



April 11, 2016

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Economic Development Committee
10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: April 12 2016 Agenda Item - 2016.ED11.7 – Nuit Blanche Venue

Dear Members of the Committee,

This letter conveys the Guild Park Stakeholder Group's unanimous support of the motion by Ward 43 Councillor Paul Ainslie to consider Guild Park & Gardens as a venue for 2017 Nuit Blanche.

Who we are

The Guild Park Stakeholder Group includes the following volunteer organizations:

- **Friends of Guild Park & Gardens** – launched in 2013 with the approval of the Toronto Parks and Environment Committee, it brings a “whole-park” focus to the site’s programs and facilities.
- **Guild Festival Theatre** – launched in 2009, this registered charitable organization has presented five seasons of professional drama at Guild Park’s outdoor Greek Theatre.
- **Guild Renaissance Group** – since 1997, this registered charitable organization continues the legacy of the Guild of All Arts by working to return arts/cultural programs and facilities to the site.
- **Guildwood Village Community Assn.** – founded in 1958, this neighbourhood organization represents 3,000 households on community-wide issues to improve the local quality of life.

Supports Toronto’s vision for the arts

Guild Park’s participation in Nuit Blanche 2017 aligns with the City of Toronto’s strategic vision of:

- using cultural events as economic drivers across the city; and
- increasing access to these events to communities outside the downtown core.

The site’s potential as a city-wide destination for arts and culture events is well recognized.

The 2014 *Management Plan For Guild Park & Gardens* describes the park as “a regionally treasured destination with a special combination of features that create a rare park experience. The site’s rich cultural heritage resources and public art are framed by a cultural landscape structure set within extensive, high quality natural heritage systems on the spectacular Scarborough bluffs.”

The City’s 2014 *Making Space for Culture* report recommended “the adaptive re-use and restoration of the Guild [Park & Gardens] property and use of the [site] ... for cultural activity.”

A natural choice for Nuit Blanche: Guild Park, where “Art Meets Nature”

Guild Park’s 88 acres of gardens, forest, waterfront and heritage has a legacy of inspiring artists’ imaginations and creativity with its natural attractions and historical artifacts. This provides Nuit Blanche creators and curators a unique “green” and historic canvas for their installations.

We believe Guild Park is a “natural” choice as a venue for Nuit Blanche.

Bringing Nuit Blanche to Guild Park marks the return of significant cultural events to the park. Among major arts celebrations hosted in the past at Guild Park was the 1982 Contemporary Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition. Canadian sculptor, Sorel Etrog, curated this display of 35 artworks to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Guild of All Arts. Supporters of the international exhibition included



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Ontario Premier Bill Davis, Metropolitan Toronto Chair Paul Godfrey and Jean Sutherland Boggs, Chair of Canada Museums.

What we've accomplished

Since 2013, the volunteer organizations within the Guild Park Stakeholder Group have together brought more than 30,000 visitors to Guild Park for a series of popular arts/culture events.

The programs and activities we hold at Guild Park include a weekend-long arts festival; live theatre performances; walking tours in partnership with Doors Open, Heritage Toronto and Jane's Walk; community events, such as neighbourhood barbeques, movie nights and other celebrations (more details available on request).

Conclusion

The success of these volunteer-driven events at Guild Park demonstrates:

- the public's ongoing interest in the site;
- the effective collaborative efforts among volunteer groups;
- our ability to partner with the many City departments/divisions responsible for different aspects of Guild Park; and
- the local councilor's active support of Guild Park's revitalization and ongoing support of the activities undertaken by the Guild Park Stakeholders Group.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information to the Economic Development Committee. We would be pleased to provide further details about Guild Park to committee member and to assist in any way to make Guild Park part of Nuit Blanche in 2017.

Sincerely,

David Arnold
President
Guildwood Village Community Assn

per Linda Harris
President
Guild Renaissance Group

Anne Marie Johnson

per Anne Marie Johnson
President
Guild Festival Theatre

John P. Mason
President
Friends of Guild Park & Gardens

cc: Ward 43 Councillor Paul Ainslie