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QUEENSWAY TERRACE NORTH COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Kiewit-Eurovia-Vinci (KEV)
Mr. Shawn D. Lannen, Vice-President
Mr. Oliver Kolouch

Councillor Theresa Kavanaugh
Anita Vandenberg, MP
Stage 2 LRT Project Team, City of Ottawa

National Capital Commission
Mr. Robert White, Government Relations
Mr. Ian Gabrina, Government Relations
Ms. Emilie Girand-Ruel, Manager of Public
Consultations

Re: Response to Berm Proposal for Connaught Park

Dear Mr. Lannen and Mr. Kolouch,

The board of the Queensway Terrace North Community Association (QTN) appreciates the prompt response from KEV to our first letter on the Connaught berm proposal, dated April 14, 2020. We also appreciate the provision of additional essential information; the openness to discuss options that would better serve community needs within the scope of KEV's mandate; and a willingness to continue to work with the community on more detailed plans before full implementation.

After a QTN board meeting that was devoted exclusively to review of the new information, we ask for your consideration of the following factors as you make further decisions on the berm proposal.

Support for soil retention and berming

QTN fully supports plans to retain excess soil on-site and use it for berming and landscaping. That is essential to mitigate the negative impacts of the LRT tracks and massive fly-over that cut right through the middle of this green space, and it is environmentally responsible, which is also a high priority of the QTN community.

QTN supports the use of berms to help mitigate the visual intrusion and negative sound impacts of the LRT system. Mitigation measures require particular attention in this section of the system because of the fly-over, the convergence of two tracks, and emergence from the tunnel. Berming was a major part of the mitigation measures discussed between 2016-2018. We were shocked to learn recently that berming was not



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part of the City's final plan. We were not allowed to see or have input into later versions of that plan; elements that were promised in early presentations by the City were dropped without informing, let alone consulting with the community.

Without berms there is no effective plan for mitigating the negative visual intrusion for residents who live within the sight lines of the high, massive fly-over and LRT tracks and will deal with a train passing close-by every few minutes. Turning what was restful green space into an expansive transportation corridor affects all residents of QTN who regularly use and highly value that space. It also affects recreational and transit users of the NCC multiuse pathway. Effective mitigation of the negative visual impact of the LRT system is essential and requires the use of berms, as well as tree-planting, which seems to be the only solution offered in the City's plan.

For sound mitigation, reliance on technical fixes on the tracks themselves, trees, and removal of the bus lanes for sound mitigation is woefully inadequate. We were told experience with Phase I would prove there are no sound impacts for residents. In fact, residents living in proximity to existing LRT lines are experiencing negative sound impacts that affect their daily lives and ability to enjoy their homes. While we do not have enough information to assess sound mitigation plans, berms are an essential addition to what have not been adequate mitigation plans to date.

Recommendation: Start now and continue work on detailed design

QTN recommends a two-stage approach:

- 1) Approve the use of excess soil for berming on site.
- 2) Finalise a more detailed berming plan with expedited consultation with all stakeholders as represented by QTN, NCC, and the City of Ottawa.

The following are matters that need further attention before full implementation:

Drainage

A full drainage plan is required to prevent the risk of flooding residential properties and water-pooling on paths that make them unusable at times. Residents provided information about previous experiences that resulted from inadequate attention to



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drainage issues when landscaping changes were made in this area. Informing residents of the results of the drainage study and consulting on the measures to be taken is essential to provide assurance that this concern is being adequately addressed as implementation proceeds.

Effectiveness of the berming plan for visual and sound mitigation

Further attention to the detailed design and location of the berms is required to ensure that there will be effective mitigation of the visual and sound impacts of the LRT system. The limited information available during the consultation prevented adequate assessment of its effectiveness. For example, the final design of the fly-over needs to be considered in relation to the berming, but that design is not available to residents to make an informed assessment of its adequacy. Many residents voiced concerns about other details, such as promixity and shadowing of their backyards, while supporting the use of berms in general. Further consultation as a condition of approval for what needs to happen immediately seems a reasonable approach to get a final outcome that better serves the needs of residents, the City, and the NCC.

Relationship between berms, paths, and tree-planting

Integration of the various components of the plan for this area, from the perspective of residents and users of this space, requires further attention before full implementation. Residents have raised legitimate and significant concerns about the relationship between the berms and having usable paths in all weather conditions for the purposes of getting to the transit stations, getting to other destinations, and walking and cycling for physical exercise and pleasure.

Both the City of Ottawa and the Federal government, which is responsible for the NCC, are aggressively promoting more active lifestyles for health and environmental reasons. Residents of QTN consistently put a high priority on the ability to walk and cycle through green spaces as part of their daily patterns of living. Decisions being made now for this area are a good opportunity to make progress toward those goals, as well as increasing the use of public transit. This is particularly needed, given known plans for intensification in areas such as Queensview Drive, around the new Queensview station. Enhancing connectivity between residential areas through this green space could add to



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amenities for all residents and users of services, including convenient use of public transit. Without further detailed attention it will be a missed opportunity at best, and at worst, a planning mistake that will have negative implications for a very long time.

Residents have also made suggestions for a mix of trees that can contribute to varied objectives, such as sound mitigation, beauty in all seasons, habitat for birds and wildlife, and fruit that could contribute to a growing focus on urban food production for a more sustainable future. We recognize there are many factors to consider; we ask that the legitimate concerns, local knowledge, and desires of residents be considered in the detailed plans.

Enabling varied uses of the green space

Detailed design of the berms needs to consider the varied existing uses and potential uses that could be an enhancement of this space, as a potential benefit from what is often viewed by residents as a negative development for our area. Residents have expressed interest in a range from more passive uses, such as an informal rest spot, to more active uses, such as a community garden or tobogganing in the winter.

There is not time now to make decisions about the best options. QTN asks for some flexibility and continuing engagement to refine any approved plans to achieve the best outcome for residents, the City of Ottawa, and the NCC.

Relationship to plans for Pinecrest Creek

We realize that this proposal does not deal with Pinecrest Creek directly. However, it is important to name now our concerns about the plans for Pinecrest Creek, with particular focus on the section that runs along QTN. Residents who pay close attention noted increased erosion and the likelihood of more erosion as a result of tree removal. Hopes for restoration of Pinecrest Creek as a potential benefit to a community that is accepting a lot of negative impacts from LRT expansion have been dashed. We would like to see consideration given to any measures that could be taken by the City and the NCC, in conjunction with the berming proposal, to restore Pinecrest Creek in the area along QTN and make it an attractive feature of a sustainable and usable green space for residents and visitors



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Moving forward, together

QTN recommends making the necessary decisions now to allow retention of the soil on site for berming and landscaping, as essential components of effective mitigation of the negative impacts of the LRT infrastructure being built through the middle of this valued green space.

QTN requests greater consideration of impacts from the perspective of residents as more detailed plans are developed and implemented. The constructive, thoughtful suggestions from residents in the very short and very limited consultation process indicate benefits for all actors from greater openness, access to enough information to provide informed suggestions, and responsive dialogue as options are considered.

QTN is prepared to work with the City of Ottawa, the NCC, and KEV to quickly develop more detailed plans, including the integration of various elements under the control of different actors, and various uses to make this an attractive space for both residents and visitors for a long time to come.

Thank you for giving this serious consideration,

Simon Partridge, President

Kathy Vandergrift, Vice-President & Chair of the QTN Planning Committee

on behalf of the

Queensway Terrace North Community Association



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