

# City negotiates for public art, park space

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Negotiations between the city and Cadillac Fairview to secure about \$1 million in artwork and parkland for the new outdoor shopping centre at Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue were mocked by a resident who spearheaded the campaign to retain a covered mall at the North York intersection.

"Public art worth \$1 million? How impressive," said Simone Gabbay, who collected more than 5,000 signatures in support of a covered mall. "And how useful for the residents as a substitute for their shopping mall and meeting centre."

Toronto council agreed to accept a partial settlement offer by Cadillac Fairview for the inclusion of public art and about half an acre of parkland to the city by deed in escrow after North York Community Council refused a site plan control application for the property last month, which was dealt with at an Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) meeting last week.

Ward 25 Councillor Cliff Jenkins (Don Valley West) said the parkland would provide space for a future community centre in coming years as part of Phase 2 of the redevelopment project, which will be dealt with once Phase 1 plans, which includes retail and a Town Square, are complete.

While Jenkins acknowledged the city knew heading into the OMB hearing Cadillac Fairview was not legally obligated to retain indoor space, he applauded Gabbay's plight.

"I know a lot of people are disappointed," Jenkins said, adding he had hoped Cadillac Fairview would be moved by moral persuasion. "Simone did a magnificent job. She was fighting a very uphill battle and did the best she could."

But Gabbay was miffed the public was given the assumption the city could fight for indoor space.

"If the city had already received advice that this could not be achieved, why bother?" she asked, referring to Jenkins' motion at community council to ask the city's solicitor at the OMB for indoor space to be included in the redevelopment plans. "Was this a mere formality to appease the 5,000 petition signatures, which were blatantly ignored when those deals were made?"

The Don Mills Centre closed last Wednesday to make way for the outdoor retail centre, with construction expected for completion in August 2008