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on behalf of Navigator Limited [info@navltd.com]
Sent: 2017-03-10 1:00:48 PM
To: Terry Young [/O=IMO/OU=MSX1/cn=Recipients/cn=Terry Young]
Subject: Queen's Park Update, Friday, March 10, 2017

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Friday, March 10, 2017

In the news

Finance Minister **Charles Sousa** opened the door to imposing a foreign home buyer tax to curb rapid growth in Toronto's home prices. Minister Sousa expressed concern with "the degree of fast appreciation in the short-term and what will that do over the long-term", contradicting his earlier desire to "let market forces prevail". Warren Lovely, an advisor to Minister **Sousa** and the head of public sector research at National Bank told *The Globe and Mail* that he had come around to the idea of a B.C.-style foreign buyer tax, despite having advised against it last fall.

Yesterday, Premier **Kathleen Wynne** travelled to Guelph to tout the benefits of the government's Fair Hydro Plan to small businesses. The Premier said the plan "will make a real difference to businesses that are on main street, that are family businesses, that are serving communities", calling the reductions "substantial". Local business owners praised the move as a "good start". Meanwhile, in a speech to the Toronto Region Board of Trade, PC Leader **Patrick Brown** criticized the government's plan for setting a "very low bar" on price reductions.

At his speech to the Toronto Region Board of Trade, PC Leader **Patrick Brown** predicted that affordability will be the main issue in the next provincial election. In his speech, Brown noted that Ontario has accumulated more debt in the 13 years of Liberal government than in the preceding 137 years, that the government plan to reduce rates does not address green energy contracts which he called the "root of the problem", and that the Ontario PC Party would run infrastructure and transportation "more like a business, and less like a bureaucracy".

Education Minister **Mitzie Hunter** confirmed that as many as 300 Ontario schools will be slated for closure because they are under-used or dilapidated. PC Leader **Patrick Brown** disputed Minister **Hunter's** claim, citing a school in Maple, Ontario at 97 per cent capacity that will close.

Brown repeated his call for a moratorium and blamed the government's priorities for the closures. NDP MPP for Hamilton East—Stoney Creek **Paul Miller** noted that the government "closed more than 277 schools" since 2011 and that the government "has been closing schools that are full".

Opinion Highlights

- Sam Oosterhoff, boy politician, might just be for real. (Meagan Campbell, *Maclean's*)
 - Will Kathleen Wynne lead, follow or get out of the way? (Robert Fisher, CBC News)
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Insights | What to do with the OMB?

By Clare Schulte-Albert

Parents of students attending John Fisher Public School in Toronto received quite the shock on Tuesday. They were told that the land next door was greenlit by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) one year ago, for a 35-storey high-rise development.

Due to health and safety concerns during the high-rise's construction, the Toronto District School Board is considering relocating the students to the Vaughan Road Academy, approximately 20 minutes away. In response, parents held a rally in front of the school, where they were joined by Toronto Mayor John Tory. Tory made it clear the city is not impressed with this decision being "forced" upon it by the provincially-run OMB.

For those less familiar with the issue, here are the Coles notes. The City of Toronto has an Official Plan that guides how the city should grow and develop. Those who wish to build large-scale residential projects must a) ensure their development plans align with that Official Plan, or

b) apply for a change to the Official Plan.

Such applications can take years to process and the city mandates public consultations with the local communities. If the City of Toronto refuses to approve such applications, developers are able to appeal to the Ontario Municipal Board to have the decision overturned.

Through this lens, the John Fisher case raises some important questions. Were the parents appropriately consulted by the developer and the City of Toronto? Why does the province have the final say on such issues? Do we really need the OMB when urbanization is rapidly changing the social fabric of Ontario's cities?

Before anyone makes excuses of apathy or arms-length decision-making, take a look at the public opinion research. In a survey conducted by the Ontario Ministry of Municipal Affairs, 89 per cent of residents said they had attended a public meeting regarding zoning, 77 per cent thought that more could be done locally to avoid OMB hearings. The keys to social licence for those surveyed were also defined: more information, more public involvement, and more mediation (aka good ol' two-way dialogue).

However one considers the way the John Fisher case is handled, the province is certainly not deaf or blind to the need for more local engagement when it comes to urban planning and attaining social licence in communities. In fact, the Ministry of Municipal Affairs just concluded a review of the OMB that looked at more "transparency in hearing processes and decision-making" and "protect[ing] long-term public interests".

Even so, no one at Queen's Park or City Hall agrees on how to reform the OMB to include more local voices. There is a real need for more supply in Toronto to bring down housing prices, but at the same time, such considerations must be balanced with quality of life consideration in the local community. After all, families who will move into that 35-storey high-rise will still need schools, hospitals, transit, and recreational services too.

There will be no simple solution for the parents of students at John Fisher Public School, and others in similar situations. But if there is, it will begin with all parties taking a seat at the table and engaging in what my Grade Six teacher would call "active listening".

Clare Schulte-Albert is a Consultant at Navigator Ltd.

Social Media Snapshot



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Events at a Glance

Tuesday, March 21, 2017

Ontario's Energy Future: The Hon. Glenn Thibeault will lay out priorities for the road ahead as the government prepares for the launch of a renewed Long Term Energy Plan

Time: 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Location: Arcadian Court, 401 Bay Street, Toronto

RSVP: <https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/oea-speaker-series-the-hon-glenn-thibeault-ontarios-energy-future-tickets-31891969740>

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

Ontario's Climate Change Action Plan and the First Cap and Trade Auction: The Hon. Glen Murray, Minister of the Environment and Climate Change

Time: 7:30 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.

Location: One King West Hotel and Residence, 1 King West, Toronto

RSVP: <http://economicclub.ca/events/display/the-hon-glen-murray-minister-of-environment-and-climate-change-to-address-the-ec>

Wednesday, March 29, 2017

Dismantling racism in Ontario is key to Canada's success: The Hon. Michael Coteau, Minister of Children & Youth Services and Minister Responsible for Anti-Racism

Time: 11:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Location: InterContinental Hotel, 225 Front Street West, Toronto

RSVP: <http://economicclub.ca/events/display/dismantling-racism-in-ontario-is-key-to-canadas-success>

Queen's Park Schedule

The legislature will rise for March break next week. Regular updates will resume on Monday, March 20, 2017.

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