

# NEIGHBOURS FOR 100% GREEN PARK

## WYCHWOOD BARNS UPDATE

## AUGUST 2003

### Flat Green Desert!

For months Artscape supporters have consistently derided the idea of a regular neighbourhood park at the Wychwood Barns site by saying that we want a boring "flat green park", a "green desert".

Now that their councillor, Joe Mihevc, has produced the "flat green park" par excellence, Artscapers have publicly expressed great enthusiasm for the "green desert" that lies in all its unimaginative, dull (some would say subtle) splendour at the foot of Helena.

The \$141K price tag for this sod square did not include a tree or even a swing, but did include metre upon metre of costly chain link fence (and apparently permanent mountains of debris).

The chain link fence would seem to delineate the partitioning of the **small area**, reserved for **public** use, from the much **larger area**, reserved for the **private** use of Artscape, its non-profit tenants, lofters, the food banks, and the easy bake oven.

### City Reports on Artscape's Proposal :

The City issued a Request For Proposals (*tailored to Artscape's Feasibility Study specs*) to develop the TTC site. Tellingly, only Artscape sent in a proposal!

Highlights - June 30<sup>th</sup> Staff Report on Artscape's proposal:

- **City** to commit to raising **\$2.3 Million**.
- **City** responsible for hazardous materials cleanup and site remediation. (*RFP specs required developer to do that.*)
- **City** to guarantee Artscape's loans and mortgages.
- **City** to do all work on rezoning & Official Plan amendments. (*RFP specs required developer to do that.*)
- **City** to assume responsibility for site servicing.
- **City** to help Artscape find funding for the live/work part.
- **City** to provide \$500,000 cash contribution.
  
- **Artscape** to lease site for **99 years @ \$1 per year**.
  
- **Cost to Artscape ... \$99.**
- **Cost to Taxpayers ... MILLIONS!**

### Expected Results:

- NOT much of a park.
- NOT much in the way of trees.
- A Harbourfront in our neighbourhood!
- Busloads of school children on educational tours.
- Crowds coming to the food banks.
- Crowds coming to theatre performances & galleries.
- Local green grocers facing competition from the tax subsidized "green barn" food co-op.
- Local landlords competing for tenants against tax subsidized lofts, studios, and office space.

(Results continued)

- Noise, garbage, traffic and parking problems.
- Area still short acres of public park space.
- **CITY PAYS MILLIONS OF DOLLARS!**
- **CITY FOREGOES all revenues!**

### Is this the best the City of Toronto can do?

There are better ways to spend our money and more advantageous ways to deal with the Wychwood Barns site that are compatible with the neighbourhood.

### What's Next?

This report will be presented to the Administration Committee on Sept. 4, 2003. It will make recommendations to City Council.

Let the Committee know how you feel, because Councillor Mihevc has told them that we approve of his Artscape vision. Members of that committee are:

Doug Holyday 392-4002	David Soknacki 392-4008
Brian Ashton 392-4052	Rob Ford 397-9255
Anne Johnston 392-4627	David Miller 392-4072
Frances Nunziata 392-4091	Paul Sutherland 392-4038

Email format : councillor\_lastname@toronto.ca  
(for example: councillor\_sutherland@toronto.ca)  
City website: [www.city.toronto.ca](http://www.city.toronto.ca)

By the way ...

*This June 30<sup>th</sup> report first went to the Administration Committee on July 2<sup>nd</sup> with no advance notice. Several of us made deputations to the committee and the matter was deferred until Sept. 4<sup>th</sup>. However, AFTER WE LEFT, David Miller (mayoral candidate) reopened the matter. So, Culture Dept. Staff got the go ahead to "negotiate" with Artscape ... despite the fact that the matter had already been deferred!*

### ELECTION in November:

No one is running against Mihevc YET!

Potential candidates should know that the current councillor is definitely beatable!

Ward 21 residents and businesses are very dissatisfied with Mihevc's handling of local matters and are willing to work for, and contribute to, the campaign of a good candidate!

# ARTSCAPE FEASIBILITY STUDY SURVEY RESULTS

## May 2002 Survey

Here are the local results we obtained under the *Freedom of Information Act*.

	<b>*No Artscape</b>	<b>1 barn</b>	<b>2 barns</b>	<b>3 barns</b>	<b>4 barns</b>	<b>5 barns</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Alcina</b>	48	9	-	-	-	6	<b>63</b>
<b>Benson</b>	7	4	1	3	2	7	<b>24</b>
<b>Christie</b>	20	2	-	2	1	14	<b>39</b>
<b>Ellsworth</b>	13	6	-	5	3	10	<b>37</b>
<b>Helena</b>	57	9	3	7	7	21	<b>104</b>
<b>Hocken</b>	8	-	-	-	-	1	<b>9</b>
<b>Slade</b>	3	1	2	1	-	2	<b>9</b>
<b>Tyrrel</b>	20	3	-	-	6	4	<b>33</b>
<b>Wychwood Ave</b>	18	2	-	1	2	3	<b>26</b>
<b>Wychwood Park</b>	45	6	3	2	-	4	<b>60</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>404</b>

City Staff and Councillor Mihevc misrepresented the survey results claiming that local residents overwhelmingly favoured the Artscape proposal with 5 barns. **Not true!**

- **70% of local residents** wrote in ‘No Artscape’ or chose **one barn**;
- 18% chose 5 barns;
- 5% chose 4 barns.

***Why is Joe Mihevc ramming through a costly four-barn development?***

**OPEN SPACE PARKS ARE FOR ANYONE, AND EVERYONE, ANY TIME.**

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BY THE WAY: According to the Auditor General, the City councillor involved with the Wychwood Car Barns site has been officially ‘advised’ about his having sold city property (bricks from the Barns site) & having initiated the removal of rails & metal from the Barns site without first obtaining authorization, as both actions are contrary to the Municipal Code. The Auditor also told the Councillor to recuperate the money from the sale of the city property, money he’d already given to a local organization, and turn it over to the City. The Councillor was advised to refrain from such activities, as he had no right to take any action regarding City property.