



TOPCA Deputation - May 30, 2016

To: Mississauga Planning & Development Committee

Re: **City's Master Plan - Port Credit Marina Lands (1 Port St)**

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TOPCA was pleased to convene a 'Roundtable' meeting with other Port Credit area residents associations last Thursday (May 26), to bring us up to date on the Marina Lands (One Port Street) master plan process.

We were fortunate that the IPC project team and the Canada Lands team could join us, along with Ward One office staff (Councillor Jim Tovey couldn't attend but was well represented, and has also discussed this with us).

As discussed at the Roundtable, we have identified four (4) high-level areas of concern with the City's Draft Master Plan:

## 1. Process

We were assured at the Roundtable that the City is in control of the process at the Marina Lands site. It has been a long process! Dr. Bill James of Centre City Capital has had a model of his concept plan out for years, and has a long-term lease on the site. Canada Lands began interacting with the community in 2011 at a TOPCA Town Hall meeting ('Ramping up the Port Credit Vision' March 22, 2011), and presented its own master plan in 2013.

The City began its preliminary process in 2012, almost 3.5 years ago, and a lot has been said! The most recent public meeting (Feb. 4), was packed and the residents didn't get an opportunity to hear what their fellow table groups came up with as final input. Yes, there are comments recorded in the Corporate Report, but the weighting of these comments is unknown.

As Ruth Marland, the City's Strategic Team Leader for the master plan informed us, this process is complicated. At the Roundtable, we expressed concerns about: the recent *in camera* land conveyance approved at Council (May 25; what is it?); the status of an MOU with Canada Lands to ensure a full-service marina is retained; and delay of the OPA being a sufficient mechanism to preclude release of the lands for development pending an MOU (Memorandum of Understanding).

The community asks, how does the CLC master plan fit with the City plan and process? At the time of the Canada Lands master plan release, the community reaction was that the Marina Lands would be over-developed and the Marina itself squeezed out, if relocation onto the eastern breakwater (which requires significant engineering) is not possible.

The City's Master Plan, frankly, doesn't look that different from the Canada Lands plan, except that the community's concerns about the Marina are addressed more robustly, thanks to the independent Marina Business Case (funded by CLC) which has been completed in the interim.

A significant positive, confirmed at the Roundtable, is that CLC will now retain long term oversight of the redevelopment after all, allowing more continuity and cohesion in achieving the overall Vision, including community liaison. At TOPCA, we are certainly prepared to continue working with CLC and their chosen developers on the components of the site as development applications are submitted!

**TOPCA Question for PDC:** Will tonight's public comments at PDC inform the Marina Lands OPA process when it moves forward in Fall 2016?

[Answer given at PDC: YES]

## 2. Marina

Here is our concern about the Marina: We don't want to buy into a concept plan which removes the Marina from its present location if the transition to the eastern breakwater does not take place, or if the services at the Marina are diminished. As set out in the Corporate Report, we must rely on an MOU with Canada Lands and a delayed OPA process to ensure the site is protected for the use, but there are still serious concerns about the financial scenario of \$20-50M to actually achieve the goal of full-service retention.

Everyone agrees it is important, paramount in fact, to 'Keep the Port in Port Credit'. Our Mayor is quoted recently in the *Toronto Sun* (March 20, 2016) that "revitalizing the Port Credit Harbour Marina" is one of her main priorities for federal infrastructure funding. Canada Lands stated at our Roundtable that a full-service marina is "integral" to the successful redevelopment of the site.

In February 2016, Council expressed concern that the Marina Business Case recommended public sector involvement in the marina redevelopment because "...the financials are not compelling enough to generate full funding through private investment" and that it would take 10 years to start generating a profit for the City after debt servicing.

The business case shows that the Marina currently on the site will be insufficient to keep up with the projected growth of Mississauga's boating community. We are informed that boaters from every Ward in the City use the Marina now. This is a City-wide asset and amenity comparable to Celebration Square (which cost \$40M), or the Credit River for example, and equally as important and unique to our City's identity and tourist economy.

Our Ward 1 Councillor Jim Tovey refers to the Marina Lands project as "city building" by advancing the City's Strategic Plan to make Mississauga more sustainable, liveable and economically strong. There is not only revenue potential for the City but also marina jobs and spin-off jobs for the local community, which has lost its other industries and is well under the target jobs ratio in the Local Area Plan.

There are funding sources including other levels of government, and even the possibility of special area-specific development charges. We strongly urge the City to seek any and all funding for the transition and retention of the Marina, much as funds were aggressively and successfully sought for the Hurontario LRT.

**TOPCA Question for PDC:** Is there commitment by the City, and a OMB-proof mechanism, to withhold development rights to the property until secure funding and a transition plan for the present Marina is secured?

