

Wednesday, November 3, 2021

Toronto City Council
12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Attn: Marilyn Toft, Council Secretariat

Delivered by email to: councilmeeting@toronto.ca

Re: PH27.2 – Zoning Conformity for Official Plan Employment Areas – Phase 1 Final Report and Phase 2 Update

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Toronto City Council,

On behalf of **CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind)**, I wish to express our concern and alarm with respect to the report on Zoning By-Law conformity for employment zones in the Official Plan, specifically the proposed removal of permissions for bingo halls and related uses in the Former City of Etobicoke Zoning By-law (Attachment 9 to the Final Report).

Our charity is one of 66 local charities that rely on Delta Bingo and Gaming St. Clair, to support our organization in the Toronto community. Without that support we will simply not be able to function.

A portion of the funds raised through the bingo halls support CNIB by changing what it is to be blind today. With the support from the Bingo Halls, CNIB can provide opportunities for limitless possibilities, through knowledge, skills, and confidence to smash barriers. Our programs are designed to address the needs of people of all ages across five areas:

LIVE: "Live" programs provide the support and services to enhance daily living skills, realize goals and seize the future with confidence.

Play: Whether you're thinking of trying yoga or learning how to paint, "Play" programs foster an active and healthy lifestyle and give the opportunity to connect with others.

Work: CNIB's "Work" programs provide the skills and resources to attain career ambitions, thrive academically at every stage and hone abilities as an entrepreneur or mentor

Learn: CNIB's "Learn" programs focus on education, skills training, and literacy to empower and achieve goals by fostering social skills and independence.

Tech: Unleashing the power of technology leads to an independent life. Our "Technology" programs level the playing field providing skills and training that focus on the accessible, available, and affordable technology.

These five areas would not be possible without the continued support of the Bingo Halls

The last 18 months have been very challenging for everyone, and our organization is no exception. We have struggled to survive with very little funding as Delta St. Clair was closed for 420 days over the course of the pandemic. Now, due to a proposed expropriation from the City of Toronto and Metrolinx, the Delta St. Clair location will have to move to another site. The new site (at 360 Evans Ave.) is currently zoned to allow for a Bingo Hall. Under the proposed By-law amendment that permission would be revoked.

As you can appreciate, finding an appropriate venue at a reasonable price in the current real estate environment is a real challenge. We are looking forward to the move to 360 Evans Ave. and urge you not to remove this permission and allow us to re-locate as planned with the current permissions.

Based on the concerns identified above, we respectfully request that the Draft By-laws and report, specifically as it applies to the use of employment lands for bingo halls, is removed entirely or in the very least referred back to City Planning staff for dedicated public consultation and review. Thank you for your time and consideration of this request, and we look forward to further discussions on this matter.

Sincerely,

Nancy Iliou
Gaming Auditor
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