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DEPUTATION – MR. MICHAEL TIBOLLO
WITH RESPECT TO A FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

The Committee of the Whole recommends that the deputation of Mr. Michael Tibollo, National Congress of Italian-Canadians, Director Court, Woodbridge, and Communication C4, dated August 20, 2012, be received and referred to staff for a report.

C	<u>9</u>
Item #	<u>54</u>
Report No.	<u>33</u>
<u>Council - Sept 25/12.</u>	

DATE: September 25, 2012

TO: Mayor Bevilacqua and Members of Council

FROM: Marlon Kallideen, Commissioner of Community Services

COPY: Clayton Harris, City Manager
Mary Reali, Director of Recreation and Culture

RE: Communication C4
Committee of the Whole Meeting – September 4, 2012
Proposal for “Festival of Light” Event at Vaughan City Hall:
November 30, 2012 to January 7, 2013
Item 54, Report 33

Mr. Michael Tibollo, President of the National Congress of Italian Canadians - Toronto District (NCIC) made a deputation at the Committee of the Whole meeting of September 4, 2012 and requested that Council consider hosting the proposed “Festival of Light” event from November 30, 2012 to January 7, 2013 at City Hall.

At this meeting, Council received the correspondence and deputation from Mr. Tibollo and referred the item to staff for a report.

Staff met with Mr. Tibollo and although some details of the festival are still being finalized, the following are some particulars that were discussed:

- The Festival of Light event is aimed at showcasing the significance of the theme of “light” in various cultures, traditions, and religions. The goal of this celebration is to foster a greater understanding of various cultures and to celebrate shared themes.
- The community partners to date, that have confirmed their participation include members of the First Nations, Muslim, Sikh, Catholic, African-Caribbean and Jewish communities, along with support from York Region Police.
- The event will include displays and exhibits in the atrium area of City Hall that represent how various cultures celebrate the theme of “light” during the months of December and early January. This may include displays of menorahs, nativity scenes, and other displays related to the theme of the event.



TORONTO DISTRICT

SENT VIA EMAIL
sybil.fernandes@vaughan.ca

AND VIA FACSIMILE
FAX NO.: 905-832-8535

August 20, 2012

Clerk's Department
City of Vaughan
2141 Major Mackenzie Drive
Vaughan, Ontario L6A 1T1

Attention: Ms. Sybil Fernandes

Dear Ms. Fernandes:

Re: Proposal for: "The Festival of Light": November 30, 2012 to January 7, 2013
Location: Vaughan City Hall

C 4
COMMUNICATION
CW - Sept 4 / 12
ITEM - Deputation d)

I am writing to you as the President of the National Congress of Italian Canadians-Toronto District. Earlier this year, at a meeting of our Board of Directors, we discussed the possibility of developing an event that would celebrate the customs and traditions of the various cultures and religions that make up the population of Vaughan. Initially, we thought of restricting it to only two, but then realized that all cultures and religions celebrate one particular theme in and around the month of December. Accordingly, we developed an event around the theme of celebrating "light" as part of the various cultures and religions.

The City of Vaughan has a very diverse population and as such, we are of the opinion that the first such celebratory event should take place at Vaughan City Hall. We are aware that the City of Vaughan hosts a tree lighting ceremony and a Menorah lighting ceremony. As well, we are aware that Diwali is also celebrated at the City. Our proposal is somewhat different in that it will include all the existing events however, seek to bring other cultures together and celebrate a common theme during a time when all communities are celebrating, family, friendship, peace and community.

In all the various cultures and religions, the theme and symbolism of "light" is significant and, as such, we have developed the concept of celebrating the theme of "light" during this important period from November 30, 2012 to January 7, 2013.

Our idea is simple: We will promote one event that will take place during the month. We will set up displays that highlight the various cultures and religions and provide literature for those who visit the exhibits. We propose to have the exhibits on display for the entire month of December.

The exhibits will include displays of nativity scenes, menorahs and other traditional artifacts and symbolic pieces that are used in the various cultures. As well, we will have each ceremony as has been done in the past, however one evening, we will have the various cultures and religions represented by their leaders speak of the significance of light to their respective cultures and share as a community traditional food and music. All of this will take place in and around the displays that will be set up in the main gallery of City Hall. It is our hope that through dialogue and education we will learn more about each other thereby doing away with stereotypes, misunderstanding and prejudice.

We have begun the process of discussing this proposal with the various communities and many are interested and prepared to participate. The following groups have been invited and will be participating: Catholic, Jewish, Buddhist, Muslim, Sikh, First Nations and Hindu.

We are writing to you to request an opportunity to address Council regarding this proposal so as to obtain permission for such an event to be hosted at Vaughan City Hall. The Festival of Light will take place during the month of December. We hope to commence on Friday, November 30, 2012 with an official opening and schedule the various events planned by the City as part of the month. In addition, we will set up displays that will remain at City hall for public viewing during the entire month. We intend to work with the various school boards to also ensure that as many children as possible have the opportunity to see and participate.

