

February 10th Council Meeting URA Deputation

Good evening Mr Mayor, Councillors, City Staff, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Michael Gannon, resident of Unionville, and I am speaking on behalf of, and with the approval of, the Unionville Ratepayers Association, in support of Councillor Rea's and Councillor Hamilton's motion to allow the public to read the Arena reports. It remains our view that any content that can be legally released from any report should be released.

On September 14th 2012, the URA, after an open series of meetings and member surveys, sent a long letter to our Mayor and Council. I won't repeat it all here, but in summary we asked for 2 key things;

1. That the City of Markham be formally requested to release to the public all relevant documents and studies related to the MSECC project that can be legally released at this time, and.....
2. That the City of Markham commission an independent review of the MSECC project, and to release a report from this review to the public prior to the final Council decision on the project.

At a well-attended meeting of the URA on February 2nd 2015, we reviewed this unfulfilled request, and reaffirmed our position.

\$725,000 of public money was used to procure reports that we were led to believe would inform us about the viability of such projects, their pros and cons, financial and partnership options, and if this was indeed the case then this information should be made available to assist all stakeholders in any discussion of future projects. Residents are also stakeholders.

Given the passage of time since these reports were produced, and the fact that nobody met the private funding deadline imposed by Council, today's

conditions are different. If there were any stumbling blocks such as competitive advantage or commercial confidentiality, they are not as significant when time has passed, and there are no current bidders. We also urge you to consider what “can be legally released” really means. Of course, please do not release any content that you are “required by law” to keep confidential. Anything that meets that strict definition can and should be redacted out. There is a wide gap however between “required by law” not to release, and being cautious for whatever other reasons, be they commercial or political. Given the nature of the reports in question, it seems to us highly unlikely that 100% of all the content of all the reports meets the threshold of “required by law” to keep confidential. The City itself already published some content, as the The National Post said just last week “It would be highly unusual for a consultant to tell a client what they could do with the information provided to it. Besides, the city already has released some details of the reports publicly, in using elements of them to buttress its case for the arena.”

Residents are stakeholders, we paid for those reports, and deserve to be informed. Please support the motion.