

Sent by Email: iec@toronto.ca

27 June 2023

Deputy Mayor Jennifer McKelvie, Chair
Infrastructure and Environment Committee
City Council, City of Toronto

Dear Deputy Mayor McKelvie and Committee Members,

Re: Item #2.9 -- Agenda Item 5.2 Ward - University-Rosedale - 11 and Toronto-St. Paul's - 12

Thank you for the opportunity to express our views on a very significant aspect of the plans for rebuilding the Heath Crescent stairs (the "Stairs") as set out in the report tabled by Parks, Forestry, and Recreation ("Parks"), dated June 8, 2023.

Whilst it is encouraging to see that the basic work to accommodate new stairs is within sight (2024/25), we understand that the start of actual construction of new Stairs is not scheduled to occur until 2030/31. That timeline means that almost 20 years(!) will have passed since the Stairs were first damaged in a storm in 2013 before a safe replacement and access point to the ravine ecosystem is available to the residents of the City of Toronto. In our view, the proposal to delay rehabilitation of the Stairs until 2030/31 is not acceptable and an embarrassment for the City.

As you are aware, the Heath Crescent stairs have been a vital part of the City's ravine network and ecosystem for many generations. The Stairs provide access for a great many residents from all over the City well beyond the surrounding communities. Walking groups, running clubs, and bird watchers from around the city have regularly used the Stairs to gain entry as have a steady stream of dog walkers and schoolchildren going to and from Deer Park and York schools.

The site is challenging because it is steep, narrow and the TRCA's studies determined that the slope was unstable, requiring major work to protect a home and infrastructure at the top. TRCA is now proceeding with slope stabilization work having overcome lengthy delays related to an adjacent section of private property. We understand that the slope work will be done in 2024/25 to accommodate new Stairs and that it will incorporate the design work for the Stairs.

We are asking that the City re-examine the situation to consider accelerating the timetable for the rehabilitation of the Stairs to be concurrent with TRCA's undertaking of its related slope stabilization project in Yellow Creek (2024/25). For example, could changes be made to the sequencing of other projects and expenditures to provide sufficient capital for the Heath

Crescent stairs in 2024/25? It has already been a decade at this point since the stairs were first damaged which should be impetus enough to advance the timing for the project.

We appreciate that the City faces serious budget challenges and, therefore, we are also requesting that the City consider re-examining the proposed \$1.27 million rehabilitation budget for the Stairs to determine if there are viable and less costly construction options. For example, can some existing sections of the Stairs be repaired in-situ, as opposed to replacing the entire staircase?

We look forward to working collaboratively with the IEC, Parks, TRCA, and other City departments, to find favourable and acceptable solutions to advance the timing of the rehabilitation of the Heath Crescent stairs within these constraints.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Moore Park Residents Association

(signed)

Gordon J. Bogden

President

president@moorepark.org

(signed)

Rob Spindler

Member

cc: Councillor Dianne Saxe, City Council, Ward 11, City of Toronto