

COUNCIL EXCERPTS – DRAFTv2

PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT NOV 7 2009 – DISK 1, title 02 11/4/2009 / 3:49pm

“The revenues associated with collecting the tax are projected to be in the neighbourhood of annualized at just over 10 million dollars assuming 2000 lawfully erected signs. The report outlines options for directing the enhanced revenue to first enforcement of the bylaw and then considerations through the 2010 budget process the priorities of city beautification arts and culture.”

Ann Borooah, Chief Building Official/Executive Director, Toronto Building, Staff Presentation, 0:31:24

“At one point during the process was the industry made aware that the tax would be used to fund arts initiatives?”

Councillor Stintz, 3:26:57

Re: “I don’t recall the exact point and there has never has been a true dispute with were the taxation would fully go if there is additional money. The issue here is that the city and the committee is asking for too much from an industry that does not have enough to give. We can give something in line with the Hemson report because it was factually assessed and proper consultation went into it. We are prepared to pay for proactive enforcement...”

Lisa, Titan / OMAC

“We have justifiable, quantifiable need”

Councillor Davis 5:16:43

Re: “You’re not proposing to use any of this money to fix broken sewers in neighbourhoods.”

Chris, Abcon, Megaposter

Re: “No but investing in the public realm and various clean and beautiful city initiatives and the arts and so on are demonstrable needs in the city of Toronto...”

Councillor Davis, 5:17:14

“We need a revenue source to be able to monitor the situation, this is what all the big municipalities are doing across North America, their putting in a tax and their funneling that tax into enforcement and their funneling that tax into city beautification enhancements. We have to match the tax to the service, and because there is a real nice marriage with what I think the arts advocates are saying and the tax that is being proposed here. The reason why you advertise on billboards is because it impacts on the public realm, you walk by it, you drive by it you cycle by it that’s why they are there. Is it not fair and reasonable to say -- we can debate the quantum, but is it not fair and reasonable to say that we want control over where that visibility happens, we want to be able to manage that control and we want the public to benefit from the fact that you are showing those signs in a public realm. That’s the basic theory here and I think that philosophy, that way of thinking is as sound as the day is long...”

Councillor Mihevc, 6:21:11

“We are following our objectives, we are going to have a consistently enforced harmonized sign bylaw and revenues, new additional revenues that can go into the kinds of beautification, arts and other uses in the city that we desperately need.”

Councillor Davis 6:29: 30

“Now, some level of taxation over and above that [enforcement] that’s fair. To those that don’t want any advertising, careful what you wish for – because if we end up with no advertising there is also no money for grants for the arts”

Councillor Milczyn, 6:35:40

“I want to say one last thing to the arts community that are in the room tonight, the groups that have tried to seize this opportunity [actually we made the opportunity too] to finance profoundly important arts programs and youth programs in the city and who put 600 people in this council chamber not too long ago supporting the notion of tax supported so that those youth could participate in the life of the city and the beautification of this city. I want to say thank you for that effort, I want to say that you are part of our communities, your part of the people elected us to represent you and it is going to be a very big struggle to get a tax established and make sure that it does not go to general revenue....The taxes that we raise of this policy, go towards, whether it is youth through arts or trying to tackle the TTC budget increases go towards providing services to some of the most vulnerable people in this city, and we can’t do it by walking away from this tax.”

Councillor Vaughan, 6:47:46

“I want to pick up where Vaughan has sort of left off when he talks about the taxes being utilized to support the vulnerable communities and so on as well as the arts community. I think we can all agree that we can support the concept.”

Councillor Thompson, 6:48:30

“...I think that we will all be the beneficiary of it. I think that the area and the focus in terms of arts, and I do hope that um much of the arts community is hoping to realize will actually accrue to the community and the programs that they are hoping to see materialize. My hope is that it does realize but I think at the end of the day we might have some challenges with that, the point that I wanted to make though with this remark is to suggest that we will all be the beneficiary of the work of the arts community and the visitors coming to Toronto.”

Councillor Thompson, 6:52:50

COUNCIL DISK 2 -12.1.2009

“The direction to report back on this item came from council which suggested that we should report back, staff should report back on the application of a billboard or signage tax, for the purposes of raising revenue to administer the bylaw as well as raise revenue for city beautification, arts or cultural initiatives. In keeping with the direction given by council, the proposed TPST or sign tax was based on the goals outlined in this slide including providing a source of revenue including providing better enforcement of the sign bylaw, potential revenues to support city beautification and other city goals including arts and culture further support the goals outlined in the new sign bylaw and promote the City’s environmental goals.... In conclusion, we are proposing in the report before you a tax that we believe will support these city goals as directed by council...”

