

Bisera, Leikha

Subject: FW: Council Deputation Dec 10th re Markham Tennis Club Bubble Item # 8.2.4
Attachments: Deputation re Tennis Bubble at Markham Tennis Club (MTC).docx

From: Michael Gannon <
Sent: December 10, 2019 10:07 AM
To: Clerks Public <clerkspublic@markham.ca>
Subject: Fw: Council Deputation Dec 10th re Markham Tennis Club Bubble Item # 8.2.4

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Kindly add this deputation to the official record. Thanks.

Regards
Mike Gannon
905-513-9974
647-868-3274

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: Michael Gannon <
To: Alan Ho Amanda Collucci <>; Jack Heath <>; Karen Rea <Andrew Keyes <>; Isa Lee >; Reid McAlpine >; Khalid Usman>; Jim Jones <; Frank Scarpitti <; Don Hamilton <Joe Li <j>; Keith Irish
Cc: Mary Creighton >; Andy Taylor>; Brenda Librecz
Sent: Monday, December 9, 2019, 10:23:58 p.m. EST
Subject: Council Deputation Dec 10th re Markham Tennis Club Bubble Item # 8.2.4

Dear Mr Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Regional and Ward Councilors, kindly find attached my deputation for tomorrow on the above subject. Markham has a well deserved reputation for our fantastic recreational facilities. Thank you! Several of the principals involved in this matter also have my deepest respect for their years of selfless volunteering on behalf of Canadian tennis, but I could not support this proposal without significant modification for my own club (Unionville) so integrity and honesty obliges me to speak up.

In summary, the proposal takes away up to 2 months of affordable tennis for Markham families in order to deliver 7 months of much more expensive tennis by a private operator, at a cost to the City of almost a million dollars. How is that fair or wise? There are too many unanswered questions, no demonstrated benefit to the City in exchange for the dollars, insufficient transparency, no time for the broader tennis community to react, you are not following your own tennis policy, no formal vote of support from Markham TC itself, and questionable procurement. I respectfully suggest you defer this item until you have more information, have done more engagement, and have satisfactory answers to many questions raised in my deputation. I might well then be first in line for my own membership if it can be done fairly and without impact to the other Markham community tennis clubs!

Regards
Mike Gannon

Deputation re Tennis Bubble at Markham Tennis Club (MTC)

Good afternoon. I agree there is a need for more indoor tennis facilities in Markham, but do not support this current proposal. Some of the principals in this deal have selflessly given great service to the sport of tennis for many years. Indeed I play with some of them from time to time, so Scott, Dave, Dave etc if you are listening, this is not personal. Would I support this proposal for my own club, in Unionville? Emphatically not, so unless I want President Trump calling me another two faced Canadian, I feel obliged to speak up.

Credentials. I served on the Board of Unionville TC for 6 years, I helped the City formulate processes for Angus Glen tennis centre, and I helped Mary Creighton with revisions to the City's tennis clubs policy published in 2013.

A comment on the staff report. The outdoor tennis season is not 5 months, its closer to 7, especially taking into account startup and closing activities. People start playing outdoors from mid-April, and finish late October. Team tryouts take place throughout April. Most court maintenance takes place in April or October, when the bubble would still be up, so at MTC, this would have to be done during the limited 5 month period.

I play tennis in the indoor season at BTC, Blackmore Tennis Club, in Richmond Hill, a commercial for profit club, operating 7 months under a bubble, like the one proposed for Markham. A key difference however is that it uses town owned public courts but is not operated as a community tennis club outdoors. My cost for the indoor season, playing twice a week for just over 5 months, is usually around \$1,000. My total cost for the outdoor season in Unionville, just under 7 months, is about \$125. This is just for myself. It's reasonable to assume that Markham's winter pricing would be similar to Blackmore.

So in essence, what this proposal is asking for is for the City to subsidise a private operator by almost a million dollars, to take away up to 2 months of the current outdoor season of cheap affordable tennis, all in order to support a commercial club that will provide much more expensive indoor tennis, for those families who can afford it, for 7 months of the year! This was never the intent of the ILMP.

How can this proposal benefit the City and residents? How does this proposal benefit current MTC members, and how long will their courts be out of use during

the first year of construction? Will they migrate to other clubs for a longer outdoor season of affordable tennis? Can our other clubs absorb those numbers?

Why are MTC members any of my concern you might ask? Because I don't like the precedent. I don't want to wake up one day and find that my club has been dealt a similar deal, without my input, that cuts short the outdoor season of affordable tennis, for the benefit of the more affluent. Yes, I can afford it, but it's not fair for families who cannot.

I mentioned earlier the City's tennis policy. Why is it being ignored here? Most of you won't be aware of that policy, so here are a few extracts.

*This policy provides for a fair and consistent process to ensure Community Tennis Clubs are operating with **transparency** ensuring **fair public access** to tennis courts in Markham..... with **democratic principles accountable** to its membership..... The (tennis club) Executive is **accountable to its members***

It is my understanding that Markham TC members have not voted for this significant change to their club, nor has their Board voted to approve it. So, does Markham TC as a whole support this proposal, and should this not be required prior to asking Council for approval?

The tennis policy also calls for a City run *Management Committee will consist of three members appointed by the City from the Recreation, Operations and Asset Management Departments, as well as one member representing each of the established Community Tennis Clubs.*

Why has this expert committee not reviewed and reported on this significant proposal, so that other clubs could provide input, for staff and Council?

Procurement. There is a long established successful operator of similar facilities in the Region, Tennis Clubs of Canada, with clubs in Richmond Hill, Aurora, Barrie and Newmarket. Why have they not been asked to bid? Why sole source to just the one bidder? And why a 25 year lease? We only gave Miller Waste an 8/10 year deal, and look at all their investments.

In summary, the proposal takes away up to 2 months of affordable tennis for Markham families in order to deliver 7 months of much more expensive tennis by a private operator, at a cost to the City of a million dollars. How is that fair or wise?

There are too many unanswered questions, no demonstrated benefit to the City in exchange for the million dollars, insufficient transparency, no time for the broader tennis community to react, you are not following your own tennis policy, no formal vote of support from MTC itself, and questionable procurement. I respectfully suggest you defer this item until you have more information, have done more engagement, and have satisfactory answers to the above questions. I might well then be in line for my own membership! Thanks for listening.