



Councillor

Mike Del Grande

TORONTO

WARD 39 • SCARBOROUGH - AGINCOURT

VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 2

Dear Neighbour,

Over the past 2 years, I've noticed that more people are contacting my office to alert me about community issues. There is a steady flow of calls regarding rooming houses, grow houses, By-law infractions and poor delivery of City services. You are comfortable that your call is handled confidentially and you see results in calling your Councillor's office. I am told that my results-oriented, no nonsense approach is refreshing and it makes me proud to count more and more of you as friends and supporters.

My toughest job at City Hall is processing complaints from one resident about another. I know that someone will be grateful and someone will be angry. When you elected me Councillor, I took an oath to uphold the by-laws of this City. To me, it means fielding calls without regard to winning or losing votes. My opinions matter when Council is debating a new By-law or changing one, not when staff are enforcing it.

Some people feel they can do whatever they want with their properties. Yes and No. With property ownership comes property rights; however, with rights come responsibilities. These responsibilities are to neighbours and the community. If you are in doubt about anything to do with your property, please call my office and I will be happy to discuss it. For example, we can advise if permits or inspections are required for work you plan to undertake. One quick word of advice: businesses in residential communities are forbidden.

I do want to help, but that doesn't always mean that you will get a 'yes' for everything you ask. My staff and I will provide you with honest, straightforward answers without the typical game playing you get from vote-seeking politicians.

You elected me because I live in your neighbourhood and because I promised to improve the quality of life in Ward 39. You want to feel safe and proud of your community. Sadly, our community has seen some violence and shootings. I will continue to work with the Police to increase their presence in Agincourt and make our streets safe.

When I was growing up in Toronto, it was criminals who were afraid. Since then, I have seen a gradual and unfortunate shift - law-abiding citizens are now the ones in fear. **We get what we tolerate.** The Police alone cannot be expected to get guns off the streets. Honest, law-abiding citizens need to stand up to be counted and report crime. Please call 416-222-TIPS or my office - your call is confidential and anonymous. You have done it with grow houses and you've seen results. Together we can put an end to crime in Ward 39.

Thank you for allowing me to continue to serve our community.

Mike Del Grande
Councillor, Ward 39,
Scarborough-Agincourt

(Please visit my website at: www.mikedelgrande.ca)