Ann Borooah, Chief Building Official/Executive Director, Toronto Building, Staff Presentation, 0:53:15

Re: “You indicated that this policy of taxation supports city policy goals which particular goal does it support. Does it support attracting business, encouraging business – which is a public policy goal I believe of the Mayor?”

Councillor Ootes 1:47:37

Re: "It is, councillor and we did work with the agenda for prosperity and the staff in Economic Development and consulted with the BIAs around the proposed regulations and recommend signs that we think will contribute to the cities goals for a beautiful city as outlined in the official plan – and supporting beautiful urban environment and that is the primary goal of the sign bylaw itself and that is what it is intended to support."

Ann Boroogh, Chief Building Official/Executive Director, Toronto Building, Staff Presentation, 0:53:15

DISK 2.5 12.1.2009, 2pm

"I have a number of comments that I would like to make. First, I have been working on this issue for five years – it started with an audit that was done in my ward where we identified that 50% of the signs in my ward were illegal or documentation could not be found as far as their legitimacy. And that got me going and working on this with some of the folks that are behind us. The first and foremost though, I think it is very-very important for us to thank the group of individuals behind us, many of whom, yes are under 30 – under the 35 set, the illegalsigns.ca folks, the beautifulcity.ca folks for their spirited advocacy on this public policy issue, you know we are very often cynical or develop a cynicism in this city about the possibility for real change. Well here is a group of people – and I can remember the meeting that we had here, this council chamber was absolutely packed. They had it. It was the young people engaging and debating this and trying to figure out the right thing to do is. Trying to figure out if taxation was the best strategy, trying to figure out how, basically to beautify our public streets. So if there is a victory here and I do hope at the end of the day we do the right thing – a lot of credit goes to these folks here. Any young person, any group that thinks that change is not possible I think this is going to be a template for how actually you can change city hall. So I think they need to be complemented... When EKO does a poll and they are a very reputable firm, they say at 70% support such a tax, with 14% saying they are neutral – that is very, very good in terms of public relations terms. In terms of petitions they have done a ton of work around petitions – they have shown that yes the vast majority of Torontonians support this, support the direction that staff is going in.... This is a very-very modest tax, this tax has already been cut two times, from 28 to 18 to 10. This is reasonable and it should not be cut further. Madam speaker I think if we want to be a leading edge city, if we want to beautify our public spaces, if we want to have some regulations, we are not saying no to the signs – we are saying there has got to be some rules and we the public who are basically having these signs imposed on us deserve to get some benefits from it. I think this package before us is a good and fair package and we should not compromise."

Councillor Mihevc, 1:06:54

"Billboards are rather unique, you really don't have a choice, you can turn off your tv, turn off your computer turn down your radio, but billboards are extremely hard to ignore so they really don't give the client or customer a big chance... Even though these billboards may be on private property they still require public through fairs and public access to be seen and I think that this motion allows the industry to come forward in a true spirit of partnership [in allowing them to come forward and submit their statements]."

Councillor Heaps 1:14:34

"...I disagree with Councillor Holyday, in fact some of that money should go to beautification. The advertising industry at the turn of the century signed a contract with the public and that contract essentially said we are going to give you a radio ad, we are going to pump a radio ad to you [but] are going to buy some high quality programming and you can have that, that is your benefit and if you

choose, you can sit there and listen to our ad. The television industry carried that through. But with the billboard industry there is no public benefit, okay. They broke the contract with the community. The signs are there, and their there and their there and they offer nothing in return – and the tax offers us at least something in return that we can apply to the community – and there is no more appropriate place to put some of this money than beautification of this city. If this bylaw is approved as it is, than each councillor will have an opportunity to take those little bits of money they get for community beautification projects and you'll be able to do 5 or 6 of them in your ward. And then the money will go to beautify the city rather than simply sucked away into general revenue. And then the companies will be giving something back to the people of Toronto for the pain that they have to suffer for watching these signs.

