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REGISTRAR / GREFFIER
COUR D'APPEL DE L'ONTARIO

Court of Appeal File No. COA-24-CV-1328
Court File No. CV-23-00701672-00CL

NOTICE OF APPEAL TO THE COURT OF APPEAL

B E T W E E N:

CAMERON STEPHENS MORTGAGE CAPITAL LTD.

Applicant

and

CONACHER KINGSTON HOLDINGS INC. AND 5004591 ONTARIO INC

Respondent

NOTICE OF APPEAL

THE APPELLANT Arjun Anand in trust for a company to be incorporated (the “**Appellant**”) APPEALS to the Court of Appeal from the order and decision of the Honourable Justice Black (“**Motions Judge**”) dated December 10, 2024 (the “**Order**”), made at Toronto, Ontario, pursuant to the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act* (“**BIA**”).

THE APPELLANT ASKS that that the Order and Decision be set aside and a judgment be granted as follows:

- i. An Order setting aside the Order whereby the Motions Judge refused to approve a firm Agreement of Purchase and sale dated September 26, 2024 (“**APS**”) in respect of the real property municipally known as 2849, 2851, 2853, 2855 and 2857 Islington Avenue, Toronto, Ontario (the “**Toronto Property**”).

- ii. An Order granting an approval and vesting order (“AVO”) with respect to the APS between the Receiver and the Appellant, with any necessary extensions of time (the **"Toronto Sales Transaction"**);
- iii. An Order directing the Receiver to proceed with the Toronto Sales Transaction and vesting title to the Toronto Property to the Appellant on the closing of the Toronto Sales Transaction;
- iv. If necessary, an Order declaring that the Appellant has the right to appeal to this Court under section 193 (c) of the BIA, and that there is a stay of proceedings under section 195 of the BIA;
- v. In the alternative, an order granting the Appellant leave to appeal pursuant to section 193(e) of the BIA and an order granting a stay of the Order pending appeal;
- vi. If necessary, an Order for the abridgment of time to serve and file materials for the Notice of Appeal and dispensing with further service thereof;
- vii. An Order expediting the appeal;
- viii. An Order granting the Appellants their costs of this appeal and of the motion before the Motions Judge on a substantial indemnity scale;
- ix. Such further and other relief as the Appellant may request and this Honorable Court may deem just.

THE GROUNDS OF APPEAL are as follows:

BACKGROUND

1. On December 6, 2023, the RSM Canada Limited was appointed Receiver without security of properties municipally known as 2849, 2851, 2853 and 2857 Islington Avenue, Toronto, Ontario (the “**Toronto Property**”) pursuant to an order of the Commercial Court (“**Appointment Order**”). On March 1, 2024, the Court granted an order substituting the name TDB Restructuring Limited in place of RSM Canada Limited as Receiver (the “**Receiver**”).
2. The Appointment Order was sought by the secured lender being Cameron Stephen Mortgage Capital Inc. (the “**Lender**”) pursuant to a mortgage in the amount of \$15,600,000.00 registered on the Toronto Property. The Lender is the only creditor with a registered charge on title to the Toronto Property.

TERMINATED SALE OF THE TORONTO PROPERTY

3. On or about June 12, 2024, the Receiver entered into an Agreement of Purchase and Sale for the Toronto Property (the “**Terminated APS**”) with a third party purchaser (“**Third Party Purchaser**”).
4. On July 24, 2024, the Receiver sought and obtained an order from the court approving the transaction.
5. The Third Party Purchaser sought multiple extensions. After multiple attempts to secure a commitment from the Third Party to close the transaction, the Receiver

ultimately notified the Third Party on August 27, 2024, that it was terminating the APS due to its failure to close the transaction.

REMARKETING AND SALES PROCESS

6. The Receiver remarketed the Toronto Property which included extensive marketing efforts, as set out in the Third Report prepared by the Receiver dated November 25, 2024 (the **Third Report of the Receiver**). The Receiver and the listing agent being Colliers Macaulay Nicolls Inc. ("**Colliers**") set out a detailed sales procedure which included:
 - (i) Setting a bid deadline of September 26, 2024 at 3:00 p.m. ("**Bid Deadline**") to receive all bids;
 - (ii) Sending out email "*blast to approximately 3,000 prospective purchasers*";
 - (iii) Relisting the Toronto Property on the multiple listing service;
 - (iv) Contacting all previous bidders and those who had signed confidential agreements, to advise them that the Toronto Property was being remarketed;
 - (v) Maintaining an electronic data room to provide access to confidential information pertaining to the Toronto Property to parties who had executed a confidentiality agreement.

