

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMITTAL ONLY mbalgav@toronto.ca

February 25, 2011

Parks Development and Capital Projects
City of Toronto
Metro Hall, 24th fl.
55 John St.
Toronto ON M5V 3C6

Attn: Martin Balgavy, Project Co-ordinator

Dear Mr. Balgavy

Re: Greenwood Park Capital Improvements

Friends of Greenwood Park (FROG) is a group of local area residents and park users with a vested interest in the improvement and long term vision for Greenwood Park. FROG's informal membership includes over 200 families/households from the surrounding area that are or want to be a part of FROG. Our recent activities include spring and fall clean-ups, regular winter skating campfires, and a weekly rink house 'family corner'.

Several FROG members attended the City's February 1st community meeting about Greenwood Park's proposed upgrades. It was very clear from Aecom's draft designs for the change building reconfiguration, proposed shiny roof and new pleasure skating trail that little or no thought has been given to an overall vision for Greenwood Park.

We recently received Aecom's minutes from this public meeting and feel they are not an accurate reflection of the comments heard that night. We feel the community deserves more meaningful consultation, such as a design charette, not just another public information session. We also believe a master planning exercise informed by year-round park user experience and sound research must be undertaken before this project proceeds in isolation.

Other recent changes to Greenwood Park include a quickly executed and controversial dog park as well as augmented landscaping around the playground (currently unfinished). Newly laid asphalt paths and the proposed children's water-sand play area were obviously not considered in congruence with the newly proposed pleasure skating trail. Drainage swales and walkway plans were also presented to the community in the last few years but have yet to be installed.

The current approach is not sound planning or a prudent use of available funds. The City cannot continue to underestimate the importance of Greenwood Park with a continued ad-hoc approach. If facilitated correctly the proposed improvements, with some element of visioning, can ensure Greenwood Park serves the community well for many years to come.

The seeds of many good ideas were present at the recent meeting; however, they were not considered within the scope of a master plan. If a roofed rink is to find the greatest success, even as a prototype, it must be first justified by solid research in terms of function and demand and then considered within the broader scope of an established design vision for the park. This design vision must be based in the realms of landscaping and urban design, not a detached engineering project.

We know from the collective professional experiences of our FROG members that if the design is stimulating and part of an overall vision it will be easier to excite the community and City Council to secure funds and make this all happen. Right now, it isn't and doesn't consider how the entire park is used on a year round daily basis.

We understand Councillor Fletcher has requested the involvement of James Parakh from the City's Urban Design department. We feel this is a very positive step toward facilitating this project within an overall vision for the park. With James' involvement we are requesting that City staff host a public design charette to understand the role of the improvements within the overall park facility and create a master plan vision. This master plan will then be used as a road map to help guide these current proposals and any future projects in a cohesive manner.

This is an exciting time for Greenwood Park and we truly believe we have a common goal to make these improvements as successful as possible. Let's not waste this opportunity, let's work together on a holistic approach to create a meaningful change of which we can all be proud.

We trust you will honour our request for a design charette to include urban design. In advance we would like an opportunity for one or two FROG members to meet with you, the Ward Councillor and James Parakh to map out the next steps and better understand your timelines and budgetary constraints to ensure this opportunity is not missed.

Kind regards,

**Friends of Greenwood Park
Park Improvement Steering Committee**

Sally Bliss
Deborah Day
Joanne Murphy
Neil Pattison
Brent Whitby

Cc: Councillor Paula Fletcher (pfletch@toronto.ca)
James Parakh, City of Toronto, Urban Design (jparakh@toronto.ca)