

# **RONCESVALLES VILLAGE**

## **REAL ESTATE REPORT**

**Courtesy of Chander Chaddah, Broker, 416-410-chad (2423)**

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**It has been some time since I have written a Roncesvalles Village Real Estate Report. It seems the time has arrived to start anew because of a development that affects everyone in the neighbourhood.**

**Sometime in the not too distant future some four hundred trains a day are going to be passing down the east side of our neighbourhood.**

**It would make sense for so many reasons that this should be a new ELECTRIC light rail connecting Union Station to the airport and points in between and beyond: quieter; faster; less polluting; capable of being utilized as a fully integrated downtown relief line, connecting with the St. Clair street car and the Eglinton cross town; providing numerous other stops along the way; and even finally delivering some honest to goodness rapid transit for the beleaguered residents of Mount Denis, Weston, Rexdale and others to mention only a few of the under serviced areas of the City.**

**Alas, at the moment this is not the case. The Province, through its transportation agency Metrolinx, has announced it is rolling out a new train, the Union Pearson Express (UP Express), and will also substantially increase the frequency of existing GO train service - all the while utilizing dirty, cancer causing DIESEL trains - diesel train exhaust has been documented by the World Health Organization to be a tier one carcinogen on the same scale as asbestos. To add insult to injury, the UP Express will have only two stops between downtown and the airport. Further, at a cost of \$25.00 - \$35.00, a trip will hardly be an affordable option for Toronto families or workers wishing to take the UP Express to the airport.**

**For more than half a dozen years, there have been those such as the Clean Train Coalition, the Weston Community Coalition, and the Junction Triangle Rail Committee fighting the good fight, trying to convince our political leaders to do the right thing - which is to electrify the track. It is because of them that we know that the UP Express locomotives are convertible from dirty cancer causing diesel to electric (as acknowledged by Metrolinx). It is because of them we know that the implementation of an electric UP Express is not only feasible, but doable, and in a time frame that makes sense (as acknowledged by**

**Metrolinx). It is because of them that we know that almost all of the costs that have already gone into rail bed expansion, repair etc. and would have been spent with or without the electrification of the line thus far, have not been wasted.**

**Yet for some reason the political will does not exist to do the right thing and make an ELECTRIC UP Express a reality.**

**Perhaps it is because of the Pan Am Games that this is the case. Certainly, the Provincial Government and Metrolinx continue to tell us the UP Express has to be ready for the 2015 Pan Am Games. Who would have thought that the lasting legacy of the Pan Am Games will be dirty cancer causing diesel trains... What a way for a celebration of sport and good health to be remembered.**

**If we are to have any hope of these trains to be electric - all of them, not only the UP Express but eventually all of our rapid transit and commuter surface rail -then the UP Express must be electric right out of the gate.**

**No dividing our neighbourhoods with sixteen foot noise abatement walls, which will be necessary with the expansion of dirty cancer causing diesel GO trains. No converting the UP Express later (as if that will ever happen) but CLEAN ELECTRIC NOW, because as my dear old pa is fond of saying, "start as you mean to go on" and assuming we mean to go on with a green economy, should we not as a society be making every effort to create as healthy an environment as possible for our children and grandchildren?**

**Those who make the decisions need to hear your voice. They need to know there will be a political cost to not doing the right thing. We have a new premier who has identified Toronto transit as an issue. We have a leader of the PC party of Ontario who has identified Toronto transit as an election issue and, while the leader of the NDP seems to be missing in action, we do have some fine members of her party representing three of the ridings that will be most negatively affected by this increase in dirty cancer causing rail traffic. On top of all of that, we have the City of Toronto's Medical Officer of Health endorsing the electrification of the line as well as an endorsement from Toronto City Council.**

**Soon there will be an election in Ontario. With eight ridings abutting this rail corridor, four Liberal, three NDP, and one Conservative, the time to influence events is now!**

**All of this work on trains etc. is being funded with our money. It is we the**

taxpayers of Toronto who are paying for all of this and I've got to say that does not feel so good!

## **Please join me and other concerned residents**

on May 2nd at 7:00 - 9:00 pm at the Sorauren Park Field House, WBS meeting to write your letter of concern to the Premier and leaders of the NAP and PC parties.

Pens, paper, pencils, crayons, and envelopes will be provided.

**Please bring the children.** They are never too young to learn the values of civic engagement and it is their still young lungs and ear drums that are being asked to bear the brunt of these exhaust fumes and noisy trains as they play in Sorauren Park.

**For those of you who tweet and facebook,** please let your circle of family and friends know what we are up to, ask them to join us on the 2nd, and if they can't do so ask them anyway to write a letter and make as much noise about these dirty cancer causing trains as they can, for this is not just a Roncesvalles Village issue, this is an issue that affects all Torontonians.

I have decided I will join at least part of the second decade of the 21st century and will begin a blog on my web site:

<http://www.roncesvallesvillage.com>

Please check in for updates and developing stories or register for the RSS feed to automatically receive updates on this issue and others that affect the neighbourhood.

Together we can make a difference.

Chander