(Hereinafter referred to as the "**Sales Process**")

7. After its extensive marketing efforts, the Receiver and Colliers received two offers and one letter of intent. A subsequent offer was received after the Bid Deadline on September 28, 2024, which was also considered by the Receiver and Colliers. The Receiver determined that the offer from the Appellant was the highest and best offer.
8. On October 7, 2024, the Receiver executed the APS with the Appellant subject to court approval. The APS was conditional, but the Appellant waived all conditions. Accordingly, the only outstanding matter required to close the transaction was Court approval and issuance of an approval and vesting order vesting the purchased assets in the Appellant.
9. The Appellant complied with the Sales Process and the Bid Deadline. In good faith, the Appellant completed its due diligence and waived all conditions.
10. The motion for the approval and vesting order for the APS was scheduled and was heard by Justice Black on December 10, 2024 (“**Motion**”).

LATE BIDDER AND AVO MOTION

11. On December 6, 2024, 4 days prior to the Motion, 1001079582 Ontario Inc. (“**Late Bidder**”) submitted an offer (“**Late Offer**”) to purchase the Toronto Property. This was over nine weeks after the Bid Deadline. This was after the Receiver had completed the Sales Process and had entered into the APS, and after the Appellant had waived all conditions.

12. On December 6, 2024, the Late Bidder in essence, went “fishing”. They initially provided a bid which the Receiver said was not “substantially high”. Unfortunately, despite seeking a sealing order, the purchase price to be paid by the Appellants was indirectly disclosed to the Late Bidder (by the Receiver) (“**Confidential Information**”). This resulted in the Late Bidder making two additional bids each for slightly higher increments with the hope that the Receiver (and the court) would eventually “bite” and would consider the Late Bidder’s offer.
13. This use of the Confidential Information and the abuse of same brings into question the entire process.
14. Despite the Late Bidder not having any standing, the learned Motions Judge permitted the Late Bidder to make submissions and despite rejecting all the arguments of the Late Bidder, accepted the submissions of the Late Bidder to:
 - (i) Re-open the completed Sales Process; and
 - (ii) Convert the Sale Process to an auction.
15. The Motions Judge correctly made the following findings:
 - (i) Rejected the arguments of the Late Bidder that it had an indirect ownership interest, was a beneficial owner and therefore had a right to redeem;

- (ii) That the integrity of the process must be maintained, and correctly quoted prior well-established jurisprudence as it relates to the integrity of the process;
- (iii) Rejected the Late Bidder's assertions that Colliers failed to provide proper advice and failed to ensure that the Toronto Property was exposed to the residential market;
- (iv) Rejected the Late Bidder's assertions that the Receiver and/or Colliers failed to properly market and sell the Toronto Property;
- (v) His Honour explicitly found that:

“As noted, I do not find that there are any flaws with the sale undertaken here; to the contrary I find that the conduct of the Receiver, and those involved in the process, including Collier, was unassailable” (paragraph 33) [emphasis added].

- (vi) His Honour found that the Appellant acted in “good faith” (paragraph 31) (collectively, hereinafter referred to as “**Findings of Fact**”).

16. Despite making his Findings of Fact, His Honour went on to state:

“Nonetheless, I find that the magnitude by which the Third Offer exceeds the subject price does in fact qualify as “substantially higher” and that it is not appropriate or in the interest of the majority of the stakeholders to leave that much money “on the table””

17. His Honour did not approve the firm APS which had come to fruition from a robust and “*unassailable*” Sale Process. Rather, the learned Motions Judge re-opened the Sale Process, and implemented an auction process and accepted the Late Bidder suggestion that if, ultimately, the Appellant does not obtain the lands, then the Appellant would be entitled to “*reasonable legal costs associated with the process to date.*”
18. His Honour, in setting aside the already completed Sale Process and re-opening the Sale Process, did so in contrary to well-established case law and, in particular, the principles as set out in *Royal Bank v. SoundAir Corp.*¹
19. There were no “*exceptional circumstances*” which would warrant rejection of the Receiver’s recommendations or the principles in *Royal Bank v. SoundAir Corp.* Yet, the LMJ found “*unique circumstances*” when there were none. As the jurisprudence clearly established, it is not uncommon for the late bidders or owners attempting to redeem at the 11th hour. The courts have consistently maintained that the integrity of the process must be upheld and reject the requests of the late bidders.
20. His Honour categorized the facts as being unique in circumstances where they were not and attempted to circumvent the well-established jurisprudence based on such a finding.

¹ [*Royal Bank of Canada v. Soundair Corp.*](#), 1991 CanLII 2727 (ON CA) [“*SoundAir*”].