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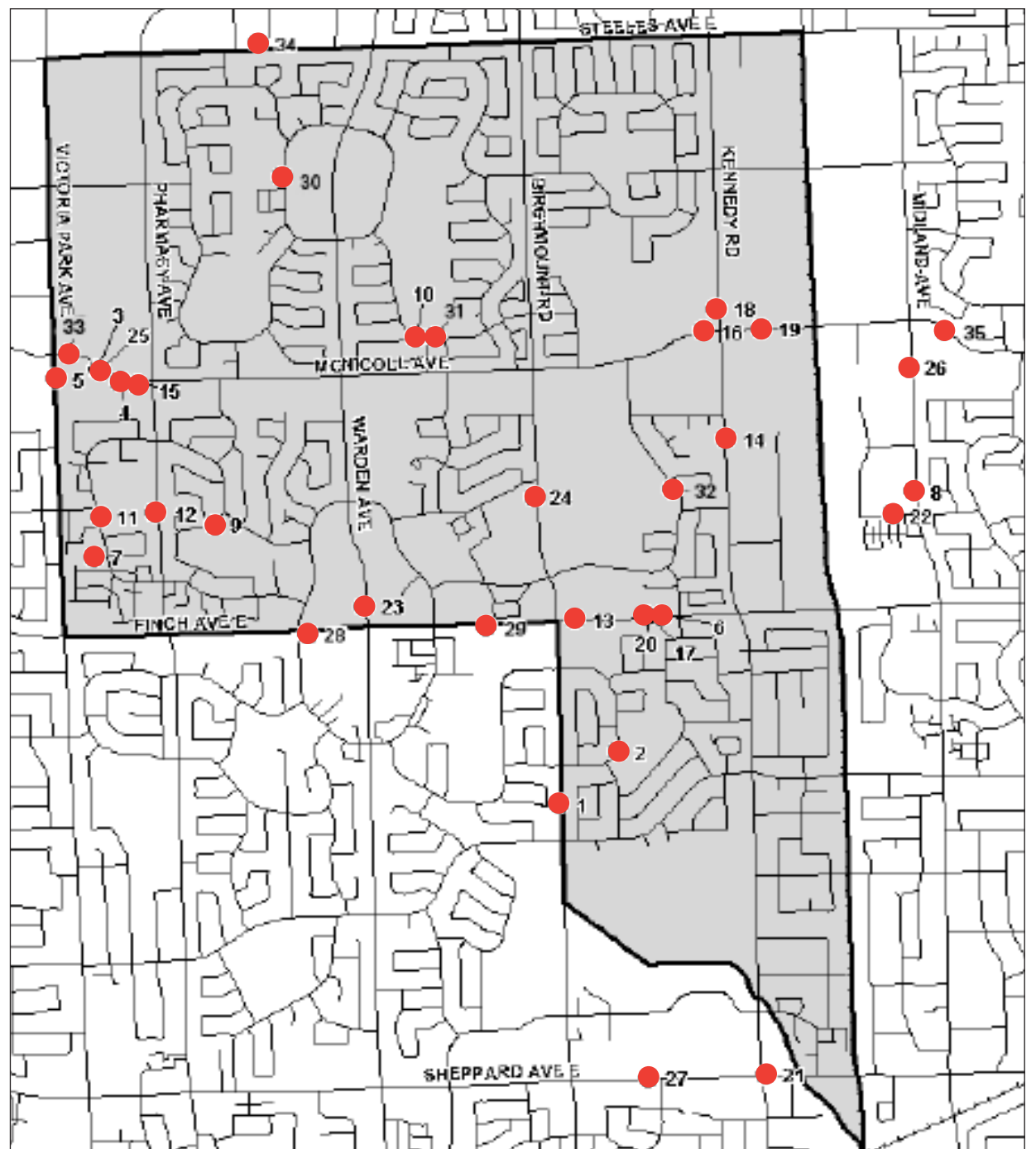
Did your sewer back up on August 19?

Call 416-338-8888
To Report the Damage and
Ask about the Basement Protection
Subsidy Program

Mike Del Grande ☎ **416-392-1374**

Community Services in Scarborough-Agincourt

- 1 Childrens' and Food Services**
Agincourt Community Services Association
2610 Birchmount Rd • 416-321-6912
- 2 Nursery School and Child Care**
Agincourt Co-op. Nursery School
35 Glendower Circuit • 416-291-0401
- 3 Land Surveyors Association of Ontario**
Land Surveyors
1043 McNicoll Ave • 416-491-9020
- 4 Immigrant and Settlement Services**
Canadian Arab Federation / Iraqi Society
1057 McNicoll Ave • 416-493-8635
- 5 Home Support Services Carefirst**
Seniors Association
3601 Victoria Park Ave • 416-502-2323
- 6 Immigrant and Settlement Services**
Centre for Info. and Community Services (CICS)
3852 Finch Ave E • 416-292-7505
- 7 Substance Abuse for African Canadian**
Youth Chester Le Community Centre
160 Chester Le Blvd. • 416-491-3456
- 8 Marriage Counselling Services**
Chinese Family Services of Ontario
3330 Midland Ave • 416-979-8299
- 9 Advocacy & Support Services**
Concerned Parents of Toronto
149 Heatherside Dr • 416-492-1468
- 10 Child Care**
David Lewis P.S. - Jr. YMCA
130 Fundy Bay Blvd. • 416-490-1624
- 11 Parent-child programme: 2-6 years**
Chester Le Public School
201 Chester Le Blvd. • 416-396-6145
- 12 Community Groups, Bible School, Summer Camp**
Epiphany of Our Lord Academy
3150 Pharmacy Ave • 416-393-5378
- 13 Crisis Intervention, Wife Assault Programme**
Greek Orthodox Family Services
3840 Finch Ave E • 416-291-5229
- 14 Private Home Child Care Agencies**
Heritage Home Child Care
3015 Kennedy Rd • 416-754-8814
- 15 Health Services**
Hong Fook Mental Health Association
1065 McNicoll Ave • 416-493-4242
- 16 Childrens' and Seniors' Recreational Programmes**
L'Amoreaux Community Centre
2000 McNicoll Ave. • 416-396-4510
- 17 Immigration, Refugee Services; Family Counselling**
Living Water Counselling Centre
3850 Finch Ave E • 416-754-0470
- 18 Child Care Centre**
Mary Ward Catholic Sec. School
3200 Kennedy Rd • 416-393-5544
- 19 Long Term Care and Retirement Facilities**
Mon Sheong Scarb. Long Term Care
2030 McNicoll Ave • 416-291-3898
- 20 Federal Matters**
MP, Scarborough-Agincourt (Jim Karygiannis)
3850 Finch Ave E • 416-321-5454
- 21 Provincial Matters**
MPP, Scarborough-Agincourt (Gerry Phillips)
4002 Sheppard Ave E • 416-297-6568



