



Mimico Lakeshore Community Network
www.mimicolakeshorenetwork.wordpress.com

lakeshorenetwork@gmail.com

April 5, 2016

To: Planning and Growth Management Committee
City of Toronto
City Hall
Toronto, ON

Atten. Nancy Martins

Re: Item PG11.4, Mimico Judson Secondary Plan

We are writing on behalf of the Mimico Lakeshore Community Network, an umbrella organization that brings together seven different community groups in the Mimico-Lakeshore area.

We wish to express our strong support for the Mimico-Judson Secondary Plan that is now being proposed. It is the product of several years of painstaking work by the city planning staff, accompanied by a thorough process of consultation with the community.

We particularly welcome the vision of the Mimico-Judson neighbourhood as a location for both residential development and employment uses. This is in keeping with the history of Mimico, as a place to which the railway brought work and where housing was then built for the workers, and also with the principles of good planning, which encourage the building of communities where people can live, work, shop and play without having to leave the vicinity.

We do have serious concerns about two things that might undermine the successful implementation of this very commendable plan.

The first is an application coming before the City to rezone some of the lands in Block "F" on the south side of Judson Street to permit the construction of town houses on lands that the Secondary Plan designates as an employment area. Not only does this indicate that site-specific exceptions to the Secondary Plan are being contemplated before the plan itself is even passed. It proposes a land use that is contrary to the intent of the plan in a crucial way.

Policy 2.9 (b) states that land uses in Block “F” shall “support and protect the existing and long-term operation and economic role of the Willowbrook Rail Maintenance Facility.” The concrete meaning of this very abstract language is that in a few years’ time there will be a noisy industrial operation going on day and night, as the Metrolinx locomotives are converted from diesel to electric power – an operation that will be vital to the regional rapid transit service that Metrolinx will be mandated to offer to the GTA. Those who had invested in town houses on the south side of Judson Street could be expected to complain and put pressure on Metrolinx to restrict its operations, so that in the end the land use would not at all “support and protect” the role of the Willowbrook facility.

The proposed redevelopment of the lands in Block “F” would also be incompatible with the Mimico-Judson Greenway, which is a key feature of the Secondary Plan for the area west of Royal York Road, and would require the acquisition of a strip of land in order to widen the Judson Street right-of-way.

We are aware that your committee has been apprised of this issue, and is working to have the Secondary Plan in place before the application for redevelopment of the Dunpar lands is considered. We encourage you to persevere in this course of action.

Our second concern has to do with the future of the Mimico GO station, whose existence and location underpins the whole foundation of the Mimico-Judson Secondary Plan. A commitment has been made by City Council to support the construction of a new GO station at Park Lawn Road. This new station would be part of a new transit hub that would serve the rapidly growing apartment neighbourhood of Humber Bay Shores. A petition in support of a new GO station has been gaining wide support in Mimico.

But the policies now being applied by Metrolinx in the selection of sites for new GO stations would warrant the construction of a new Park Lawn station only if it replaced the existing Mimico station and the latter were closed. Such an outcome would be unacceptable to those who live or work in the Mimico-Judson neighbourhood, and to those who support its development in accordance with the Secondary Plan, as MLCN does.

The success of the Secondary Plan will therefore require a shift in Metrolinx’s policies, so that the closing of the Mimico GO station can be avoided. We see two considerations that prompt us to conclude that such a policy shift would be reasonable.

First, when the diesel locomotives that are now in use are replaced by locomotives powered by electricity, it will become technically feasible to have trains stop at both of two stations that are approximately one kilometre apart. Secondly, consideration might be given to having some trains stop at either Mimico or Park Lawn, but not both. Such a decision would be far more acceptable to the community than the loss of the Mimico station.

We would urge the Committee to approve the Mimico-Judson Secondary Plan with dispatch, to recommend its enactment by City Council, and to resist any attempt to have an outstanding example of good planning wrecked by an exercise of raw political power.

In our view, the community will benefit from having the Secondary Plan enacted in the form that has been proposed by the City's planners. But only private interests would be likely to benefit from having it modified.

For the Mimico Lakeshore Community Network,

Martin E. Gerwin gerwin40@gmail.com

Judith A. Rutledge jarutledge40@gmail.com

Co-chairs,
MLCN Steering Committee

20 Miles Road
Etobicoke, ON
M8V 1V3

(416) 503-3736