21. Permitting the Late Bidder to vary and set aside the already completed Sale Process, in essence, has created a situation where the Late Bidder has stepped into the shoes of the Receiver and is now dictating the process.
22. The Learned Motions Judge erred in law because he misapplied the test as set out in *SoundAir* as it relates to subsequent late bids. As set out in *SoundAir*, a substantially higher late bid can be considered by the Court but only if it meets the following conjunctive test:

“...prices in other offers have relevance only if they show that the price contained in the offer accepted by the receiver was so unreasonably low as to demonstrate that the receiver was improvident in accepting it.” [emphasis added]
23. In other words, there needs to be evidence **and a finding** that:
 - (i) The price contained in the offer accepted by the Receiver was “unreasonably low”; **and**
 - (ii) The Receiver **was improvident** in accepting the earlier offer.
24. The Motions Judge found that the Third Offer was “*substantially higher*” and he also found that the Receiver’s conduct was “***unassailable.***”
25. Having made the explicit finding of “*unassailable*” conduct on the part of the Receiver, it follows that the Receiver could not have acted improvidently in accepting the APS and the Court could not set aside the already completed Sale Process.

26. In effect, the Motions Judge permitted the Late Bidder to take advantage of Confidential Information (its knowledge of the sealed purchase price offered by the Appellant). The evidence before the Motions Judge was that:
- (i) Three offers were received on or about the Bid Deadline. The APS was the highest offer. A reasonable inference can be drawn that the true value of the Subject Property was in line with the three offers and the accepted highest offer being that of the Toronto Purchaser.
 - (ii) The Late Bidder using Confidential Information made three bids between December 6th and December 10th, each bid being higher than the previous bid by a few hundred thousand dollars. The Late Bidder kept “*letting out line*” until the Receiver “*bit*”.
27. The Late Bidder improperly used and took advantage of the Confidential Information which constitutes a serious breach of the integrity of the Sales Process.
28. The Court should not condone such wrongful conduct. It brings into question the integrity of the entire process. Permitting the Late Bidder to take advantage and use such Confidential Information leads to a “*mockery of the system*” and will have a chilling effect on future receiverships and more particularly parties’ willingness to participate in a sales process.

THE BASIS OF THE APPELLATE COURT'S JURISDICTION:

29. The Appellants have an automatic right of appeal to the Ontario Court of Appeal pursuant to subsections 193(c) of the BIA, and there is an automatic stay pending appeal pursuant to section 195 of the BIA.
30. In addition, and/or in the alternative, the Appellant seeks leave to appeal pursuant to subsection 193(e) of the BIA. The appeal raises an issue of general importance to bankruptcy/insolvency practice and the administration of justice.
31. Despite holding that the Receiver's conduct was unassailable (which means he did not act improvidently), the learned motions judge set aside the APS and ordered the Proposed Auction Process. By doing so, he rejected the well-established *Soundair* principles. It is an error of law to ignore the Sale Process, misapply the *Soundair Principles*, and set aside the APS simply due to a later and higher bid. As prior Courts have said, "*to do so would literally create chaos in the commercial world and receivers and purchasers would never be sure they had a binding agreement.*"
32. The appeal is *prima facie* meritorious as the Order is contrary to the established law and amounts to an abuse of judicial power. Moreover, there is no evidence that the appeal would not unduly hinder the progress of the bankruptcy / insolvency proceedings or cause any prejudice to any of the majority stakeholders.

33. To permit the decision to stand would create significant uncertainty in the commercial bar and in particular, as it relates to the conduct of the Receiver. Potential purchasers would be hesitant to negotiate and enter into an agreement of purchase and sale with a court appointed Receiver only to have the potential purchaser's genuine good faith efforts be ignored by a late bidder who took advantage of confidential information and circumvented the Sales Process.
34. The integrity of the court ordered Receiver and Sales Process must be protected. The court has previously consistently favoured an approach that preserves the integrity of the process.
35. Inconsistent interpretation and application of the relevant test will lead to lack of certainty. A dangerous precedent will be set if this decision is permitted to remain. Courts have consistently maintained that the integrity of the Sales Process must be maintained, and the Court will only consider a late bid if the steps taken by the Receiver were improvident. This has now been expanded to permit a late bidder to set aside an "unassailable" sales process merely by improperly making use of Confidential Information and thereby gaining a competitive advantage and making an 11th hour bid. The integrity of the entire court ordered receivership and Sales Process will be brought into disrepute and question.
36. The Appellants are committed to moving this appeal forward expeditiously. By contrast, there is self-evident extreme prejudice to the Appellant if the Proposed Auction Process goes ahead before the Appellant's appeal rights are concluded.

37. There is an automatic stay pending appeal pursuant to section 195 of the BIA. However, if the Court determines that there is no automatic stay pending appeal despite the granting of leave, the Appellant/Moving Party requests that the Court grants a stay pending appeal pursuant to Rule 63.02(1)(b) of the *Rules of Civil Procedure*, as the appeal will be rendered moot if a stay is not granted.
38. Section 183(2) of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act*.
39. Section 31 and 32 of the *Bankruptcy and Insolvency General Rules*
40. Such other grounds as counsel may submit and this Honorable Court may accept.

December 16, 2024

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