

Pam McConnell

Councillor, Ward 28
Toronto Centre-Rosedale
City of Toronto

City Hall, 2nd Floor
100 Queen St. West
Toronto, Ontario
MSH 2N2

Tel: 416 392-7916
Fax: 416 392-7296
TTY: 416 392-1239
councillor_mcconnell@toronto.ca

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Gillian Mason
Chair, Toronto Public Library Board

Dear Ms Mason:

I am writing in regards to the naming of the new Library Branch at 495 Sherbourne Street. I would ask that you call this branch the St. James Town Public Library Branch.

I want to congratulate you and your board on your 99th public library branch. It is going to be a wonderful addition to the community. I also want to thank you on behalf of the community for all the work the Public Library Staff has done to help them get the resources and services they need.

I understand there are some conventions that the Toronto Public Library Board considers when naming the library branches. I know that standard practice, in situations such as this when the library will be in a community centre, you would prefer them to have the same name. As the Community Centre will be named the Wellesley Community Centre, it would mean naming the library the Wellesley Library. I would ask that you give some special consideration in this circumstance however, and name the Library, the St. James Town Public Library Branch.

I want to outline for you today why it is very important for the community that great consideration be taken when we name both the Community Centre and Library. The working assumption has been that both the Recreation Centre and the Library branch would be named after St. James Town. It is quite clear that with the incredibly dense community, almost the size of Lindsay Ontario, St. James Town on its own clearly needs these new facilities.

St. James Town however, is not the only community in the area that is under serviced. There are many other neighbouring communities that will greatly benefit from a new community centre and library. It became clear early, on in this project that this new facility would have to be designed with the greater communities needs in mind. One of the benefits of this new multi-use facility is that it will bring many of these surrounding communities together including the residents of Bleecker Street, Winchester Park, Upper Jarvis, Homewood Avenue, Church and Wellesley, Cabbagetown and of course St. James Town.

The loss of the Wellesley Hospital, was one that all of these communities felt. A valuable service was lost, and in many ways this new Community Centre will fill this void left when the hospital closed. As the Community Centre will have a larger catchment, similar to the old Wellesley Hospital, it seemed very appropriate that it be named the

Wellesley Community Centre.

It is still very important though that we do recognize the St. James Town Community. In many ways this community has been the drive behind getting this Community Centre and Library. As representative for this community for the past 20 years as either City Councillor or School Trustee, I know how excited this community is that they will be host to this grand new facility. It has instilled a real sense of pride.

The Library Branch will be the cornerstone and the most beautiful part of the new Community Centre. By naming the branch the St. James Town Library Branch, we will be telling this community that despite the naming of the Wellesley Community Centre, the most welcoming and beautiful part of the building is worthy of being named after them.

I understand that this would require a change from your convention of naming your library branches the same as the building it is in, but I do believe this is a special circumstance, and deserves special consideration.

Sincerely,

Pam McConnell
Councillor, Ward 28