

31 May 2017

Submission to the **Planning and Growth Management Committee**, City of Toronto, by
 Andrew M. Stewart, on behalf of The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
 Re: **PG21.9**, Application for area-specific amendment to the City's Sign By-law: 2 Strachan Avenue.

We object strongly to this proposal to exempt any portion of the Special Sign District around Fort York National Historic Site, including 2 Strachan Avenue, from the provisions of the Sign By-law (Chapter 694 of the Municipal Code). The by-law was put in place, originally in 2004, with advocacy from the Friends of Fort York, to protect the visual impact of large illuminated and electronic billboards on the views out from Fort York.

Fort York National Historic Site, established in 1793, 43 acres in size, is Toronto's founding 18th-century landscape. It is an outstanding historic and public-realm site owned and operated by City of Toronto Museums and Heritage Services, part of Economic Development and Culture Division. It has official status as a national historic site, a provincially registered archaeological site and a municipally-defined Heritage Conservation District.

Fort York contributes to Toronto's unique character among North American cities and has received well over 100,000 visitors, annually, during the past few years during and since the bicentennial of the War of 1812, beginning in 2012.

The Friends of Fort York is a volunteer organization that, among other things, advocates on behalf of this site. We reach an audience of about 2500 people through our quarterly electronic newsletter. This constituency, represented by the volunteer directors of The Friends of Fort York, works closely with City staff on fulfilling the potential of Fort York as one of Toronto's most significant sites and large downtown green spaces with special historic value for citizens and tourists alike.

Approving the proposed amendment for 2 Strachan Avenue will erode Fort York's unique qualities that are critical to defining Toronto's story and also Canada's, which has now existed for 150 years, which makes the country nearly 60 years younger than Fort York. The proposed amendment also works against The Bentway, the City's new initiative to re-invent public space under the Gardiner Expressway, supported by a \$25 million private-sector gift. Amendment of the Sign by-law will only discourage this kind of private-sector investment in parks and open spaces.

Please, therefore, we ask you to deny this application to amend the Sign by-law for 2 Strachan Avenue.

Andrew Stewart

Andrew M. Stewart (Vice-chair)
 Donald Cranston (Chair)

The Friends of Fort York and Garrison Common
 260 Adelaide Street East
 P.O. Box 183
 Toronto, Ontario M5A 1N1
www.fortyork.ca