- 22 Immigrant and Settlement Services**
North American Muslim Foundation
63 Silver Star Blvd • 416-299-1969
- 23 Child Development Programme**
Ontario Early Years
2900 Warden Ave. • 416-491-1466
- 24 Seniors' Facilities**
Salvation Army
3080 Birchmount Rd • 416-497-7520
- 25 Meals on wheels, In-home Care for Seniors**
Scarborough Support Services
1045 McNicoll Ave • 416-750-9885
- 26 Employment Assistance**
Seneca Employment Centre for Intl. Professionals
3660 Midland Ave. • 416-293-3722
- 27 Long Term Care Facilities**
Shepherd Village and Seniors Apartments
3760 Sheppard Ave. East • 416-609-5700
- 28 Seniors' Home Support Services**
St Paul's L'Amoreaux Seniors' Centre
3333 Finch Ave E • 416-493-3333
- 29 Music, Arts, ESL/Citizenship**
St. Aidan C.S.
3521 Finch Ave. E. • 416-393-5350
- 30 Before and After School Programmes**
St. Henry C.S.
100 Bamburgh Circle • 416-393-5395
- 31 Art programme, Music programme**
St. Maximillian Kolbe C.S.
100 Fundy Bay Blvd • 416-393-5412
- 32 Family Day Care Centre**
St. Sylvester C.S.
260 Silver Springs Blvd. • 416-393-5373
- 33 Long Term Care Facilities**
Tendercare Living Centre. Moll Berczy Haus
1020 McNicoll Ave • 416-499-3313
- 34 Settlement Services to all Immigrants**
Toronto Chinese Community Services
3636 Steeles Ave. East • 905-948-1671
- 35 Health Care Centre & Seniors' Apts.**
Yee Hong
2319 McNicoll Ave. • 416-298-0688

In July 2005, the United Way and the City of Toronto issued a report on the distribution of community services across the City. It identified Ward 39 – particularly, the northern half of the Ward – as one of the poorest served areas in Toronto. For us living in Agincourt, the report did little more than put in print what we already knew.

Before that report was even issued, I asked the Community Services Committee to have staff verify the report's findings and justify how this inequity was allowed to exist. We are supposed to be 'one' City; how is it that some areas (mostly downtown) are serviced by dozens of agencies and others (like ours) have only one or two? What I saw was very disappointing – downtown Councillors closed ranks to protect their funding at the expense of everyone else. They tried to tell

me that nobody in Ward 39 was asking for funding; so, nobody was receiving it. Poor excuse! The staff report that I asked for is still a work in progress, but I'm not going to be discouraged and I'm not going to sit and wait for it.

