

Wednesday, October 12, 2016

**Office of the Mayor**  
City Hall, 2nd Floor  
100 Queen St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2



Dear Mayor Tory,

Thank you for your response on September 14, to our initial letter dated August 19, 2016.

On September 15, Friends of Silver Creek welcomed Yvan Baker's (MPP Etobicoke Centre) news that the province is considering a "whole site solution" for Silver Creek School. **However, we await the confirmation due late fall that the services at The Etobicoke Children's Centre (ECC) and Silver Creek Pre-School (SCPS) will remain on-site and that the Silver Creek School TDSB playing field will remain a green space for Etobicoke and Toronto.**

*Mayor Tory, based on our experience of advocacy this past year, we have three requests:*

1. **That city planners involve citizens from the onset of community analysis and that the errors in the Silver Creek Profile in the Schools as Community Assets document be corrected;**

Unlike city staff, our community had no knowledge as to whether the ownership of the open space at Silver Creek would be considered separately from the buildings. We were repeatedly informed that the green space was a municipal responsibility; the city informed us that there would be no purchase of this property. This process, **with a lack of communication from the city**, has been very stressful for the families and staff of the ECC and SCPS, and for residents and youth groups who are permit holders for the TDSB field.

- We had no knowledge that city staff developed the "Community Asset Utilization Rate" measure in 2015 (EX4.4) used to determine the public use of a public school facility
- Our own researched uncovered *Schools as Community Assets* (EX16.21) one week before it was adopted on July 12, 2016.
- We met with Councillor John Campbell and urged him to make the amendments regarding Silver Creek School.

It is a better process for citizens when city planners meet with communities as part of the information gathering process—and not just School Boards, the Province and "other" Toronto community stakeholders as specified in the document EX4.4 2015.

- Citizens have valuable insights about usage and patterns in their neighbourhoods.
- Staff and families of the ECC & SCPC, residents and sports groups/permit holders are relevant community stakeholders and should have been consulted regarding the profiling of their community space.
- Errors have been noted on the Silver Creek profile that could have been avoided had personal discussions taken place
- We believe that it is of value for planners to visit the site and experience the space as part of the analysis.

2. That the 2006 map *Measure of hectares of local parkland per 1000 people* be updated. A report compiled in 2006 depicting the ratio of population to parkland is an inadequate planning tool in 2016 and beyond;

We are concerned that the city is still using a 2006 report for planning purposes to reference hectares of local parkland per 1000 people throughout Toronto. **The 2006 report is not an adequate tool in 2016 as multiple townhouses and condominiums are being built, the population is intensifying and plans for future developments are occurring. In the near future, communities will begin to realize that the rate of parkland dedication will not be adequate and will not address community needs.**

3. That the city commit to purchasing TDSB land with the goal of balancing a growing population with adequate parkland;

As City planners work to address the low rates of parkland in downtown Toronto, Friends of Silver Creek School ask **that both politicians and planners be knowledgeable about and maintain meaningful parkland and playing field ratios when approving large scale developments throughout Toronto.**

- Meaningful green space is imperative for physical and mental health.
- Local youth sports groups report a shortage of sport fields in communities.

**The sale of Toronto District School Board lands is a deep loss for communities but it is an opportunity for Toronto to acquire green space with the goal of balancing parkland and population growth.**

In the next few years we are anticipating an estimated growth of over 1000 residents in a small stretch of Eglinton Ave. West -- with more to come. Without a provincial "whole site solution", our community's quality of life would be seriously affected by the inevitable sale of the school to the private sector with the subsequent re-development of this land.

Our community is cautiously optimistic about the forthcoming provincial announcement but we know that we are in a better position than other communities across Toronto who face the loss of programmes and green space as schools are sold. **As the Mayor, you and city staff are required to address this loss.**

Mayor Tory, it would have been a positive experience for families to see you at the Friends of Silver Creek Community Meeting on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Silver Creek Pre-School is an exceptional school funded in part by **Toronto Children's Services**. We urge your administrative team to make time for you to reach out to this community in particular, and Etobicoke in general.

Sincerely,



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Co-Chair, Friends of Silver Creek School



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