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PHOTO: JON MULDOON

Balmy Beach Rugby Club's first men's team beat out the Irish Canadians 16-6 in the club's last home game of the regular season at the Tubs and Gage Gage Rugby Field at Coxwell and Lakeshore on September 13. Balmy Beach's second and third teams also won their games against the Irish earlier the same day.

Beaches/ East York Election Forum to be held Oct. 6

by Carole Stimmell

TO THE surprise of no one who follows federal politics actively, we are in the midst of a fall election. On Oct. 14, Canadians will go to the polls to determine the government's course of action, possibly for as long as the next four years. So it's more important than ever that citizens inform themselves on the relative merits of each party's platform and each local candidate.

To help you decide, Beach Metro News and Community Centre 55 will be sponsoring a Candidates' Forum on Monday, Oct. 6 at St. John's Norway Church (470 Woodbine Ave. just north of Kingston Road) from 7 to 9 p.m.

The four major candidates for Beaches/East York riding have been invited to participate: the Liberal candidate and current MP Maria Minna, NDP candidate Marilyn Churley, Conservative candidate Caroline Alleslev and Green candidate Zoran Markovski.

Christina Blizzard, Toronto Sun columnist and Beach Metro News board member, will be the moderator.

As in previous forums, after the candidates make their opening statement, the audience will have the opportunity to ask questions. All candidates will also be asked to answer three preset questions.

In order to assure that candidates address the major concerns of this riding as well as the election issues as a whole, we are asking that you write in with your suggestions for these questions (mail to: Editor, Beach Metro News, 2196 Gerrard St. E., Toronto, ON. M4E 2C7; Fax: 416-698-1253; or email editor@beachmetro.com). In order to give the candidates time to prepare, we ask you get your suggestions in by Oct. 1.

In Beach Metro Oct. 7 issue, we will publish statements from each of the four candidates.

If you cannot get to the forum on Oct. 6, the Shoelace Collective is holding "Job Interviews" for candidates on Oct. 7 at Woodbine Heights Baptist Church, 1171 Woodbine Ave., from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. For more information contact Bob at 416-467-8987.

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Community Council votes 'no' to proposal

by Carole Stimmell

JUST DAYS after the B.A.C.K. the Beach concert at Kew Gardens, Toronto and East York Community Council voted unanimously to accept the planning report which recommended that the rezoning application for 2/4 Neville Park Boulevard and 438/440 Lakefront Lane be refused.

For more than a year, the proposal by Sweeny Sterling Finlayson and Co has been a bone of contention in this lakefront community. Dermot Sweeny (one of the owners) applied to the city to construct a four-storey 10-unit condominium and a single detached house on the properties. Because the proposal calls for a number of exemptions to the official plan for the neighbourhood, City Council must approve an Official Plan Amendment and Rezoning to allow the development to proceed.

The initial proposal by Sweeny was for a five-storey building with as many as 16 units. After a community meeting on June 26, 2007, held by Councillor Sandra Bussin, where a number of residents expressed concerns about the form and mass of the proposal construction, the removal of trees and parking issues, the project was revised downward.

However, Senior Planner Leontine

Major, in her report to council, said that the proposed condominium "would change the character of the area and potentially initiate long term structural changes and instability to the physical character of building types and massing in the neighbourhood."

Major's report also stated that Urban Forestry strongly objects to the removal of three of the trees on the property and the damage to two others.

The next step for the application will be at the next City Council meeting, however, it is most likely that the final decision on the application will be made by the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

If the developer takes the application before the OMB, the city's solicitor and planning department will be on hand to defend the city's position, not only to protect this portion of the lakeshore from condominium developments, but because this could be an important test of the city's new Official Plan.

The Neville Park neighbourhood decided early on that it wanted to be involved in the process and organized the Beach Lakefront Community Association (BLNA).

The BLNA has been working to get the word out about the issue in the greater community and on Sept. 7 held the B.A.C.K. the Beach concert in Kew.

While rainy weather kept crowds small, Harold Tabone, Communications Director for the organization was still pleased.

"We accomplished what we needed to accomplish," he said. Tabone said that the main reason for holding the concert was to raise awareness.

"I have been receiving so many emails from all over...There were even reporters at the concert from outside of Canada."

While making people aware of the issues involved is important, to actively participate in the OMB hearings, a great deal of money is needed.

"We raised 60% of our goal at the concert," said Tabone, however fundraising will be ongoing.

He was very heartened by the support of musicians and volunteers who went the extra mile to make the concert happen. He also praised Bussin for supporting the community. At the community council meeting, "she was at her best," he said.

"I appreciate that [developers] need to make a living," said Tabone, "and Sweeny does very nice work...I might even invest in one of his projects if it were on Queen or Kingston Road."

Dermot Sweeny could not be reached for comment.