

March 2, 2010

Communication from Councillor Minnan-Wong re Don Mills Centre Settlement

Please see below the forwarded e-mail communication from Councillor Minnan-Wong regarding the Don Mills Settlement, with the previously confidential, but now public, settlement details available for review [here](#).

Please note that, although Appendix 2 of the Design Panel Commentary in the attachment shows Don Mills Friends as being one of the agreeing parties, we stated our strong disagreement as soon as we were made aware of the details and have since withdrawn from OMB party status ([click here](#) for more information).

Simone Gabbay, Founder
Don Mills Friends
416-446-0862
www.donmillsfriends.org
donmillsfriends@pathcom.com

Dear Don Mills Resident,

On February 23rd, 2010, City Council approved a settlement offer of \$17 million by Cadillac Fairview for a community centre in return for proposed increases in height and density for Phase II of the redevelopment of the Don Mills Centre. I voted against the settlement offer and in favour of the Don Mills Community.

My vote was not against a community Centre. I have long been an advocate for a community centre for a deserving Don Mills community. Still, I was not prepared to support an application for development in exchange for a community centre at any cost.

I voted "no" for the following reasons:

Firstly, I disapproved of the secrecy of the details of the settlement.

This confidentiality prevented me from holding another public meeting and releasing the specific details before City Council considered the item. I strongly objected to this secrecy at Council as the community should have been provided with all the facts first.

Secondly, the application included the kind of heights and densities found along the Sheppard subway line.

I fear that these heights and densities will now be used in the future as precedent and will set the tone for new development in Don Mills. I remain very concerned that North America's first planned community is now destined to become a "Tall Building District."

Finally, I do not share in the view that a refusal by City Council would have "killed the deal."

While it is true that Cadillac Fairview indicated as

much, they had made this claim before. While it is true that the OMB may have approved the application anyway without a community centre, it is also possible that the OMB may not have approved the development in its proposed form. Should we as City Councillors make our decisions based upon what the OMB may decide? Or, should we decide an application based upon the merits of that application? I side with the latter.

I believe this application was defeated by City Council the first time on its merits and that it should have been a second time for the same reason. Intensification in Don Mills may be inevitable, but it should be managed and be appropriate for the neighbourhood, not fast tracked and dictated by developers using the practice of "chequebook planning."

Whether we agree or disagree on the settlement, I thank you for taking the time to communicate with me on the matter. This is an important community development and your input is essential to the decision making process.

The details of the settlement are now available to the public and have been attached for your convenience.

Thank you again for your feedback.

Sincerely,

Denzil Minnan-Wong