

July 16, 2008

Dear Residents,

To all of you who responded to my open letter regarding the Gardiner – **Thank you.**

The responses were many and varied. The issues, concerns, observations and ideas presented were a fantastic array of perspectives.

What's clear is that people want more than just a waterfront that works. Residents in Ward 20 want a beautiful, accessible, livable and environmentally sustainable waterfront. With or without the Gardiner this must, always, be the focus of what we are trying to achieve.

During the debate and under questioning, staff made it clear that in authorizing the Environmental Assessment, the first step will be to frame the terms of reference for the study. In other words, before a plan can be developed conditions must be set that will attempt to measure what needs to be accomplished in a take down, what trade-offs are acceptable and what issues will have priority in a study.

As a result of yesterday's vote the terms of reference will now be drafted. Those terms will be developed through a public process and will have to be ratified by council. That vote should take place within a year. I voted in favour of this.

I also moved three motions that address concerns shared by many of you:

- **North/South Pedestrian Access –**

Any change to the area must not replace the problems for pedestrians created by an elevated roadway with problems that would be created by an expanded at grade roadway of near equal capacity. One of you wrote that the problem is the challenge is accommodating 100,000 cars. The respondent wrote that until other modes of transportation become a higher priority along the waterfront the barriers will always exist. Accordingly I moved a motion to measure how pedestrian access would be enhanced over current conditions through an Environmental Assessment and asked the staff working group to calculate how different scenarios would accommodate north south non vehicles movements through the study area. If the terms of reference do not speak to enhancing pedestrian access to the lake from the city, I will not support the takedown in one year's time.



- **Urban Design –**

Moving people is one thing, creating wonderful neighbourhoods to move through, creating all-weather passageways, building a viable neighbourhood in the wake of eliminating a raised roadway are just as critical as simply facilitating multiple access points to the waterfront. The neighbourhood between the water's edge and the older communities north of the tracks must be great places to visit regardless of their proximity to the lake. I moved a motion to make sure that new replacement roads must have built form environments and land parcels suitable for development. As one respondent put it, if taking down the road is such a catalyst for great design and new neighbourhoods than why does the area where the Gardiner has already been taken down still look so bad. Why after all these years is it still flanked by abandoned industrial land? If urban design does not lead the planning and if instead road building drives the proposed terms of reference then I will not support the project in one year.

- **Environment –**

In many ways this is the pivotal issue. If any land use decision in this corner of the waterfront fails to improve the environmental condition at the mouth of the Don River it should not be considered. Taking down the Gardiner and re-creating north-south bridged connections to the DVP will have a profound impact on efforts to naturalize the mouth of the waterway as it meets the lake. We must not let a road building exercise affect this goal of regeneration. The naturalized Don not only provides needed habitat and biodiversity and important flood protection, it is also an important filter that cleans water entering the lake. Reducing lake pollution protects waterfront beaches, improves drinking water standards and allows for better and safer recreational use of the waterfront for all Torontonians. As one of you wrote that after literally decades of false starts and mulling it over killing momentum on these parts of the waterfront plan would be criminal. I agree. I moved a motion to ensure that the terms of reference for the EA must accommodate plans to naturalize the Don and must not prevent rehabilitation. If the terms of reference for the Environmental Assessment do not meet this test I will oppose it in one year's time.

This has been a difficult decision. Several responses supported the study with reservations. Many more did not support the plan as currently described and suggested that the whole thing be scrapped. The problem with striking down the study is that it could revive Front Street. In September of this year, the Public Works and Infrastructure Committee will consider a motion to remove the Front Street Extension from the Official Plan and replace it with a local road.



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**Councillor Adam Vaughan 魏德方**

Toronto City Council  
Trinity-Spadina, Ward 20

I believe that the one year time frame to set the terms of reference gives us time to make sure that opponents of the Front Street Extension will have time to make sure that roadway is truly dead (i.e. removed from the Official Plan) before anything is done regarding the Gardiner.

Under this scenario, I supported the call to set the terms of reference for an EA, but with reservation. On the floor of council, and as a commitment now to residents of ward 20, I will not support going forward with the EA if the terms of reference do not adequately address the issues raised in my motions.

I will do my best to keep all of you informed as to when public hearings and consultation sessions are set. Once again thank you for your advice and counsel

Sincerely,

Adam



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