

Mike Sullivan

From: Weston Community Coalition [info@westoncommunitycoalition.ca]
Sent: September 13, 2005 15:12
To: msullivan@cep.ca
Subject: Weston Community Coalition Update

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Mike Sullivan

Despite not hearing from us all summer, the Weston Community Coalition is alive and kicking. Because the Environmental Assessment is now moved to a FULL assessment, and because SNC Lavalin stepped down as consultant, GO Transit has spent the summer finding another consultant. They have advised us that they hope to confirm one at the October GO Board Meeting.

The FULL Environmental assessment starts with the proponent (GO Transit) preparing a 'Terms of Reference'. That document will form the structure of the assessment, defining what gets studied and how. The proponent must consult with any interested party during the creation of the terms of reference, and the Coalition has formally advised GO that it wishes to be consulted.

GO Transit refuses to advise whether they intend to request that the minister 'scope' the assessment. Scoping is where the minister allows a proponent to not study certain aspects, thus limiting the 'scope' of the assessment. We believe that scoping is not in the best interests of the community. We have asked, through Councillor Nunziata, for a meeting with the minister of the Environment to discuss this and other matters before the terms of reference are drafted.

We have also asked for and been granted a meeting with Mayor Miller to try and determine the city's position on the Air-Rail Link (ARL), and on the routing and the assessment process. He has stated publicly that he would prefer it to be run by GO Transit.

We have also asked the Toronto and York Labour Council to support our cause through a resolution at their next meeting. The resolution will ask that any publicly funded transit systems be run as public, not private for profit, transit, and that the city not pay its share of the costs if this is 'railroaded' through over city objections.

We have been in contact with the federal department of Transport (the agency from which the whole of the ARL issue sprung). They have allowed us to see some studies, but have declined to allow us to see others, suggesting that national security would be compromised. We are appealing that decision.

Some of you have written directly to the government, and got back a form letter stating that the whole process was conducted with participation from the city, GO Transit, and federal and provincial officials, and was deemed by a 'fairness commissioner' to have been a fair process. We asked to know exactly who attended these meetings to decide on the Weston corridor and that it be a P3 (Public-Private-Partnership). They have refused to tell us who was at the meetings. We have asked our MP, Alan Tonks, to find out for us, but they have refused his office as well. It does seem awfully strange that the identities of the public officials who attended these meetings are so secret.

At our next meeting of the Coalition we hope to have a conversation with Rod McPhail, the City of Toronto's director of Transportation Planning, to get more insight into the city's overall plans for light rail transit, etc.

A reminder that our web site (www.westoncommunitycoalition.ca) contains all the documentation we have received to date. If you have the time, it makes interesting reading.

If you have any information you wish to give us, please feel free to respond to this e-mail.

Thanks

26/10/2005

Mike Sullivan on behalf of
The Weston Community Coalition