

From: Geoff Faul

To: Polhill, Bud; Henderson, Dale; Lysynski, Heather

Subject: Pen Equity Development Proposal

Lambeth Community Association is requesting delegation status at the next Planning and Environment Committee meeting at which the Pen Equity development project will be on the agenda.

The City of London in various documents and policies including a recently strengthened Trees Protection Bylaw, makes public statements and commitments to protect and increase tree cover in London (currently considerably below provincial guidelines) and encourages its residents and organizations to volunteer their time and resources to protect trees on their property and indeed, to increase plantings.

Lambeth Community Association is an active partner in London's Million Tree Challenge. In 2009, Lambeth's Bicentennial year, Lambeth Community Association coordinated the planting of 100 Centennial Oak Trees in and around Lambeth. In 2012, LCA coordinated two tree-sales events, one of which was a fund-raiser for Lambeth Public School Parent Council; it sent volunteers to donate hours at a trees education booth at Western Fair. Also in 2012, LCA negotiated an agreement with a local funeral home to fund the planting of memorial trees for every family who require its services. In 2013 LCA arranged to send over twenty visiting overseas students to volunteer as tree-planters for the annual tree dedication event at London's Celebration Forest. This week, is working to establish a similar Celebration Forest tradition at a location in Lambeth. Finally, LCA has had representatives on two Million Tree Challenge Task Groups and on the MTC Steering Committee. All in all, LCA has taken seriously, its partnership with MTC and its commitment to re-foresting London.

Of course one of the great challenges in encouraging volunteer work is creating a sense of the productivity and utility of volunteering.

This is the reason for LCA's interest in the Pen Equity project proposal.

How can the citizens of London, its property owners and organizations be asked by the City of London, to expend their energies and resources on protection and planting of trees when the City, through its Standing Committees and Council, is prepared to entertain the destruction of trees even in areas where they are presumed to be protected?

How do I, as President of Lambeth Community Association (a member of Urban League), go to my community and ask people and companies to donate their time, their energy and their money to planting trees, when the City is prepared to remove some +10,000 trees on the strength of a simple proposal to sacrifice this site for a simple "entertainment complex"?

Indeed, it appears that this project proposal sets a new "low" in London's apparently desperate search for "jobs" - at any price.

After subtracting the environmental and natural heritage costs, and the cost of additional municipal infrastructure & services, what does the City gain, beyond one single paving contract?

London's reputation for environmental sensitivity, for natural heritage and protection of woodlots is not one that commands respect amongst its peers, but the problem now being faced by Lambeth Community Association is that volunteers and potential volunteers are asking why they should bother? "It's not like the City cares..."

As the representative of an organization that has taken pride in its contributions to the inventory of trees in London, I request that the Planning Committee return this item to staff, to direct staff to work with Pen Equity, to redesign the land use in order to preserve the natural heritage of this site.

Regards,
Geoffrey Faul
Lambeth Community Association