

Mike Sullivan

From: Mike Sullivan [mikedsullivan@gmail.com]
Sent: September 13, 2006 5:03 PM
To: 'Brendan Agnew-Iler'
Subject: RE: Response to your letter

Thank you for your reply on behalf of the Mayor. I appreciate his expression of concern for the neighbourhoods along the proposed routes and his support for a stop in Weston (we hope other stops as well, so it serves Toronto). Some of these neighbourhoods are clearly disadvantaged as is evidenced by their identification in the Strong Neighbourhood Strategy, and therefore would be more likely to suffer harm from the proposed link.

We can't help but notice that several of our questions went unanswered, or perhaps were misunderstood.

If there is significant public money to be spent on a rapid transit link to the airport, does the mayor support the TTC as the operator of such a link? I recognize that the TTC already provides a couple of airport services, but neither are in the same league as the proposed air-rail link.

We realize that the city has no 'plans' for city money in this project. But, the Province has committed the GTA Municipalities to \$240 Million of the overall cost of the GO Transit Infrastructure improvements. Of that \$240 Million, approximately \$90 Million is related to the improvements needed for the Air-Rail Link, which ultimately would go to a private operator. Those plans were not 'evolving' as you suggest, but are clearly spelled out in the Canada/Ontario agreement on the project. At the time, the mayor was supportive. He stated that as it was federal and provincial money, not city money, it was 'ok'. If it goes forward and city money is required for a private train, would he still be supportive?

You also neglected the Woodbine racetrack question. You referred us to the Official Plan, which shows a stop at Woodbine Racetrack, and a link to the Airport from the GO line. If, as we fear, one of the driving forces behind the push to put in this link is the eventual casino at Woodbine, is it wise for the city to be supporting a gambling express?

Finally we asked that he use his good offices to ensure that city officials are part of the Public Liaison process in the EA.

You also suggested that you thought someone had responded to my earlier letter. I have still not received anything. Can you please find out where the answer is, if it has been answered.

Thanks

Mike Sullivan

Chair
Weston Community Coalition

From: Brendan Agnew-Iler [mailto:biler@toronto.ca]
Sent: September 13, 2006 1:02 PM
To: Mike Sullivan
Subject: Response to your letter

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

Thank you for your letter concerning the proposed rail link to the airport. The mayor appreciates the time you have taken to express your concerns. I have studied the available material and discussed the project at length within this office. It is difficult to give a detailed answer to many of your questions because they are based on information that has been superceded. Now that the EA has been bumped up there are many proposals and assumptions draw from the Class EA process that are no longer relevant.

As you know, the mayor supports a rail link to the airport in principle, but is veryconcerned about the impact on neighbourhoods along the route and would like to see community concerns addressed. He has been very clear that a stop should be added at Weston and even seconded a Council resolution that no streets be cut to accommodate the increased rail capacity.

The Mayor is very supportive of public transit service to the airport. Right now there is excellent service to the airport in the form of express bus service to the airport from Kipling Station. Ridership on the Airport Rocket bus route has been steadily rising for several years. The TTC has also identified Eglinton West from the subway to the airport as a corridor requiring higher order transit. In fact, this is included in the Official Plan, the Ridership Growth Strategy and the Building a Transit City service planning report which, together, inform all of the City's and TTC's decisions about transit and transportation.

There are no plans to invest City money in the project. There was an evolving plan at the time that GO Transit was conducting a Class EA study for the initiative, which included a plan to dig a trench for three of the five sets of railway tracks in Weston. These would have been used by GO, VIA, CN and Blue-22. That study was subsequently canceled, and GO has now initiated an individual EA study for expansion of GO service and an airport transportation link. The corridor is not owned or controlled by the City.

As I have done in the past, I would be more than happy to work with City staff to ensure you receive answers to technical questions.

Thank you for writing and sharing your concerns. Should you require further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact this office again.

Yours truly,
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