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The Directors
Deer Park Ratepayers Group
PO Box 185, Stn. Q
Toronto, ON, M4T 2M1

Re: Membership Resignation

Dear Directors:

I am writing to inform you that I will not be renewing my membership in DPRG for 2009.

Last May, after the President circulated the draft of the new By-Law No. 1, I emailed her the following:

When DPRG was formed 50 years ago, an important objective was to stop inappropriate development. This is as important today as it was then. I am therefore recommending that a new clause be added to Article 2 between present clauses 2.2 and 2.3. It could read as follows;

“To monitor applications to the City for the amendment of its By-Laws to permit the construction of a development within Deer Park; when appropriate, to work with the Ward Councillor to establish a Members’ Working Group to meet with the City Planner and the Developer; to keep the Members informed.”

It might be argued that my proposal is implied in the other clauses, but some Members believe that monitoring of developments ought to be a major focus of DPRG and hence itemized in the By-Law.

The President found this too specific and proposed the following as an alternative that became an amendment to the By-Law:

“To monitor development applications and other proposed changes to Deer Park and take appropriate actions to promote the interests of the residents of Deer Park.”

I was assured that it would be interpreted in the spirit of my original proposal. This has not happened and I recommend that you reconsider my original proposal. I now regret not having spoken to the matter from the floor.

The City has now given its approval for the project proposed for 30 Alvin to proceed. It will be the largest project ever built in Deer Park. Fifty years ago the residents thought it necessary to form the association to fight the construction of an inappropriate service station. Surely the present Directors ought to have called an open meeting to discuss with the present membership the implications of what was proposed for 30 Alvin: a project worth hundreds of millions and, in its density and scope, entirely inappropriate for this residential neighbourhood.

When it became clear that no leadership was forthcoming from DPRG, my neighbour and I started reporting what was going on to the residents, as best we could, but with no help from DPRG. Eventually we created a blog, <http://30alvin.blogspot.com/>, to disseminate the information collected. DPRG did not file a response to the City Planner's reports. The silence of DPRG played into the hands of the developer by permitting the City Planner to take the easy way out and recommend approval of the development when he did not receive any serious objections from the DPRG.

It is now clear that the President's personal agenda never did include consultation with the DPRG membership-at-large or even with DPRG members of the Working Group. I, and a couple of others, were invited to a Directors meeting on June 4, 5 days before the Community Council meeting, to discuss the DPRG presentation to the Community Council. There was no draft for discussion. I left that meeting not knowing what the President's verbal presentation was going to be. Furthermore, DPRG had not taken advantage of the opportunity to make an earlier written submission to the Community Council as some of us had done as individuals.

The Annual Meeting on May 22 was clearly structured so that there would be no time to discuss 30 Alvin.

The few statements released by the President to the membership did not reflect the seriousness of the situation. They appeared to me to reflect her personal views and, I am guessing, did not have the official support of the Board. She was always anxious to complement the developer for what he had done right but most reluctant to criticize what was wrong with the project. Her primary object was to secure the strip “park” on Yonge St. The result will be that we are going to have a “park” that is too expensive and ornate for the area and which will divert Section 37 funds that are desperately needed for park work elsewhere. It will please the developer who will

have the landscaping of the walkways leading to the condominium entrances paid for with Section 37 funds.

The President's remarks to the Community Council were in the same vein. I did not detect any sense that she was reporting to Council that there had been, and still remains, strong objection among the residents to the height and density of the project. Her stated strong support for the project, speaking as the first deputant, undermined the subsequent deputants who could not speak for the DPRG but only as affected residents.

DPRG did not rise to the challenge and we will forever have to live with the consequences.

Yours truly,

E. L. Mercer