



Mimico Lakeshore Network

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To the members of Etobicoke-York Community Council:

We are writing on behalf of the Mimico Lakeshore Network, an umbrella group that brings together nine different community organizations that have concerns relating to the development of Mimico.

The Mimico Lakeshore Network wishes to express its enthusiastic support for the renewal project proposed by Wesley Mimico United Church. It has been the shared purpose our member organizations to promote the building of a *community*, rather than merely adding to the housing stock. The new Wesley Mimico Place will be most welcome to all those who have the building of community at the centre of their values.

The launching of Wesley Mimico Place will contribute to the building of community in several distinct ways. First, it will allow Wesley Mimico United Church to continue as a vibrant worshipping community and as a wellspring of valuable charitable work. Secondly, it will provide housing for middle-income seniors in a setting providing fellowship and communal activity that cannot otherwise be found in the neighbourhood. The life-lease arrangement will be a first in South Etobicoke, and is expected to cost less than condominium ownership, although it will be well above what is defined as "affordable" housing in City policies. Thirdly, it will provide recreational facilities and space for community activities that is sorely needed in this locality. Fourth, it will make possible the preservation of a much-loved heritage building that is a noted Mimico landmark -- and do so in a way that also honours the social and cultural heritage of Wesley Mimico United Church.

We urge our Community Council and City Council to allow the flexibility with respect to heritage attributes that will be needed to make the plan practicable -- in particular with regard to the existing sanctuary space, the new formal entrance and terrace on the south side of the building that is indispensable to achieving ground-level accessibility to the new sanctuary for people with disabilities (something that will soon be a provincial requirement), and the addition on the north side that is required to make underground parking feasible. This will indeed require some compromises with the strictest possible standards for preserving the physical details of heritage architecture. If these compromises set a precedent, it is the right one: saving a treasured heritage building that will now continue to serve as a centre for community activity, and whose future would otherwise be in doubt, amply merits this degree of flexibility in the application of our standards for the preservation of heritage structures.

For the Mimico Lakeshore Network,

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