Never one to be easily discouraged or back down, I decided on another tactic. In early September, I convened a Summit that brought together City staff responsible for distributing this funding with the School Boards, Churches, Community Agencies and concerned area residents. If Staff wanted to hear what services were lacking, I wanted them to hear it from the people who knew best – the people who work in the Ward. They heard that Ward 39 needs more ESL classes, more daycare spaces, more community health centers, more employment assistance, and more settlement services. Most

importantly, we need better communication of what is available and where to get it.

During the meeting, I asked everyone to be creative and to offer suggestions to improve the situation. Schools and churches need to open their doors to offer space. Volunteers need to come forward and be mobilized to the areas where they are needed the most. I have been working with a number of organizations to secure meeting and classroom space and I will continue to do so until all of the community's needs are met.

The meeting was a huge success and will form the foundation of more collaborative and productive relationships. I promise you – the amount of money that City Hall invests in Ward 39 is going to increase and we are finally going to get the services that others enjoy and we deserve as well.

August 19th Storm

Since August 19th, my office has been inundated with calls from Ward residents reporting flooding of basements and garages. Staff indicate that the City has not seen that much rain fall – that quickly – since Hurricane Hazel in 1954.

For the 2 weeks following the storm, I knocked on doors. I spoke to people about their losses and frustration with how the City responded to the storm. I was told about inconsistent and inaccurate information delivered by staff.

A few weeks ago, I took full advantage of my seat on Works Committee to pass along your complaints and demand answers on what went wrong and what we're going to do about it. I also managed to get two

important Motions approved: the first requests that staff aggressively gather information on where the flooding occurred and initiate engineering studies to find out why it happened; the second recommended the extension of a program to reimburse homeowners who install back-flow valves to protect against future basement flooding. You will hear more on both shortly.

Staff tell me that the City's response was organized and effective. I know this wasn't the case and my criticisms were shared by other Councillors. There were problems with both operations and communications and they will be fixed.

If you suffered losses during the storm, my advice to you is:

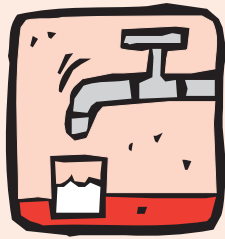
- **PLEASE** - Call **416-338-8888** to report the loss – we need to know where the problems lie
- Disconnect your down spouts – the City has a program to help pay for this
- Consider installing a sump pump in your basement
- Install a back-flow valve to prevent storm water from backing up into your basement
- Build up your basement window wells to prevent flooding from excess surface water
- Keep your sewer backup insurance coverage – even if you have to pay extra for it
- Regrade your yards to direct surface water away from your house
- Fix any cracks you may have in foundation walls or basement floor
- Call my office about blocked catch basins, so I can get them cleared.

McNicoll Avenue Watermain Project

In a previous newsletter, I talked about a major watermain project along McNicoll Avenue scheduled this past Spring. Unfortunately, delays were encountered and the project didn't start until August. At my request, Staff held 2 additional information meetings in August, but the turnout was very poor.

The crux of the project involves the installation of a large watermain under McNicoll Avenue similar to the one installed along Warden Avenue (south of Eglinton) a few years ago. Watermains provide for the City's long-term needs and are a critical part of our underground infrastructure.

McNicoll Avenue will be closed in 3 phases: Pharmacy to Warden; then Warden to Birchmount and finally, Birchmount to Kennedy. During each phase, East/West traffic will be stopped at a major intersection. North/South traffic along each



major cross street will be kept open – the pipe will be fitted by tunneling under the road instead of digging up the surface. The pipe installation work should wrap up during next summer. I have carefully reviewed our Traffic Operation's plans to detour traffic away from our residential streets. Looking at a map and living on the street are totally different. After the project starts, if you feel that the traffic has subsequently increased on your street, please call my office and I will ask staff to revise their plans.

When staff first approached me, they wanted to simply restore McNicoll Avenue to its pre-construction condition after the pipe was installed. I told them that the inconvenience to my community warrants giving something in return. I negotiated a series of improvements to also enhance McNicoll Avenue.

