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BY E-MAIL & COURIER

November 19, 2013
File No.: 133752.1001

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West, 10th Floor
West Tower
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attention: Ms. Nancy Martins, Administrator,
Planning and Growth Management Committee

Dear Ms. Martins:

**Re: Planning and Growth Management Committee Item No. PG28.2
Official Plan and Municipal Comprehensive Reviews: Amendments to the
Official Plan for Economic Health and Employment Lands Policies and
Designations and Recommendations on Conversion Requests
40 Reading Court**

We are counsel to the House of Praise - the Redeemed Christian Church of God (the "House of Praise"), owners of the property municipally known as 40 Reading Court in the former City of Etobicoke (the "Property").

House of Praise

The House of Praise is a non-denominational, Pentecostal and international Church, and is one of the parishes of the Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). RCCG was founded in 1952 and presently has over 6000 parishes in the world, with over 3 million members. The RCCG has been involved in establishing schools, rehabilitation centres, child care and support centres.

House of Praise supports a number of local charity initiatives such as "Operation Christmas Child" which involved the donation of over 1,000 Christmas gift boxes to children across the world, and "Easter Lunch on Jesus" which delivers non-perishable food boxes to 1,000 government subsidized homes in Brampton, Mississauga and Toronto. Funds have also been raised through House of Praise to support the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Sleeping Children Around the World, the DAM (a community centre in the City of Mississauga focused on

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“D”evelopment, “A”ssistance and “M”entoring) and Eva’s Initiative (which creates opportunities for homeless youth).

Background relating to Property

In March, 2010, the House of Praise entered into an agreement of purchase and sale to acquire the Property for the purposes of constructing a 4-storey, 12,030 square metre place of worship with ancillary uses. On December 31, 2012, an official plan amendment, zoning by-law amendment and site plan approval applications were filed to facilitate the proposed place of worship on the Property.

The Property is designated as an *Employment Area* and located within an Employment District under the current Official Plan. The Property is also within the Lester B. Pearson International Airport Operating Area, which is included as Special Policy Area 29 in Section 7 of the Official Plan. Places of worship are contemplated within this current policy framework subject to specific locational criteria as well as Transport Canada guidelines.

Issues with the Proposed *Core Employment Area* Designation and Policies

An official plan amendment has been requested to address locational requirements for a place of worship in *Employment Areas*. Places of worship are a permitted use within *Employment Areas* and may locate on major streets, which are shown on Map 3 of the current Official Plan. Reading Court is not a major street shown on Map 3, however, it is in proximity to a major street (Skyway Drive). Other factors support the establishment of a place of worship on the Property: the proposed place of worship will generally operate at off-peak hours; Reading Court is cul-de-sac street; and parking is to be provided on the Property.

The proposed Official Plan Amendment No. 231 (the “**Proposed OPA**”) designates the Property as a *Core Employment Area*, which would permit a variety of business and industrial uses. The *Core Employment Area* designation does not permit places of worship, notwithstanding that other sensitive land uses, such as hotels and trade schools, are permitted within the *Core Employment Area* designation.

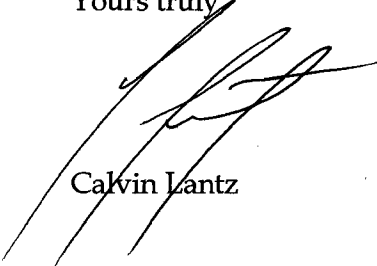
The Property is currently vacant and is in close proximity to two hotels, a trade school and a single-storey office building to the east. There are also many existing places of worship in the area surrounding the Property, including those located at 272 & 285 Attwell Drive, 23 Fasken Drive, and 151 & 161 Skyway Avenue. As such, in considering the potential for future compatibility issues, sensitive land uses have already been established in close proximity to the Property and any proposed place of worship on the Property would not create any additional or unacceptable land use incompatibilities. When considered in context with the land uses immediately surrounding the Property (e.g. adjacent hotels, offices and a trade school), the proposed place of worship is compatible with adjacent land uses and a desirable land use on the Property.

Accordingly, we request that the Proposed OPA include a Site and Area Specific Policy to permit a place of worship on the Property.

Please provide us with copies of all staff reports, notice of any public meeting and copies of all decisions of City Council or its committees with respect to the Plan.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Yours truly



Calvin Lantz

CWL/mc

cc. Pastor Wale Akinsiku, *House of Praise*
Councillor Doug Ford