

## MOTION

### **Authorization to Release Section 37 Funds to Heritage Toronto for Production and Installation of a Heritage Plaque Recognizing the Village Corner Music Venue**

**Moved by:** Councillor Saxe

**Seconded by:** Councillor Cheng

#### **SUMMARY:**

Half a century ago, the Village Corner club at 174 Avenue Road in Ward 11 was one of the birthplaces of Canadian folk music. It helped to launch the careers of legends like Ian & Sylvia, David Wiffen, and Gordon Lightfoot. Lightfoot's folk duo, the Two Tones, recorded his first album there: *Live at the Village Corner*. Lightfoot later played some of his first gigs as a solo artist there.

The club was favoured by professionals and musicians. It started as a small, L-shaped room crowded with instruments, stools, and a piano, which could squeeze in 60 people. In 1962 it took over the barbershop next store, increasing its capacity to 100.

The Village Corner was central to the early rise of Canadian folk music. While other local coffeehouses featured international folk artists, the Village Corner focussed on Canadian folk musicians, both amateur and professional. Many folk musicians played here, as well as some prominent blues musicians such as Sonny Terry & Brownie McGhie.

The club opened in 1960 and ran for 7 years, operated by John Morley and Roy Davies. It charged 50-cent memberships and 1-dollar admissions. Morley said he loved owning a place where people from all walks of life could relax.

This motion is to complete the funding for a heritage plaque at 174 Avenue Road. Part of the cost has been crowdfunded.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. City Council increase the 2025 Operating Budget for Heritage Toronto on a one-time basis by \$5,300 gross, \$0 net, fully funded by Section 37 community benefits obtained in the development at 124 and 128 Pears Avenue (Source Account: XR3026-3700794), secured for community improvements in the vicinity, for the production and installation of a heritage plaque recognizing the Village Corner music venue at 174 Avenue Road (Cost Centre: HG0001).