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September 22, 2017

Carol Kaustinen, Secretariat
Government Management Committee
10th Floor, West Tower
City Hall 100 Queen Street West
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Re: GM22.13 Project Funding for North St. Lawrence Market – Archeological Interpretation

Dear Ms. Kaustinen:

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) is a registered not-for-profit organization, founded in 1982, it represents residents who live in the area bounded by Yonge and Parliament and Queen and the rail berm.

We are writing in support of the recommendations in the staff report on the archeological interpretation and commemoration of the North St. Lawrence Market site that was submitted August 31, 2017. As this site has been used as a public market for well over 200 years, we knew that once the City was legislated to conduct a full archeological dig that many artefacts of significance would surface and are pleased that so many did. Most of the material found can properly be displayed off site but some need to be in or close to their original location so that their significance can be appreciated. We realise and understand that the cost of displaying the central drain (the “porcupine drain”) is significant and understand that to present this find in a format for public viewing within the new building it will be necessary to make changes to the current design of the new North Market. This additional cost would increase the project cost by around 2% but it is worth pointing out that it is planned that some of this extra cost will come from Section 37 contributions specifically allocated for ‘heritage interpretation’ in the St. Lawrence area.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association and other stakeholders have been working on this project since 2002. It has been stalled several times and each delay continues to increase the costs; the time for talking is really coming to an end and excavation and construction should begin on schedule early in 2018.

We should stress that, though we support the staff recommendations, we are open to looking at other (cheaper) ways to view this artefact. However, we are not willing to forego seeing any ‘physical acknowledgment’ of this significant heritage on or close to the site. We fully understand the financial and other pressure the City encounters for all aspects of city building

but heritage is important and we have little enough of material left from the early 19th century. In our opinion, displaying some of the foundations and structure of earlier Markets on (or close to) their original location is important as the North Market is one of the very few sites in our City which have been used for the same purpose for so long. (St. James Cathedral is maybe the only other one.) Heritage interpretation opportunities of this kind do not present themselves very often and once construction commences the chance to properly commemorate a major part of our history will be lost.

As we say above, though we think the Staff recommendation is good we are open to other ways of displaying 'the porcupine drain' (or part of it) but are adamant that there should be a public display of some sort at or close to the site of the new North Market.

There is a very short window of time to get this right; construction has been repeatedly delayed due to the re-engineering of the winning architectural design and then the Stage 4 archaeological dig. We have very few physical reminders of the origins of our City in the "First Ten Blocks" and in the St. Lawrence area - it really would be tragic to remove the few we have. While the stories, the culture, the historic plaques help us remember where we came from, it is original physical objects that probably make the greatest impression.

If this were a private development we strongly suspect that the City would demand a far greater part of its history be preserved on site. It is certainly not setting a good example if the City cannot, or will not, do at least as much for public sites.

We look forward to being able to work with City staff and our Mayor and Councillors to create a new North Market that not only looks forward to the 21st century but pays homage to the public markets that have occupied the site since 1803.

Thank you.

Sincerely

Suzanne Kavanagh
President, St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association

cc. Ward 28 Councillor Office
SLNA Board of Directors
SLNA Heritage Committee
St. Lawrence Market Neighbourhood BIA
St. Lawrence Market Precinct Advisory Committee