

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM27.11	ACTION			Ward: 11
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756 Bathurst Street - Request for Staff to Initiate Long-Term Lease Negotiations with A Different Booklist Cultural Centre - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the General Government and Licensing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Joe Cressy, recommends that:

1. City Council authorize the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management to initiate negotiations with A Different Booklist Cultural Centre for a long-term lease at 756 Bathurst Street, contingent on the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture's review of A Different Booklist Cultural Centre's long-term business plan, and to report back to City Council for authorization of the lease terms.

Summary

A Different Booklist Cultural Centre is an organization engaging in elevating the cultural, social, educational and economic well-being of the African Canadian and Caribbean Canadian communities, by providing space for community projects, events and culturally responsive resources. It provides opportunities for the public to experience the rich cultural legacy of Toronto's Black and Caribbean communities.

The organization is not-for-profit, but is associated with a for-profit venture, namely "A Different Booklist" bookstore. Therefore, A Different Booklist Cultural Centre does not qualify under the City's Community Space Tenancy Policy. Providing assistance to A Different Booklist Cultural Centre in securing a new location is an important objective for the City, as part of a broader recognition of the need to commit to long term cultural infrastructure for the Black community in Toronto. City staff are working in partnership with A Different Booklist Cultural Centre to secure funding from Canadian Heritage, which generally supports long-term capital projects.

A Different Booklist Cultural Centre was housed in the Mirvish Village neighbourhood, but was forced to relocate by the re-development of the former Honest Ed's site. Economic Development and Culture Division staff are working with Councillor Layton's Office to secure a future long-term location for the organization at 756 Bathurst Street.

The City entered into an agreement of purchase and sale for 756 Bathurst Street, authorized by City Council on July 4, 2017 through adoption of Item 2017.MM31.69. Although the transaction may not close until 2022, A Different Booklist Cultural Centre requires some certainty regarding a potential lease with the City, to raise funds from the private sector and other levels of government.

There is a long history of African Canadian and Caribbean Canadian community and heritage on Bathurst Street that has held strong over the many decades. This cultural centre will help make sure that legacy will live on, on a changing Bathurst street for many more decades to come.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM27.11