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December 2, 2013

Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly and Members of Executive Committee

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5V 2N2

Atten: Ms. Kelly McCarthy
Council Secretariat Support

Email: exc@toronto.ca
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Dear Deputy Mayor Norm Kelly & Members of Executive Committee

EX36.7: Request to Amend the Tripartite Agreement for Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport
Executive Committee Meeting No. 36 December 5, 2013

CORRA, the Confederation of Resident and Ratepayer Associations in Toronto, is writing to inform Toronto and East York Community Council's Billy Bishop Airport Subcommittee, Executive Committee, and Members of City Council of our position on the requested change to permit the use of jets at the Toronto Island Airport, known as Billy Bishop Airport.

As with many matters, CORRA's position is to speak for groups who may otherwise not have a voice. CORRA has chosen to speak for:

1. the environment and the need for the City of Toronto to honor the Official Plan's Environmental Policies; and
2. the migratory, residential and sanctuary birds and their natural flight paths.

CITY OF TORONTO OFFICIAL PLAN

CORRA along with a coalition of ratepayer groups fought to ensure that the environmental policies in the Official Plan were not weakened. The Billy Bishop Airport has been described as part of a Mixed Use Area by some of the consultants.

CORRA does not agree with that description. At best the airport could be described as being at the southern edge of the mixed use. In fact, in reviewing the Maps of the Official Plan, much of the airport lands touch on or is in close proximity to areas designated as **Environmentally Significant Areas** [see Map 12 of the Official Plan] and adjacent to areas shown as part of the **Natural Heritage System** [Map 9 of the Official Plan]. Map 18 shows the airport has the land use designation of **Other Open Space** and that it touches upon areas designated **Natural Areas**.

The Official Plan in Chapter 4.3 is quite clear that among the matters to be considered in any development adjacent to or within such areas must protect, enhance or restore trees, vegetation and other natural heritage features. In Chapter 3.4, policies 12 and 13 sets out what must be studied before work is permitted.

To date the required studies have not been done. In CORRA's opinion any action including reopening the tripartite agreement is premature and should not be rushed. In fact Chapter 5.3.1 requires Council to be guided by the Official Plan policies.

BIRD SANCTUARY

CORRA notes that there is a bird sanctuary in close proximity to the airport. It has been able to coexist with the airport in its current configuration and use. The introduction of jets will upset the present balance with the bird sanctuary. There is a strong risk that the sanctuary will not be allowed to continue. This will be further explained under the heading labeled Bird Strikes.

ATLANTIC FLY WAY

The Toronto Islands, and as a consequence the airport, are on the Atlantic Flyway. Migratory birds heading north stop off, after flying across Lake Ontario, to rest before continuing further north to areas like Cottage Country. Again this coexistence with the Island, the airport and the sanctuary as it is today will be affected by allowing jets at the airport.

BIRD STRIKES

There are presently bird strikes on planes flying into and out of the airport. This is presently not a significant problem. This changes with the introduction of jet planes. Jet engines are vulnerable to bird strikes. Jet engines can handle a bird strike if the bird is four pounds or less. They can fly on one engine. The problem is, as was shown in the case of "Miracle on the Hudson" they may not survive several strikes or running into a flock of Canada Geese. Both Canada Geese and the Cormorants on the Leslie Spit are larger than 4 pounds. In addition even smaller birds if they are in a large mass can bring down a jet plane. For that reason airports take steps to ensure birds are not permitted within several kilometres of the airport and its flyways. This is a safety issue.

The impact of introducing jets onto the Island has not been properly addressed. This again ties into the Official Plan policies.

CORRA's POSITION

CORRA's position is that the City must follow its Official Plan and do the necessary environmental studies including impacts on the resident birds, migratory birds, bird sanctuary and other colonies on or near the fly routes along with other necessary assessments that are required, before even entering into the reopening of the tripartite agreement let alone allowing jets.

Yours truly,

William Roberts, Chair

CORRA, Confederation of Resident and Ratepayer Associations in Toronto

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CC. Toronto East York Community Council – Subcommittee (teycc@toronto.ca)
Mr. Gautam Malkani, Outreach Committee, NoJetsTO (outreach@nojetsto.ca)
Mr. John Campbell, Chair of Waterfront Toronto (JCampbell@waterfronttoronto.ca)
Members of Toronto City Council