

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM43.16	ACTION			Ward: 11
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Authorization to Release Section 37 funds to fund the Production and Installation of a Heritage Plaque to Recognize Donald Willard Moore - by Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Gord Perks

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Executive Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Mike Layton, seconded by Councillor Gord Perks, recommends that:

1. City Council increase the 2022 Approved Operating Budget for Heritage Toronto on a one-time basis by \$4,250.00 gross, \$0 net, fully funded by Section 37 community benefits obtained from the development at 297 College Street, secured for streetscape improvements (Source Account: XR3026- 3700586), for the production and installation of a heritage plaque to recognize Donald Willard Moore (Cost Centre: HG0001).

Summary

This Motion seeks authorization to release \$4,250 in Section 37 funds to Heritage Toronto for the creation and installation of a heritage plaque to recognize Donald Willard Moore.

Donald Willard Moore (1891-1994) was a leader in Toronto's Black community and a civil rights activist who fought to change Canada's exclusionary immigration laws.

Born in Barbados, Donald Moore came to Toronto via New York City and Montreal. He worked for the Canadian Pacific Railway as a sleeping car porter, which brought him to Toronto.

Travel across Canada by train could take up to four days and three nights. Sleeping car porters, based in downtown Toronto, prepared passenger cars for travel and served passengers during the journey.

Black men were preferred for sleeping car porter jobs because of their long history in domestic service to whites. Porters working for Canadian railways came from Black communities in Canada, but were also recruited directly from the United States and the Caribbean.

After leaving the sleeping car porters, Donald Moore became a tailor and the owner of Occidental Cleaners and Dyers, located at 318 Spadina Avenue. The store became an important meeting place for the Caribbean community.

The Toronto branch of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association was established there, as well as the West Indian and Progressive Association and the West Indian Trading Association. The Universal Negro Improvement Association later found a permanent home at 355 College Street.

In 1951, Donald Moore founded what became known as the Negro Citizenship Association. The group challenged systemic racism in Canada's immigration laws that limited Black Caribbean migrants legally entering the country.

In 1954, Donald Moore and members of the Negro Citizenship Association led a delegation to Ottawa to propose reforms to the government. The delegation brought attention to the unjust law and resulted in a historic relaxation of immigration rules, allowing Black Caribbean workers to work in Canada and apply for permanent residency.

Later in life, Donald Moore established the Donavalon Centre at 20 Cecil Street. Recognizing his lifetime of work, Moore received many awards, including the City of Toronto Award of Merit in 1982, the Order of Ontario in 1988, and the Order of Canada in 1990.

This plaque will replace a previous plaque for Donald Willard Moore erected by the City of Toronto's Culture Division that was recently stolen from its location at 20 Cecil Street.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM43.16