

Ministry
of the
Environment

Office of the Minister

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ENV1283MC-2009-4493

Mr. Mike Sullivan
Chair, Weston Community Coalition
72 Church Street
Toronto ON M9N 1N3
msullivan@cep.ca

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

Thank you for your interest in Metrolinx's proposed Georgetown South Service Expansion and Union-Pearson Rail Link transit project (Project). I welcome your comments on this project.

During the 30-day comment period, you submitted an objection to the Georgetown South Service Expansion and Union-Pearson Rail Link transit project which is following the transit project assessment process under *Ontario Regulation 231/08 – Transit Projects and Greater Toronto Transportation Authority Undertakings* (Transit Regulation).

I am taking this opportunity to inform you that after giving careful consideration to the project documentation and to the issues raised in the objections, I am of the opinion that the transit project is a matter of provincial importance. As a result, I have issued a notice to proceed in accordance with the Environmental Project Report, subject to the conditions relating to the natural environment set out in the attached notice.

Several objections and concerns were raised about the impacts of diesel emissions on air quality and human health. To address these concerns I am requiring that all GO Transit and Union-Pearson Rail Link trains running in the Georgetown South Corridor use the highest emission standards available when the expanded service begins, anticipated for 2015. These standards, which follow the United States' Environmental Protection Act standards for tier 4 locomotives, are predicted to substantially reduce pollutants in the train emissions, particularly nitrogen oxides (NOx) (approximately 80 per cent reduction), and particulate matter (PM_{2.5}) (approximately 90 per cent reduction). I am

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also requiring Metrolinx to conduct further studies and analyses related to the predicted human health risks from the train traffic, which must be approved by the Ministry of the Environment. If human health risks remain following the implementation of the trains containing the new emission technology, Metrolinx will be required to develop a new mitigation plan to address these outstanding health risks, prior to the commencement of train operations on the Georgetown South Corridor expansion and the Union-Pearson Rail Link.

Lastly, to address objections related to air quality impacts, I am requiring that Metrolinx implement a strict air monitoring and reporting program to ensure that air quality standards are met. Metrolinx will be required to monitor key pollutants and also determine the addition of emissions from trains in the Georgetown South Corridor.

Many requests were made to require Metrolinx to electrify the Georgetown South Corridor. Metrolinx has committed to conducting a study to look at the best technology for the entire GO Transit rail network of the future, which is required before electrification of the corridor can be considered. I have reminded Metrolinx of its commitment to further study the possibility of electrification for the entire GO Transit rail line, which includes the Georgetown South Corridor. If the study results in information or recommendations that could have positive impacts on the environment, I expect Metrolinx to implement the recommendations as expeditiously as possible.

I have also reminded Metrolinx of its requirement to meet the commitments set out in its Environmental Project Report, including maintaining a train stop in Weston, implementing the tunneled portion of the rail way between Church Street and King Street and maintaining existing accessibility to Church Street and King Street in Weston.

I am confident that the conditions requiring the trains to run with the highest emission technology, further human health studies and analysis, a mitigation plan if required, and a stringent air monitoring and reporting program, will mitigate impacts to the environment and to human health.

Metrolinx can now proceed to issue a Statement of Completion to complete the transit project assessment process, including the conditions I have imposed. Metrolinx must implement the project in the manner it was developed and designed, as set out in the Environmental Project Report, and in accordance with the conditions set out in the notice. They must also obtain any other permits and approvals required to proceed with the construction and operation of the project.

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Again, I would like to thank you for participating in the transit project assessment process under the Transit Regulation and for bringing your concerns to my attention.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Gerretsen', written over a large, stylized circular flourish.

John Gerretsen
Minister of the Environment

Attachment

c: Jim O'Mara, Metrolinx, Executive Lead, Environment
EA File No. 07-03-01