

December 4, 2017

Members of the Planning Committee, City of Hamilton

Re: The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre Learning Centre for Hamilton

My name is Don Thornton and I am the President of The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton. With me are Mr. Franz Kloibhofer of A.J. Clarke and Associates, Mr. Robert Whitmore of McHugh Whitmore LLP, and Mr. Victor Abraham.

The Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton is a not for profit Ontario corporation and is registered with CRA as a charitable organization with number 75398 4129 RR0001 effective November 7, 2016. Currently there are 8 similar Learning Centres operated under the aegis of the Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation of Canada. In Ontario, Centres are in London, Windsor, and Barrie with a satellite centre in Bracebridge.

The purpose and function of our Centres are to provide free, one on one tutoring to children who have been diagnosed with dyslexia. The prevalence of dyslexia in the general population is about 20% and for children with dyslexia it poses a very severe impediment to their education, self esteem, and future development and potential. The first Centre in Canada was established in London in 2003 and over the years each of the Centres in Canada have graduated students whose lives effectively have been turned around. Testimonials from parents are heart warming and the children themselves are real success stories. Many have continued beyond high school for higher education. I wish to emphasise that our service is provided free of charge to the children and their family with the cost borne by the voluntary donations of corporate and private donors.

The need for our Centres is real. In Halifax for example the current waiting list for children seeking admission is approximately 200. While not as high in other areas, there are significant waiting lists for the other Centres.

I realize that Section 11(6) does provide a mechanism for relief from the cash-in-lieu of parkland provisions of By-Law No. 09-124 under certain circumstances. As such Council has the jurisdiction to approve such relief for "charitable, non-profit uses as may be deemed by Council". I submit that the proposed Scottish Rite Charitable Foundation Learning Centre for Hamilton is established to provide such a suitable charitable, non-profit service to our community and its children.