The present condition of McNicoll is terrible and I want it brought up to standard. There will be reconstruction or resurfacing in 2006/2007. I insisted that every intersection along McNicoll Avenue have turning lanes in all directions. Traffic is often stopped because a single car is turning – turning lanes will stop this waiting. Next, I insisted that Forestry staff go on a tree-planting blitz along both sides of McNicoll Avenue. Finally, I made the improvement of the bus loop at Kennedy Road an absolute condition of my approval. We have had to look at a half-effort for too long.

Pipe replacements and road construction are never fun to live with, but they are necessary improvements. I believe that the bonuses I've negotiated on your behalf will ultimately make McNicoll Avenue better for everyone.

Serving you at City Hall – What I do

Works Committee • Most often, interaction with the City is associated with Fire, Ambulance, Water/sewers, Roads/sidewalks, Bridges and Garbage departments. All of these functions report to Council through the Works Committee. I view it as the most important Committee at City Hall since its decisions affect your taxes and quality of life. We are currently reviewing major items like waste diversion and sanitary sludge. I scrutinize reports and ask questions to ensure projects are necessary, well thought out and deliver maximum value.

Toronto Board of Trade • I served on this body for one term then resigned. I felt the City was not acting in the most co-operative possible way to help promote tourism. Council wanted instead to handle this very important initiative on its own.

Scarborough Community Council • Along with my Scarborough colleagues, this body meets monthly to deal with issues directly related to Scarborough. Our agendas are filled with planning applications, traffic changes and City-wide policy issues affecting people in Scarborough.

Audit Committee • In the private sector, Senior Management is always looking for better and more cost-effective ways of doing business. At the City – this is not the case. We have an Auditor General, who reviews how we do business and spend your money – he reports to the Audit Committee. As a member and Chartered Accountant, I review and make additional recommendations on his findings. The City's Fraud Hotline 392-7867 has allowed employees and citizens to report fraud and wasteful spending. I ask the tough questions that you expect of me when the City does not spend wisely.

Scarborough Hospital • I am a Director on the Boards of both the Grace Campus and the General Hospital. My role is to ensure that the two sites operate to best serve the medical needs of the community. The present challenge is to keep the Grace Campus Emergency Ward open by attracting qualified medical staff. I recently prompted City Council to unanimously call on the Provincial Minister of Health to get directly involved in this issue to bring it to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion.

TTC • While I am neither on the Budget Advisory Committee nor on the Transit Commission Board, the City's Budget Chief has asked me to review the TTC's 2006 budget submission to the City. The TTC is the 2nd largest component of the City's operating budget and the Budget Chief wanted my auditing background – and sharp pencil – making sure that the TTC submission makes sense. I am a transit advocate who also understands that everything has a price and a limit to what we can afford.

Meetings, Meetings and more Meetings • I attend any meeting that impacts Ward 39. I regularly attend Committee meetings where I am not a member and speak out on issues that affect my constituents, Scarborough residents and the residents of the whole City. I am your representative and voice at City Hall. Quite often, you will not find me in the office since I am in meetings, but, when requested, I am happy to return phone calls.

Toronto Zoo • The Zoo needs City funding to stay open. As a member of the Zoo's Board of Directors, I am responsible to ensure that our Zoo maintains its world-class reputation and simultaneously relies less on City subsidies.

Marijuana Grow Houses

Since I took office in November 2003, the Police have found and dismantled over 50 grow houses. At least four others were abandoned before the Police could get search warrants. Grow houses bring gangs and gangs breed the violence that we see in the news. Quite often, gang shootings are over turf or money and the stakes are high in growing marijuana.

As this number rises, it is important to point out that it has more to do with the vigilance of our community to report them, than it has to do with the attractiveness of our community to would-be growers. We find them because we are all looking for them – plain and simple. The majority of grow house busts originate from tips received from caring citizens – a clear sign

that we are doing a good job at getting them out. The numbers have dropped. If the trend continues, it will prove what I say: when communities band together anything is possible.