Councillor Moscoe, 1:47:59

“If there is a tax collected that revenue should go to our communities. It is incredible that a few thousand dollars can enhance local communities in terms of public art, in terms of creating murals in terms of creating small gardens. And that is something that any taxes that are going to be collected should somehow go to our local communities. Otherwise if that goes to the general revenue, Torontonians are not going to see the benefit...let put the money where it should go.”

Councillor Palacio 1:59:40

“To the tax issue, notionally all of us agree that taxes need to get paid. Even the sign industry agrees that they want to contribute to the beautification of the city”

Councillor Stintz. 2:12:20

“These signs fly in the face of our investment in a clean and beautiful city, in a healthy city and also in the climate change targets we have been looking at. Now, I think that the idea that at some point we should have some of these signs and that we should take the revenue stream from that and put it into the beautification through artistry and through our public realm is a very good idea. I would suggest that we do not support councillor hoyday's direction...graffiti is not an issue of money but one of everyone working together...”

Councillor McConnell, 2:31:53

DISK 3 10:30-12:30, 12.07.2009

“The more successful we are in making them attractive gathering places, the more private industry wants to get into them, so they can profit by the number of people walking through that location as an investment we make towards beautiful spaces. We set taxes in order to pay for the public facilities that make this a great place to live, and we should take this staff recommendation on the tax revenue – that they want us to put in so we can continue to invest in a great and beautiful city.”

Councillor Perks 04:42:15 / 35:27 / 38:25

“I am committed, deeply to the funds, going to, as the Hemson report suggested into the public realm and to the arts.”

Councillor Rae, 042:47 / 0:48

“We have an opportunity to make a statement about the kind of public spaces we want in the city. We are taking the core of the money that will be levied and putting it into arts organizations that will compensate within the public realm and make positive contributions, and I think it is an excellent example of where the city sometimes leads and in this case the city has taken up the cause from the community which really come out and organized around this. Built up the consensus that is out there

and we have the opportunity to act on this consensus. This is very much in the line, Madam Chair, of a long string of community lead initiatives going back all the way to stopping of the Spadina expressway, the maintenance of streetcars in the early 1970's – all of these were examples where the community has mobilized across divisions, come together over a number of years with a comprehensive plan. This allows us to collect the amount of revenue that is needed for enforcement but to also make a positive change. And I think at the end of the day, one of the acts of this council that will be remembered. This is a small but important part of that vision of a city that is clean, beautiful and invests in the arts.”

Councillor Giambrone, 1:02:28

“A tax that will be dedicated into another industry, creative industry, a non-profit industry, the arts in this city. That is a tremendous booster. I don't know if everyone saw the memo that came through from the Pride Committee, that showed just how much revenue that is brought to the city through a non-profit organization. Pride Toronto, I think it was 184 Million dollars for pride week.”

Councillor Fletcher, 1:12:58

“I want to applaud the arts and creative community and I want to applaud in particular the youth branch, if you will of the arts and culture community. They are not all of them artists who have been hugely successful whenever they have applied to the TAC to find monies for artistic expression. They are not big components of the majors who we fund in a different way. But they have a vested interest in the arts and culture community. They are those young people who have organized themselves around the beauty of this city and all its facets – and they have done so since back in the last term of office when we were debating street furniture [before that]...and if we really think about it with the exception of community safety this is the one thing that has galvanized the youth community and indeed the activist community at large of this municipality for the last six years. Arts, culture beauty. Those things that they want to surround them because at a very early stage in their lives they decided that they are going to invest their lives in the city of Toronto, and so they have a long term commitment to the visual beauty and the arts and culture and low and behold, lucky us that is directly in line with our economic development policy. From Richard Florida on down. Everyone keeps telling us that that is a major component of a city that attracts people, such that creativity begins to go beyond arts and culture, creativity begins to permeate the minds of people in every business interest when it is there at the arts and cultural level. And so here we are, focused on business and yet in lockstep with what our youth community is asking us for and has done for the last six years. And so we have to look at their dialogue in their piece in this.”

Councillor Carroll, 1:34:55

Re: “Can I see the amendment again as far as going to general revenue.”

Councillor Moscoe

“Well going to the budget process. My own feeling and through the budget process this would happen would be that we would come back with a recommendation about 2010 year, but as you know the budget committee is transmitted to the executive committee that we through deliberating with the staff that review arts and culture, public realm etc. that we would also bring to executive committee some recommendation about the years going forward that you could look at within the context of the budget and its requirements.

