiate proposals for new construction, and who at once have the opportunity to negotiate with the City about the shape of the new structures and the conditions of their being built. Public consultation will come later; the public will not be at the table when the negotiations begin. A Secondary Plan will be an instrument for making the public interest a presence at the negotiations from the outset. For this purpose an imperfect Secondary Plan will be far better than no plan at all (other than the City's overall Official Plan). Therefore we urge Community Council to adopt the Secondary Plan and recommend its enactment by City Council.

For the Mimico Lakeshore Network,

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