As your representative on City Council, I will continue to put pressure on Ottawa and Queen's Park to get tougher on criminals. I will continue to work with our Municipal Licensing and Standards Department and our Medical Officer of Health to force the owners of grow houses to clean them up before selling them or renting them to unsuspecting people. I have also been working with my fellow Councillors to put pressure on mortgage companies, insurance companies and the real estate brokerage industry to play a more active role in this fight.

In the recent past, grow operations have made their way in condo and rental towers (by some estimates – 40% are in high-rises). Fires here are catastrophic with countless helpless people at risk. To this end, I have spearheaded another initiative – unique in Canada – by bringing together the Police and management of high-rise residential buildings. Property managers will learn how to protect themselves and the residents from the infiltration of grow operations and what to do if they find one.

When I started this fight, I asked for your support, help and patience. You now see the fruits of our collective efforts. Thank you for your initiative. My sincere thanks also to the Drug Squad Unit for their dedication.



A cook-out with Community representatives



June 18, 2005 - Grand opening of the Chester Le Community Corner

Ward Issues in Brief

Mandatory Recycling

City Council recently decided to enforce participation in the recycling programs. Effective April 2006, residents will be fined for putting recyclables in regular trash. There is a warning period to get used to the new measure, however, after that, tickets will be given for non-compliance. I supported this decision. The City has problems at the Michigan border and we have no choice but to increase our diversion rates. Scarborough has had recycling programs since 1988. After 17 years, anyone who gets a ticket has only themselves to blame.

New Crossing Guard for Elmfield Crescent and Canongate Trail

Just before school ended in June 2004, I was shocked to hear about a pedestrian getting hit by a car at this intersection – the main intersection used by the students of Kennedy Public School to and from classes. Working with the school principal and the parent council, a flood of letters was sent to the Police demanding that they install a crossing guard to protect our kids. To their credit, the Police responded quickly and decisively – the approval was fast-tracked and a temporary guard assigned for the final week of school. Let's all slow down in our residential communities – being late for a meeting is nothing compared to the worst-case alternative.

TTC McNicoll Avenue Bus Expansion Test

Last year, I persuaded the TTC to test expanded midday service for the Cummer 42 bus in response to requests from seniors. The bus currently goes past Kennedy Road during peak hours only - I wanted to know if all-day service was feasible. The TTC tested expanded hours for six months. Councillor Balkissoon and I both advertised the test in our Wards to increase our chances of success. In June, TTC reported the bad news – the number of passengers during the expanded hours was less than half needed to continue past the test phase. At least we tried.

Poop and Scoop

I am a proud dog owner and I'm out with my dog, Rags, at least twice a day so he can take care of his 'business'. Rags' 'business' is my problem to deal with – not the next person who walks through the park. Besides making our parks and boulevards less enjoyable for my neighbours and their kids, dog droppings enter water courses. The poop makes its way into the lake and affects us all - adults and children. Dog business can be disposed of in the Green Bin. Let's all show a little more respect for each other. Dog owners need to clean up after their leashed dogs and leave our parks the way they found them – free of dog poop.

Chester Le Community Corner

On June 18, I was proud to help cut the ribbon at the Grand Opening of the Chester Le Community Corner. After years of planning meetings, this new Community Resource Center offers on-site and referral services to residents in an under-served part of our Ward. Located in a townhouse unit donated by the Toronto Community Housing Corporation, the Community Corner is open to all residents. Lew Golding, Christine Davis, Susan MacDonald and everyone else involved have reason to pat themselves on the back for a job well done. Together, we made something from nothing benefiting the community for years to come.

McNicoll Avenue TTC Bus Loop

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, the TTC bus loop will be upgraded in conjunction with the McNicoll Avenue Watermain Project. The TTC Commission approved spending \$75,000 on engineering and design for the upgrades before the end of 2005. Once completed, the drawings will be passed over to our Transportation Services department to complete the construction. Getting this bus loop upgraded has been frustrating – one day, it's on; the next day, it's off. Now that I've managed to get money invested in the design, there's no turning back.

Keep in touch!

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