Our intention is to work with City staff and the various departments to ensure that we do not take away from anything that was done in the past but in fact, add to it to include everyone in our community and beyond.

We require assistance from the staff in organizing, co-coordinating and promoting the event. We will require space for the displays. The displays will be viewed during normal business hours and accordingly, there should be no additional cost for staff. We will need to have City Hall open one evening for the actual "Festival" event. We have not selected a date as yet as we have not had a meeting of all participants to coordinate. Each cultural and religious group that evening will be responsible for supplying food. We will also coordinate the music for the evening which shall be a composite of music from each culture.

On January 6, 2012, we will celebrate orthodox Christmas and of course, end with the arrival of "La Befana". The displays will be removed thereafter and the event will terminate.

We believe that this event will be successful in bringing the various communities closer together because its central theme is "light" and as such, is shared by all cultural and religious groups. What we believe will make this event interesting and stimulating for the participants will be the interpretation each culture places on the theme.

I would ask that this request be placed before Council as soon as possible and I would be pleased to be in attendance to present same and answer any questions the mayor or Councilors may have.

Respectfully submitted,

National Congress of Italian Canadians-Toronto District

Per:


Michael A. Tibollo
President

- Two evening events are proposed which would include the use of the City Hall multi-purpose room, and atrium area. These events are as follows: first week in December for a media launch event; second event is for December 20 (tentative) for an evening of speakers and cultural food sampling expected to draw 200-300 people. This second event may require staging, microphones, AV technical support, chairs/tables, and security that will have to be facilitated by the NCIC.
- Tours and school visits for the exhibits/displays will be scheduled and facilitated by the volunteers of the NCIC throughout the event's duration.
- The NCIC will create brochures and other marketing material for the promotion of the event at their own expense. City staff will assist in the distribution of this material to our City facilities.
- The NCIC will be required to provide their own display units for their artifacts or provide alternative solutions, in coordination with staff, to ensure the safety of their items.

Eligible City Support through CSO and Fairs and Festival Programs

The National Congress is currently finalizing their Community Services Organization (CSO) application. Upon approval, the group would be eligible for their rental at the lowest subsidized rate. Currently, the hourly rental rates for CSO's are \$211.63 for the atrium and \$86.12 per hour for the multipurpose room plus \$50 per hour overtime costs. As an example, if the rental for two evenings resulted in an eight hour booking, the rental cost would be \$2,382 plus \$400 overtime, plus 13% HST for a total cost of \$3,143.66. In addition, the National Congress, as a CSO group could apply for the Fairs & Festivals Support Program which could result in a further discount of 50%, specific only to the rental rate, which is a further cost savings of \$1,191. This results in a final potential rental cost of \$1,797.83.

Please note these charges are estimated costs only and based on the information known to staff at this time. They do not reflect the costs of additional services in kind such as security, tables, chairs, and garbage bins.

Note: In addition to working with the group to finalize their CSO application and facility requirements, Staff will also assist the organizers in facilitating the installation of displays and exhibits, booking spaces and assisting in other requirements of the organizer such as the promotion of the event in the community through various communication and distribution channels available to City staff.

Concurrent City Events and Resources

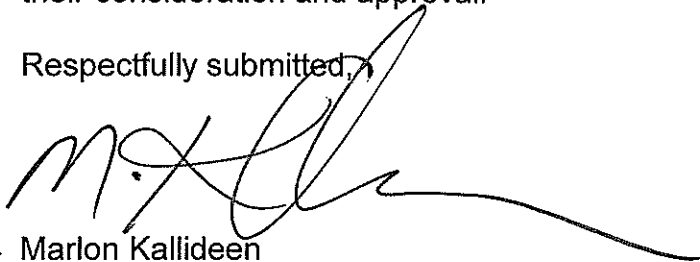
Scheduled City events concurrently happening at City Hall in December that may impact the use of space are as follows:

- City of Vaughan CP24 Toy drive (November - December 2012 - collection of toys in atrium)
- Christmas Tree Lighting (outdoor courtyard and indoor multi-purpose room & atrium) – December 6, 2012
- Menorah Lighting (multi-purpose room) – December 12, 2012
- Staff Holiday Luncheon – December 14, 2012 (multi-purpose room)
- Festive Closure – December 24, 2012 – January 1, 2013

The impact of these events, including the administrative “closure” of City Hall and ensuring public flow/access through the first floor atrium area, will have to be addressed by staff in coordinating with the National Congress on the requirements of their event. Other issues include the installation of exhibits and displays, security of and insurance of artifacts by NCIC.

Should Council endorse the use of City Hall for this event, a team of staff will meet with the National Congress organizers to ensure public safety, City requirements and security is maintained at City Hall. Any additional charges or services scoped out during these meetings as the event develops will be provided to the NCIC for their consideration and approval.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Kallideen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Marlon Kallideen
Commissioner of Community Services