

Nancy Marshall - presentation at publicmeetingJune 6/11

From: Don Weitz <dweitz@rogers.com>
To: <nmarshall@torontopubliclibrary.ca>
Date: June 6, 2011 10:42 AM
Subject: presentation at publicmeetingJune 6/11

6/6/11

Attn: Nancy Marshall

Ms. Marshall, Secretary, Toronto Public Library

I hope it's not too late to make a presentation at tomorrow's public meeting re the appeal to the OMB re the NEON housing development.

I want to submit my letter previously submitted to the North York Community Council on August 17, 2010.

My letter is still relevant and urgent. If time, I also would like to read it. In any case, I will bring copies to you today before the meeting at 6pm. in the Board Room of the Reference Library. As mentioned in my phone call, I will fax it today. .

Thanks

Don Weitz

ph: 416-545-0796

August 17, 2010

North York Community Council

City Clerk

5100 Yonge Street

Toronto, Ontario – M2N 5V7

Attn: Francine Adamo, Administrator and Jennifer Lin, Community Council Support

Re: Application No 08 182458 NNY 16 OZ/I/Item NY36.79

A Statement to the North York Community Council Opposing the Orchard View/Duplex Development Proposal

Council Members:

My name is Don Weitz, a proud member of the Stanley Knowles Housing Co-op where I have lived for over thirteen years, and a social justice activist. Our Co-op is located approximately two (2) blocks east of the proposed development site where there is a parking lot. I strongly oppose the application by the developer to amend a zoning bylaw, so they can build a 17-storey hi-rise apartment building at the northeast corner of Orchard View Blvd and Duplex Ave. Because of this proposal, all Co-op members and many other neighbours will be forced to deal with a serious crisis, a threat to our health, safety and quality of life.

Although I support a number of the Co-op's alternative proposals to the zoning amendment, I am totally opposed to any hi-rise building (above 7 stories) on the site. What's needed is low-rise, affordable and supportive housing, not another hi-rise building which will significantly increase traffic and threaten people's health and safety. The 17-story proposal of the developer is absolutely irresponsible and dangerous. These are my three major reasons for strongly opposing it:

1. Higher Density

The proposed building will greatly increase the density in the area from 1.0 to 10.2, up to 1000%! This is totally unreasonable, irresponsible and dangerous. Since the area is already high-density with several hi-rise apartment buildings located within a few blocks of the Co-op - e.g., the Minto 30+ storey hi-rise - any additional building will definitely and significantly increase density and related stresses in the community.

2. More Traffic and Safety Risks

The additional 230 apartment units together with over 140 parking spaces for cars in the developer's proposal will significantly and dangerously add to the current traffic and safety risks. Currently, there are three parking entrances and exists and a parking lot on Orchard View Blvd including a parking lot on the site—all within 2 blocks! Each day, hundreds of cars enter and leave Orchard View between Yonge and Duplex, a 2-block stretch of road. With hundreds of more cars and people as proposed in this development, the traffic and safety risks will be much greater, extremely stressful and hazardous. Currently, it is risky for many of us with disabilities - particularly people using walkers, crutches or in wheelchairs - to cross Orchard View or Duplex, especially near or at the intersection. On one or two occasions this spring, I narrowly escaped being hit by speeding cars, I'm sure I'm not the only person who has survived close calls from the traffic. Currently, there are four stop signs at this intersection, but the vast majority of drivers do not come to a complete stop; I know because on several occasions I have closely monitored the traffic in the Orchard View/Duplex intersection—approximately 90% of the cars don't stop, they just slow down.

3. More Air Pollution, More Health Risks - A Public Health Hazard

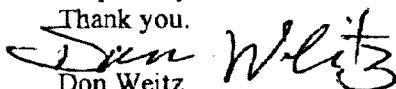
The increased traffic of cars and trucks will significantly increase air pollution caused by exhaust fumes or carbon emissions to dangerously high levels. The increased pollution constitutes a serious health hazard. On hot and humid summer days, the pollution is frequently unbearable and dangerous. Since many people in the Co-op and other buildings in the Yonge/Eglinton neighbourhood are elderly, have physical or mobility disabilities, and suffer from various chronic medical conditions, the increased pollution and traffic caused by many more cars and trucks will bring additional stresses and health risks. For elderly people and others with disabilities, higher air pollution levels will definitely aggravate their fragile physical or medical condition. In short, the proposed development constitutes an extremely serious public health risk for people, particularly those with respiratory and/or heart conditions including myself.

I ask this Council to seriously these three major reasons for my strong opposition and the opposition of many other citizens to this zoning bylaw amendment that will allow another hi-rise building, allow more traffic, allow more pollution, and cause more health risks in a high-density area housing hundreds, if not thousands, of elderly, disabled and sick people. If you approve this development, it means you approve hi-rise development over people's health and safety; it means you approve corporate greed and profit over people.

The only types of building that are reasonable, necessary and humane are low-rise affordable houses that house the many poor and homeless people on our streets; as you well know there are thousands in Toronto. As you may also know, the late great urban planner, social justice activist, community theorist and writer Jane Jacobs spoke out and fought for liveable, people-centered, accessible, safe and healthy communities for all of us, including elderly people and people with disabilities. If Jane Jacobs were alive, I'm sure she would strongly oppose this development proposal. I recommend all North York and Toronto city planners read her widely acclaimed book *The Life and Death of American Cities*; it's applicable and relevant to North York, Toronto, and all other Canadian cities.

If allowed to proceed, this proposed development, even with a re-zoning amendment, will cause many serious safety and health risks and traffic problems that are unacceptable to our co-op and community and destroy what's left of our quality of life; it has no major benefits. This development proposal should have been withdrawn as soon as it was introduced, because it is irresponsible and threatens people's safety, health and lives. I urge you to do the right thing –vote against this proposal and vote for low-rise, affordable, and supportive housing which is desperately needed in the Yonge-Eglinton neighbourhood and many other communities.

Thank you.



Don Weitz

Member, Stanley Knowles Housing Co-op
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