



June 11, 2024

**TO:** City of Toronto Planning and Housing Committee

**RE:** Villiers Island Precinct - City-Initiated Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment - Decision Report - Approval

**AGENDA ITEM:** PH13.2

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. through 7.; report from the Interim Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, dated June 3, 2024

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee,

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA) supports the recommendations in the subject staff report. As an active member of Waterfront Toronto's Stakeholder Advisory Committees for over twenty years, SLNA has collaborated with both the City and Waterfront Toronto on projects in the West Don Lands that are antecedents of the current work to create an updated vision for 'Villiers Island'. The proposed amendments to the Official Plan, zoning by-laws, the Toronto Municipal Code and other governing documents leading to the recommendation that Council adopt the 'Villiers Island' Precinct Plan 2024 Amendment incorporate the SLNA's objective of providing more density and more housing for all groups.

The opportunity to work with a parcel of land of this magnitude is a rare one. The creation of a new and vibrant community on 'Villiers Island' can take key learnings from the work done over the past twenty-five years in the West Don Lands – creating new award winning neighbourhoods from abandoned industrial lands and brownfields, specifically East Bayfront and the Canary District.

Public realm is a particular and critical focus for SLNA, as it sets the table for how housing will both shape and be integrated into the community. For the past several years, the 'Villiers Island' infrastructure project has been a well-kept secret. As this project advances toward its earliest stages of construction, it is vital that the precinct plan be updated to reflect fully current density trends, and the lessons learned designing and providing public spaces which are welcoming, functional and accessible to all. The mixed-use housing model will benefit from ample green space along the corridors and fully aligned transportation, transit and pedestrian strategies providing human-scale living experiences for many thousands of new residents.

A creatively designed public realm allows flexibility leading to diverse retail and community experiences in a vibrant waterfront community. Exceptionally high-quality parks are already coming to life. Local street network plans should link to these parks, and provide as many opportunities for flexible pedestrianization as possible.

This ambitious project is fortunate to have the leadership of CreateTO, the City and Waterfront Toronto behind it. The SLNA looks forward to continuing to bring its *resident's* lens to ongoing discussions which will see mixed-used housing at all levels of affordability, enhanced

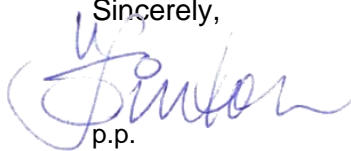
employment opportunities for the creative sector together with port-related and industrial activities emerge on 'Villiers Island' and the surrounding lands. All reinforcing the reality of Toronto as a modern and progressive waterfront city.

The St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association (SLNA), incorporated in 1983, represents over 35,000 residents living in the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood of Toronto. The neighbourhood – bounded by Yonge St., Queen St. E., Parliament St. and the rail corridor to the south – is a mixed-income, ethnically diverse residential and commercial community adjoining the Central Business District. It contains the oldest neighbourhood in the (now) City of Toronto, the *original ten blocks* of the Town of York (dating from 1793).

This past Saturday, June 8, SLNA and other local neighbourhood associations celebrated the amazing legacy of the West Don Lands Committee – helping to create three new neighbourhood associations and a farmers' market in the West Don Lands – all in close collaboration with the City of Toronto and Waterfront Toronto.

The SLNA and its Development Committee support this revised direction for the development of 'Villiers Island', and encourage support from the Planning and Housing Committee.

Sincerely,



p.p.  
Board of Directors  
St. Lawrence Neighbourhood Association



Suzanne Kavanagh  
Chair, Development Committee, SLNA  
SAC Member, Waterfront Toronto

cc: Mayor Olivia Chow  
Members of Planning and Housing Committee:  
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Councillor Josh Matlow Councillor Jamaal Myers  
Councillor Frances Nunziata Councillor Gord Perks (Chair)  
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