

MANDELA LEGACY COMMITTEE – CANADA



"The long walk continues..."



August 8, 2014

To: Chair Denzil Minnan-Wong, and Members,
Public Works and Infrastructure Committee (PWIC),
Toronto City Council

From: Lloyd McKell, Co-chair, Mandela Legacy Committee

Re: Item PWIC 33.8, Ceremonial Street Dedication to Nelson Mandela,
August 13, 2014

The Mandela Legacy Committee is pleased to see this item on the PWIC agenda of August 13, as requested by Council last April.

The staff report does a good job in providing context and background information. However we are troubled by the staff recommendation which in effect delays this decision for several months well into 2015. We believe that this delay, on a technicality, is a serious damper to the enthusiasm of the public for a decision on this rather straightforward matter, and places in jeopardy the preferred timing of a formal public ceremonial event which the MLC hopes to propose to the City to take place in early May 2015 around the anniversary of Mandela's installation as President of South Africa in 1994.

We would all agree that the linking of the Mandela name to any of our public initiatives is a source of great pride for the people of Toronto and indeed of Canada, and that any actions that appear to create hurdles in the way of those links, however well-meaning, will tend to promote scepticism and doubt as to the good intentions of the players involved.

The staff report discovers that there is no current policy governing ceremonial street dedications: that the current policy on Honourific and Street Naming does not address this aspect, although it does address other kinds of locally initiated street dedications (e.g. in the cases of Marshall McLuhan, Moses Znaimer, Johnny Bower). It could be argued that the spirit and intent of those kinds of street dedications are easily

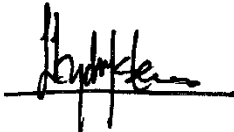
transferable to the current Mandela request with no detriment to the current policy, and with no liabilities involved for the City.

We are concerned that knowledge of this apparent policy gap did not come to light much earlier around the time of the April 2014 council decision, so that the appropriate amendments could be made and approved in time for the August decision. It is indeed unfortunate that a consultation process was undertaken with the public and with the Mandela Legacy Committee resulting in a clear direction for a specific street designation, without the backing of a policy guideline.

We respect staff's (and Council's) right to ensure that all Board decisions and actions are grounded in specific policies and guidelines, and we do support a decision to amend the policy to bring it in line with requests such as the one under consideration concerning Nelson Mandela. However we believe that Council can also decide on the specific street to be designated in honour of Mandela while also requesting that staff report back at a later date on an amendment to reflect the process used for the Mandela street designation. In other words, we urge your Committee to recommend the specific street to be designated at its meeting on August 13, 2014 based on the results of the thorough consultation process undertaken by staff.

We plan to make a deputation on this matter at the PWIC meeting of August 13, 2014.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lloyd McKell', written over a horizontal line.

Lloyd McKell
Co-chair, Mandela Legacy Committee