[*Answer given at PDC:* There will be a Corporate Report back in Fall 2016, including a Marina Action Plan, to address this]

### 3. Public Realm

The concept site plan for the Marina lands is surprisingly underwhelming given the Vision of creating an 'exceptional' place. We do know this is only the beginning.

A recent presentation by landscape architect John Danahy and Councillor Jim Tovey at a community meeting (PCVP AGM, May 3) illustrated how waterfront public realm can be allocated and used in a variety of innovative ways.

We believe the best 'community benefit' the site can produce is good design of the public realm.

We believe the basic division between private development lots and public realm must be done early, at this conceptual stage, or it will get away from the community.

TOPCA recently held a Town Hall meeting on 'Collaborative Development' (Nov. 10, 2015). The One Port Street site is a blank slate, unlike many other infill sites in Port Credit, and we are approaching it differently. While there may be "Air Wars" in future about the heights of proposed buildings on the Marina Lands as applications are made, our first priority is the "Ground War" to achieve as much open public space, including green space, as possible at the concept stage.

We realize certain densities have been calculated (by Canada Lands) to achieve a level of profit to pay for the public space. We are prepared to work with Canada Lands as to the *configuration* of the density to maximize the public realm at every opportunity.

We believe the allocation in the City's plan for the 'Destination Park' at the tip of the peninsula is inadequate and that we should aim for more. We understand the proposed park is sized at .75 acre, which is only twice the size of the average Port Credit housing lot, and merely 5% of the total developable land (17 acres) on the Marina Lands site.

Instead of appearing to accommodate all the development first (following the lead of the Canada Lands plan) and carve public realm from the leftovers, should we not identify needs and uses for an extraordinary public realm first?

With 1500 residential units (likely with a greater population than 1.47 people per unit, as projected) and 6000 sqM of office use, the public realm must firstly serve the large new neighbourhood, and then be further designed for public capacity to welcome the many 1000's of visitors the site will attract, arriving by LRT, by boat, by foot, by bike, by transit, and yes, by car.

The present configuration suggests there will be future use conflicts and pressures by the neighbours to restrict public activities in the public realm adjacent to their homes or offices (e.g. because of noise).

We have already seen this happen in Port Credit, e.g. St. Lawrence Square gathering space, and the planned retail/commercial space on the main floor of the Regatta condominium building -- both vacant.

More detail is needed at the concept level to ensure the use of the public realm at the Marina Lands is not curtailed.

We also don't believe it is enough to average out the parkland provided across the entire Mississauga or Port Credit waterfront. People will be *here*.

A bridge over the Credit Harbour to Saddington Park could be part of a solution to expand public realm access, but is certainly a long way off.

We would also support future use of the site's waterlot for public realm, but as we know landfill also takes time (per Lakeview Waterfront Connection).

The 'promenade' around the private centre developments may technically be called public realm (and certainly meets pedestrian / cyclist needs, provided motor traffic, *if any*, is slow) but we must look at how usable the space is for 'staying' or 'gathering' uses e.g. during Southside Shuffle and other festivals.

**Our Question for PDC:** Can we take another look at the public realm configuration on the site to enable a larger, flexible public gathering space, and other spaces which are more remote from the residential uses, to reduce use conflict and capacity issues?

[*Answer given at PDC:* Pursue through public OPA process, and development application processes]

#### **4. Site Configuration: Mixed Use and Heights**

We strongly support the planned Mixed Use for the site. Our concern is that some uses will fall away and the community will be left with a thicket of condos instead of the exceptional world-class site we all want. As we have seen at

Mississauga City Centre, all-residential development does not create a vibrant complete community. Here we have an opportunity, and a master plan, to get the mix right.

As said above (1. Process), continued oversight from CLC and long term commitment from the City could ensure the proportional mixed-use targets are followed.

But we need to address Built Form *as it relates to* Built Function to a much greater degree. For example, we need to be clear that an iconic (landmark) building isn't automatically 22 storeys high as proposed in the City's master plan. As we have seen from international examples, it is firstly about the *design* and *function* of such a building, and not height. An international architectural design competition for such a building is a good idea.

The City's consultant Planning Partnership has indicated that the potential 22 storey landmark building is included in the 2-2.5 overall FSI (excluding roads) noted in the Master Plan (p41). We learned at the Roundtable that an FSI of 2.5 assumes full development to the top of all the height ranges given for each built block in the concept plan. This renders the ranges meaningless -- the top end will *de facto* be the opening bid.

We are concerned this will negate any proposed height transitions to the waterfront -- transitions must be explicitly planned, and the application process must be consistent and firm with every development block to achieve them.

**Our Question for PDC:** Can we take another look at the configuration of built form / built function, to ensure that the uses and target percentages are doable and compatible; and that height maximums, rather than ranges, are specified to ensure height transition and a successful portscape?

[*Answer given at PDC:* Pursue through public OPA process, and development application processes]

*Presented by:*

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*On behalf of the Executive, Town of Port Credit Association (TOPCA)*

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