

Toronto Railway Museum Future Derailed by Toronto Hydro TRHA Frustrated by Utility's Reversal of Promise on Roundhouse Machine Shop

Toronto, April 20, 2012 —The Toronto Railway Historical Association (TRHA) has appealed directly to the President and CEO of Toronto Hydro-Electric System Limited to enter into good faith discussions with the TRHA over the future of the Roundhouse Machine Shop which, since 2001, has been intended to house Toronto's Railway Museum.

The Machine Shop, an integral part of the historic Roundhouse located in Roundhouse Park on Bremner Boulevard, constitutes the only remaining space available to the TRHA on this National Historic Site to fulfill its mandate, as directed by the City of Toronto, of establishing the Toronto Railway Museum. The museum will tell the story of Toronto's rail history through a display of artifacts and images, will include a learning centre with extensive archives, research library and school tours lecture space and will feature simulators which will allow visitors to drive a diesel locomotive through the rail lands as they were in the 1950's.

In 2008, Toronto Hydro announced its intention to construct a transformer station on the north-west portion of the Roundhouse Park immediately below the Machine Shop. At that time, Toronto Hydro stated that the transformer station would be an unmanned, underground station with the Machine Shop made available for museum purposes. The TRHA and the City of Toronto dealt with Toronto Hydro on that basis, however, in November, 2011, the utility reversed its position and declared that the transformer station would occupy 60% of the Machine Shop above grade and that any remaining space would only be made available to the TRHA on a number of occasions throughout the year and at the discretion of Toronto Hydro.

“This situation constitutes a complete reversal of the previous position of Toronto Hydro, not to mention a complete lack of transparency. Previous Toronto Hydro President and CEO David O'Brien supported and encouraged our plans for Toronto's Railway Museum, however, current CEO Anthony Haines has refused to meet with us to discuss possible alternatives,” said Orin Krivel, president of the Toronto Railway Historical Association. “We have been forced to deal repeatedly with their engineers rather than have meaningful discussions with the head of Toronto Hydro to arrive at a solution that preserves the Machine Shop for future museum use and clears the way for the transformer station.

“To date over \$22M dollars have been invested in the restoration and development of Roundhouse Park by the City of Toronto and State Development. Our TRHA volunteers have put in over 50,000 hours of work, including the restoration of rolling stock and associated rail buildings as well as the construction and operation of the miniature railway,” said TRHA Project Spokesperson Glenn Garwood. “We understand and appreciate that Toronto Hydro must satisfy current and future electrical power requirements and, in that spirit, we have proposed two reasonable alternatives for their consideration. They have completely ignored our attempts to discuss these further with them.”

The TRHA contends that the loss of the Machine Shop space eliminates the potential for revenue generation which would allow the Railway Museum to be self-sufficient and sustainable. It will also adversely affect both proposed and current programs and attractions and will destroy the possibility for a dynamic institution that would provide the opportunity for volunteer and

community involvement, public and private partnerships, educational and vocational training opportunities and research activities and a major destination for tourists and residents alike.

“If we lose the Machine Shop we lose the opportunity to complete a much needed attraction and to tell the story of Toronto’s rail history. It means we negate all the time, money, hard work and effort that have been invested in that site for more than a decade,” said Krivel. “We cannot allow Toronto Hydro to dictate the manner in which this site is managed, especially when there are acceptable alternative proposals for them to consider. There is simply too much at stake.”

Note to Editors: Representatives of the TRHA will be available for interviews in the TRHA’s maintenance bays at the Roundhouse (immediately to the west of Steamwhistle Brewery) from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The miniature railway and the refurbished turntable, complete with locomotive, will also be in operation at that time.

Summary of TRHA’s alternative proposals for the Machine Shop:

Since April 2011, the TRHA has been trying to work with Toronto Hydro and their engineers to develop alternatives which would allow for the continued use of the Machine Shop by the TRHA for the establishment of the Toronto Railway Museum as well as the design and construction of the Bremner transformer station to allow Toronto Hydro to meet the electrical requirements of the City of Toronto and contribute to the renewal of their existing facilities. In short, the TRHA has consistently worked towards a solution which would truly be mutually beneficial and we have provided viable alternatives to Toronto Hydro to that end.

The first option proposed by the TRHA makes use of a parcel of land which is immediately adjacent to the proposed transformer station site and we have been meeting with the City of Toronto Real Estate and Facilities Management Services, since July 2011, to facilitate the transfer of this additional land to Toronto Hydro for their future capacity and use through a “lease-to-own” scheme. This option would allow for the construction of the transformer station below-grade as originally proposed by Toronto Hydro.

The use of this additional land could provide Toronto Hydro with up to 74,000 sq.ft. of additional space for its current proposal and any future expansion needs. Although the land is currently subject to multiple easements, the City of Toronto has indicated that they are willing to work with the TRHA and Toronto Hydro to remove or mitigate existing easements.

It is important to note that this land will have little value once the transformer station is constructed as it will be bordered by the transformer station to the west, the Metro Toronto Convention Centre to the north and east and Lakeshore Boulevard to the south.

The TRHA also proposed that Toronto Hydro locate those elements currently housed within the Machine Shop in a one storey, above-grade structure which could be incorporated into the above-grade structure currently proposed for the exhaust and ventilation shafts at the southwest corner of the transformer station site. This option would allow Toronto Hydro to maintain their parking and access to the station distinct from the other businesses and facilities on the site and would, again, avoid the extremely detrimental measures that Toronto Hydro is currently proposing for the historic fabric of the Machine Shop.

Those elements currently proposed for the above-grade space within the Machine Shop are physically distinct from the remainder of the transformer station below grade: the relocation of these elements does NOT constitute a major design change and most certainly does not jeopardize the project. Toronto Hydro has stated that the project is too far advanced to allow for any revision. The TRHA originally proposed these options to Toronto Hydro in July 2011 but no effort was made to consider our alternatives although the transformer station design, to our knowledge, has not been finalized. Toronto Hydro has stated repeatedly that they have invested too much capital to date to consider alternatives. The TRHA rejects that argument and notes that this is a situation of Toronto Hydro's own making.

For More Information, Visit <http://www.trha.ca>

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