

**Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church**  
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**By Email**

**August 6, 2014**

**To:**

Nancy Martins, Committee Administrator  
Planning and Growth Management Committee  
Toronto City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto ON M5H 2N 2  
(pgmc@toronto.ca)

**From:**

Richard Leung, Chair of Administration Board  
Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church  
3223 Kennedy Road, Scarborough, ON M1V 4Y1

Dear Ms. Martins:

**Re: Planning and Growth Management Committee Meeting August 7, 2014  
McNicoll Bus Garage Transit Project Assessment Study  
PG35.23**

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Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church (SCBC) is the immediate neighbour, just north of the proposed TTC bus garage location. We made deputations at the TTC Board Meeting on July 23, 2014 and raised serious concerns about the inappropriate location of the proposed garage, and related health and safety issues.

This letter is to highlight planning and development growth issues brought about by the proposed garage project, substantiating our opposition to the project.

SCBC was first established in 1986 and moved into the current location in September 2007. We are a vibrant church with more than 2,300 members. We provide a vitally important resource for worship and other services to the local community and neighbourhood, including ESL (English as a Second Language) classes, blood donations, food drives etc.

**1. Pedestrian Safety to SCBC Congregants**

In 2013 TTC indicated that the entrance/exit will be on McNicoll Ave. They didn't disclose throughout their public consultation process until for the first time in a meeting with SCBC on May 26, 2014, that the only entrance/exit of the Bus Garage will be on Redlea Avenue..

The information provided by TTC estimated that traffic frequency just generated by TTC on Redlea Avenue will be at least 1,000 daily on weekdays and 500 on weekends, i.e. including the long articulated buses, TTC employee vehicles, refuel oil tankers, and heavy duty waste management vehicles. This is an enormously high frequency of traffic during SCBC's peak hours of activities during weekday evenings, Saturdays and Sundays.

This traffic frequency will incur an unacceptable level of risks to pedestrian safety. A formal traffic study commissioned by SCBC in 2013 registered more than 3,200 "crossings" of the future Redlea Avenue by our congregants between the church building and the parking lot every Sunday morning, and a high volume of crossings during Saturdays and weekday evenings. Our congregants include many seniors, children and young families with babies. Their lives would be put at risk if they have to cross the road right next to where the big buses are turning in and out of the bus garage. There will be traffic congestion on Redlea Avenue and the "turning buses" will block the view of drivers and pedestrians, creating a serious road safety hazard.

## **2. Design of Redlea – Never intended to service TTC Garage**

The proposed garage will have direct and huge conflict with the City's Redlea Avenue extension plan, which is intended to ease the traffic congestion near the Kennedy/Steeles junction. Redlea Avenue is designed as a 23-meter wide local passageway with only one lane in each direction and is never intended to hold high volume of heavy vehicles. Traffic from the Bus Garage using Redlea Ave. defeats the very purpose of building this local passageway.

## **3. Gross Lack of Transparency and Openness in the Planning Process**

TTC has failed to consult with or inform SCBC about the fundamental design change to move the entrance/exit of the bus garage from McNicoll Avenue to Redlea Avenue, situated right next to the church property.

The Traffic Impact Study, which is an appendix to the Environment Project Report, was completed in March 2014, yet it wasn't released to the public until July 21, 2014.

The Traffic Study commissioned by TTC is seriously flawed: the only entrance/exit to the bus garage is on Redlea Avenue, and yet there is no mention in the traffic study about other vehicular traffic (i.e. besides the buses) or pedestrian traffic on Redlea Avenue. There is no mention about the road traffic generated by the TTC employees. Nor is there any mention about pedestrian road safety when they have to cross the Redlea Avenue while the buses are turning in and out of the garage.

SCBC is quite concerned that the traffic consultants hired by TTC can complete a "traffic impact study" without even recognizing the "presence and operation" of SCBC, as a "next door neighbour" to the land intended for the garage, since 2007. I would like to state clearly on record that the traffic consultant have **NOT** made any contact with our church, who is the next door neighbour, to discuss our concerns about road safety of our 2,300 congregants.

## **4. Zoning incompatibility**

SCBC and the neighbouring properties are designated as within an Employment District in the City of Toronto Official Plan. Chapter 7, Site and Area Specific Policy 104 of the Official Plan indicates that business and trade schools, libraries, fraternal organization, long term care facilities, recreational uses and places of worship are permitted. Zoning By-law 24982 of the former City Scarborough and Proposed Official Plan Amendment 231 of the City of Toronto maintains the current Site and Area Specific Policy 104. Indeed the neighbouring properties including SCBC were built and started operation long before the TTC was allocated the current property by the City of Toronto.

We submit that the original zoning of the land assigned to TTC of "Heavy Industrial Employment" was decades old, and is no longer compatible with all the development that have taken place in the neighbourhood to this date. To continue TTC's intended course of building the garage will only seriously and adversely impact the socio-economic development of the local community.

**5. Did TTC Consider Alternative Locations?**

Standard practice in any major project proposal requires consideration of alternative options and justification of why the proposed option is the "best". From the now released Environment Project Report, it is evident that TTC Board did not investigate the possibility of alternate location for the bus garage since 2004. No doubt the Kennedy/McNicoll location would appear to be "expedient" from an operational point of view, such as cutting down deadhead time. But this is obviously not the ideal location to build the bus garage. We seriously believe that the McNicoll location may cost TTC Board more to build and mitigate all the concerns thus raised, and longer time to meet all Site Plan requirements. Not to mention that there could be a potential loss of prime site value as the land in north Redlea Avenue is undergoing a regeneration study for extensive commercial/residential development.

**6. Other Health and Safety Hazards**

There are written submissions and verbal deputations to follow, that express serious concerns about health and safety hazards imposed by the proposed garage project, especially harmful to the large number of seniors in the neighbouring community. Mitigation efforts will have limited results.

We have collected over 2,100 petitions from our congregations and residents in the neighbourhood opposing this TTC project. We have already handed these over to the TTC Board Co-ordinator. We sincerely urge the City Council and the P&GM Committee to listen to concerns raised by the community, and make the responsible decision to find an alternate site for the garage and to defer the decision process by initiating a full Municipal Environmental Assessment.

Yours truly,



Richard Leung  
Scarborough Chinese Baptist Church