

North York Community Council – Item 18.53

Considered by City Council on September 24 and 25, 2008

NY18.53	Amended			Ward: 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26, 33, 34
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Local Measures to Reduce Basement Flooding in the North York Community Council Area

City Council Decision

City Council on September 24 and 25, 2008, adopted the following motions:

1. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, to report to the North York Community Council for its meeting on November 18, 2008, on possible amendments to the by-laws in the North District that will eliminate all, as-of-right, reverse sloped driveways in the North District.
2. City Council direct that this item be scheduled as a public hearing.

City Council Decision Advice and Other Information

City Council considered this Item with EX23.16, headed "Update on the Engineering Review Addressing Basement Flooding (Ward All)", and Member Motion M24.24, headed "Extension of Deadline for Mandatory Downspout Disconnection in the Combined Sewer Area".

(September 9, 2008) Member Motion from Councillor Moscoe

Committee Recommendations

North York Community Council recommends that:

1. City Council direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning Division, to report to the North York Community Council for its meeting on November 18, 2008 on possible amendments to the by-laws in the North District that will eliminate all, as-of-right, reverse sloped driveways in the North District.
2. City Council direct that this item be scheduled as a public hearing.
3. City Council direct that Members of the Committee of Adjustment – North York District Panels, be invited to attend the Community Council meeting when this report is considered by the North York Community Council.

Summary

On August 19, 2005 over 4,200 basements in Toronto were flooded. Council approved a work plan to address chronic basement flooding problems in 31 separate Basement Flooding Study Areas. The majority of the study areas are in the North District. Since that time the City has introduced a number of corrective measures including direct financial assistance to homeowners (3,125 to date)...cost \$1,123,445 and a mandatory downspout disconnection program. Presently a report on remedial measures to correct flooding in study areas 14, 28, 29, and 30 was adopted by the Executive Committee and will be before Council. The cost of remediation in these areas alone will be \$272 million.

One of the recommendations of this first study is

“Due to the significant impact reverse sloped driveways can have on basement flooding; it is recommended that reverse sloped driveways be banned in any future home construction”

Reverse sloped driveways are already prohibited in North York with the exception that they are permitted, as of right, on narrow lots. Builders need no incentive to create narrow lots but this exemption acts as a double incentive in that it becomes possible to squeeze significant additional living space into this kind of construction with reversed slope driveways. The builder then walks away and the purchaser later suffers from chronic basement flooding. Furthermore this exemption acts as an incentive for builders to apply to the Committee of Adjustment to allow reverse sloped driveways when they are currently not permitted.

Since the City is spending so many millions of dollars in an attempt to correct the problem it is essential that we also make regulatory changes that correct a known problem on a go forward basis.

Background Information (Committee)

Member Motion - Basement Flooding

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/ny/bgrd/backgroundfile-15555.pdf>)

Background Information (City Council)

(September 23, 2008) communication from the City Solicitor (NY18.53a)

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2008/cc/bgrd/backgroundfile-15891.pdf>)