

Leave Don Mills arena alone

Re: 'Meeting finally scheduled for new arena plan,' News, Sept. 12.

Big business, the Don Mills Civitan Community Service Club and the Don Mills Residents Inc. should quietly go about building their hockey empire wherever they want but leave the Don Mills Arena where it is.

Don Mills residents do not have time, money or walking stamina to travel to a facility five-kilometres out of town and some have no inclination to send their kids to hockey school outside of the community.

The Don Mills Arena, the last heritage and social feature in Don Mills, can and will serve other functions. Sadly, Ward 34 (Don Valley East) Councillor Denzil Minnan-Wong through the media, has to make the community aware of the secret games and agenda of city staff and big business.

The city, represented by a councillor and resident association that has no clue about city-making or know-how on what it takes to make a vibrant community, should seek outside professional help. If the city wants to join world-class cities then it should act accordingly, and

if Cadillac Fairview wants to make big bucks, then they have to spend them.

Step 1. To serve the thousands of people who are expected to attract to the area, Cadillac Fairview must relinquish to the city the parkland required under the planning act and the new Toronto official plan.

Step 2. Add the required parkland in front of and to the rear to the existing 1.31 acres of the arena lands where access and visibility to city streets as well as public transit LRT can be guaranteed.

Step 3. Fast-track the design and construction of the long-anticipated community centre on the new public land adjacent to Don Mills Road. Use the existing arena for any community use until the new centre is available, then renovate it for figure and leisure skating.

Step 4. Invite all alienated residents for the inauguration to heal the rift, frustration, anger and despair residents currently experience while being evicted from the core of their community.

Don Mills residents grieve for the social life they had prior to being robbed of their leisure facilities embodied in the historic covered mall.

Karl Frank