Councillor Carroll

I am sorry I did not hear your response to Moscoe. So I am just wondering, is your initiative to take it away from city beautification and arts and culture and then just have a great big broad discussion on where this money goes?

Councillor Hall

I am glad you asked this question. I think if you heard my comments you would know that in no way

shape or form do I want to take it away from that component of the city's many operating requirements. A lot of people have forgotten that there is actually a second five years to the culture plan. There is great commitment that council has made in the past to the arts and culture community and we need to carry on with that. All I am saying is that by moving it to the budget process we will make the determinations in the context of those things that council is committed to in the past and also in the context of our financial controls. Which is to say that even in the arts community you don't just sprinkle free money its money based on what are your economic factors, what are you going to do with the money etc etc. etc. While we want to make a commitment there [the arts] it should be within the context of council's overall directives.

Councillor Carroll

DISK 4 2:00pm... 12.07.2009

"K'naan is someone who came out of the programs this city has supported that effectively bring the music of Somalia to the youth that live in Toronto...What is amazing about K'naan is that he continues to give back to programs like Remix where he mentors young emerging artists in this city to make sure that their voices are heard – not just in Toronto but around the world. And the grant program that has nurtured these young artists in North Etobicoke and all parts of our city deserve our thanks for making sure that when the world gathers in South Africa this summer a Canadian will be centre stage even if our soccer team isn't – and that is with arts funding. And if Councillor Ford is curious about what they do in Etobicoke with their grants money – they achieve international acclaim.

Adam Vaughan, Motion to Congratulate K'naan 0:07:22

"this is a manufactured issue like coffee cups and plastic bags" "this really is a shakedown of the advertising industry and that is something that I don't think I can support. [then goes on to say that it should go to building one new rink every couple years] "I believe that these new revenues, if they are to be raised should be used for hard infrastructure that is going to help out real people in real communities."

Councillor Minnan Wong, 0:13

"Until you really have to work hard and have a cushy number, or hand money out to a bunch of freeloaders, that is what it comes down to...You know what is really funny at the end of the day, we've all got it all orchestrated, oh all this money is going to go to the arts. This money is not going to the arts. You know it is not going to the arts. Everyone in this room knows it is not going to the arts. Now watch the arts jump up, 'well where's the money you promised us last year' I've got news for you, the arts and culture people that have been working / thinking that you are going to get this money – you're not going getting this money. And remember this as I am standing up here, you will not be getting this money. And it's all just a big cover-up that's all this is. You'll see. Mark my words; this is not going to any arts group, okay.

Councillor Ford, 0:23:10

"There are some people here that have been amazing advocates, sometimes perhaps annoyingly so. [You think dealing with us is annoying? Have ever been to city hall?] They have brought to the attention of this council the fact that our bylaws were not being followed and they brought to this council that when we regulate something that creates tremendous wealth for businesses should perhaps a little bit of that wealth be put back into the public spaces in this city. And I say good for them. That is a grassroots campaign. Good for them, drawing that to our attention....Final point is about the amount of the tax and where it should go. There is an incredible logic in this industry that is part of the creative

industries and the arts and public space which are part of the creative industries coming together. 2010 is a challenging year for us, I am going to support Councillor Carroll's motion which makes the statement but also says the budget committee will weigh in. But I think this council also needs to send the signal by adopting the report that we understand the connection between allowing advertising on buildings in this city, deciding that it is going to be in certain ways that are appropriate for this city and have some part of those funds come back into building public spaces. Now I can tell you, part of my lunch, I did two things at lunch. I went to a business function and then I went to celebrate the fact that the city of Toronto's employees almost had a record contribution to the United Way of 1.2 million dollars, well over our 950 000 goal. When I was speaking with the business people, the first issue they raised with me, they said, you know what, the city looks and feels better, it looks and feels better. I like those clean and beautiful initiatives. That what one of the leaders in our real estate field said that to me and I think as we vote on these motions about amounts, and I am going to support the staff report and if that fails, I'll support Councillor Kelly's attempt to find a compromise on the amount, but as we are thinking about that, I urge be very careful about amendments to the bylaw cause they have been thought through with some precision by staff and once you allow a sign it is essentially there forever. And think through very carefully, if we want this city to truly be a welcoming stage for the G20 for example, we want to put our best foot forward – and by allowing this terrific industry to help support our clean and beautiful programs will do just that. thank you.

Mayor Miller, 0:42:40