



FRANCES NUNZIATA

COUNCIL SPEAKER YORK SOUTH–WESTON WARD 5

October 25th, 2024

To: Chair and Members of Etobicoke York Community Council

Re: Renaming of Rainbow Park

SUMMARY:

Ernie Lustig was a lifelong resident of Toronto with deep connections to the Dundas and McCaul area and Kensington Market. Throughout his life, Ernie was deeply involved in Toronto's Jewish community. He was a dedicated volunteer at his local synagogue, Beth David, and supported organizations such as B'nai Brith Canada, UJA Federation, and The Sim on Wiesenthal Center.

Ernie was a passionate advocate for combating racism and fostering an inclusive society. Ernie played a pivotal role in establishing May as Jewish Heritage Month in Ontario in 2012 and was a lead volunteer for the August 16th event commemorating the 90th anniversary of the Christie Pits Riot.

As a resident for over 70 years, Ernie was proud of the Rustic-Maple Community and devoted much of his time and energy to various causes and organizations within the community. He was an active member of the local residents' association, raising funds for community facilities. He supported Provincial and Federal candidates and was a strong advocate for Reena, contributing to housing projects for individuals with developmental disabilities, including the Elm Ridge Drive project.

In recent years, he was an active member of the Rustic-Maple Leaf Homeowners Group, consistently attending meetings and contributing valuable insights. He supported the community festival and movie nights, contributed to the pollinator garden project in Maple Leaf Park, and regularly donated to the Falstaff Soup Kitchen, particularly for seniors.

Ernie played a crucial role in organizing annual Thanksgiving and Christmas collections for those in need, including seniors and individuals facing physical or mental challenges. His efforts supported diverse groups, including those from various ethnic backgrounds and refugee communities.

Rainbow Park is located near Ernie's home and renaming the park "Ernie Lustig - Rainbow Park" would commemorate his dedication to community service. For the renaming residents submitted a petition highlighting the community's commitment to honouring Ernie's legacy. A formal application was also submitted to Strategic Partnerships, and staff have advised that this naming is in alignment with the City's guiding principles for commemoration.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. Despite the provisions of the City of Toronto Property Naming Policy, City Council approve the renaming of Rainbow Park to Ernie Lustig - Rainbow Park.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Frances Nunziata
Council Speaker
Toronto City Councillor
Ward 5, York South—Weston