



May 10, 2022

Comments from the Casa Loma Residents Association to the Letter regarding the Administrative Inquiry into the operations of the North Campus of Casa Loma dated May 10<sup>th</sup>

I was present at all of the meetings with Nick Di Donato from Liberty Entertainment Group (LEG) and officials from the City including Cheryl Blackman and Jo Ann Pynn. Until this meeting, which was organized at the request of Councillor Josh Matlow, we were completely unaware of Liberty Entertainment's application to install the Don Alfonso restaurant including kitchen and washroom facilities, temporarily located in the Casa Loma Conservatory, in the area of the North Stables Campus that had been historically a potting shed and facing the Casa Loma parkette. A Casa Loma resident had observed new construction in the potting shed area which was reported to the Councillor and which in turn caused the meeting in question to occur. At this meeting Nick Di Donato, with concurrence from all City officials in attendance, laid out the plans and progress for the installation of the Don Alfonso restaurant including confirmation that an application for permits had already been made. We specifically asked about the use provisions of the lease for the North Campus and were assured that this was a permitted use. At no time did anyone from the City indicate on this or any other call that the use was specifically not permitted and that a lease amendment must be obtained prior to granting any kind of permission to proceed. Multiple requests for the lease were made by the CLRA and, despite assurances to the contrary, copies of the lease pertaining to the use clause have never been provided. The conversations were focused by Mr. Di Donato on "selling us" on the Michelin star credentials of this franchised restaurant from Italy and the exorbitant price point of the menu which would serve to naturally reduce the number of restaurant patrons. At no time did Mr. Di Donato or anyone from the City indicate that the City had not yet approved the change of use or in fact that there even was a need for City approval.

Accordingly, my recollection does not match with the statement in the City Manager's letter indicating : "For clarity, staff who lead the Casa Loma Corporation did not communicate that the lease allowed for a restaurant. Instead, staff clarified the conditions under which it would be permissible for the site to be used as a restaurant."

The CLRA has always been willing to be engaged in constructive dialogue with LEG or the City and the CLRA and Casa Loma residents have supported the rejuvenation of the Castle and have adapted to the

enormous increase in activities including the new Blue Blood restaurant, the relocation of the Don Alfonso restaurant after the Toronto street location was closed, the summer long outdoor concerts including the construction of the new garden pavilion, the month long outdoor Halloween Party, increased wedding activities, escape room activities, etc. which have had a huge negative impact with respect to traffic, construction activity, and late night noise. LEG has a long tradition at the Castle of implementing activities which are obviously going to have a negative impact on the residents nearby the Castle without any prior consultation or communication and then defending such actions once the activities are launched or uncovered. The Halloween program was one such example which required the former Councillor Mihevc to arrange numerous meetings with the CLRA, Castle Hill, and Ardwold Gate residents and others before LEG agreed to make relatively minor modifications which have enabled the month-long Halloween party to continue successfully for LEG with some accommodation of residents legitimate concern for the peaceful enjoyment of their homes. To date we have already engaged in over 3 meetings where a fait accompli was presented in a way that is completely disrespectful of our legitimate concerns and track record of working collaboratively. We would have expected that City staff would be ensuring that the legal agreements as to permitted use and consultation would be adhered to by LEG.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Robert Levy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "R".

Robert Levy  
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