

5.11 (f)

June 9th 2024

Dear Mayor Horwath and City Council,

Thank you for giving Pride Hamilton the opportunity to voice our concerns pertaining to the motion to restrict or prohibit fencing at outdoor events. I have been on the board of directors for Pride Hamilton for about a year and a half now, but I have lived in Hamilton my whole life. As a gay man, it is quite apparent to me that the 2SLGBTQ+ community is a point of contention among Hamilton citizens. This is a far cry from the situation in Toronto, for example, where two-foot-high barricades are considered adequate security for the parade.

We don't even have to look that far back to see what happens when we forego adequate security measures at Pride Hamilton events. In 2019, when Councillor Kroetsch was on the board, he was witness to a significant protest at the Pride event in Gage Park. I can't speak for others, but I feel that this sends a clear message as to whether Pride Hamilton needs a controlled perimeter at our events. Especially considering the recent political climate surrounding drag queens, transgender youth, and gender-diverse individuals.

Recently, it has become even more apparent that these measures were taken in good conscience and for good reason. Protest groups aim to disrupt Pride events across the country – not just in Hamilton. As a member of the board, I feel it is our duty to the community and to Hamilton to provide a safe and secure environment to enjoy the Pride festivities.

This motion feels quite short-sighted, all things considered. Is it really appropriate to ask our community to sacrifice their safety in the name of furthering someone else's political agenda?

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion. I appreciate your consideration.

Adrian DiPietro

Director of Outreach | Vendors

Pride Hamilton

