

# Chartland Community, Ward 23, North Scarborough

June 24, 2021

Planning and Housing Committee

Dear Committee Members:

Our Chartland Community is located in the southwest quadrant of Brimley Road and Finch Avenue and extends southward to Huntingwood Avenue and westward to the CN Stouffville rail line. We encompass about 350 residents.

While the Chartland Community Association (CCA) is no longer registered, a group of us, including some former Executives of the Association, continue to act in the interests of the community.

In a scan of all the public documentation made available for this project, we failed to find even a single paragraph about the issues experienced by homeowners, and the possible impacts on them, other residents and the community.

Given the proposed regulations, the largest single affected stakeholder group in Scarborough would be the 112,000 owners of lowrise family homes here. (a greater number of that type of home than in any other District of Toronto ). In presenting the elements of the plan, more attention should have been paid to the objective of creating positive long term community relationships.

Based on experiences with many on-going issues with non-compliant, unlicensed and illegal Multi – Tenant Housing, the City has acknowledged that enhanced regulatory standards, inspections and enforcement are needed to improve the living conditions and safety for residents in these houses. The City needs to ensure that existing operators, including licensed, unlicensed and illegal MTHs, are all in compliance before allowing new operators to apply for licenses.

We have attended a number of consultations on the new program and reviewed the proposed new bylaws and regulations. We have **serious concerns and serious objections to the proposed regulations, the proposed implementation process, and the City's ability to properly enforce MTH**. The current system is not working and many of these houses present real and potential safety issues for the tenants, many of whom may not be able to advocate for better housing for themselves.

Our serious objections include:

- City enforcement staff have been unable to control illegal rooming houses. City records indicate there are over 165 known illegal rooming houses in Scarborough! This backlog is continuing to increase.

- The MTH team indicated that there are only 6 enforcement officers now in the City ie only 1.5 officers in each of 4 Districts. The plan is to grow the staff to 28, or 7 per District. This is not enough to remove the enforcement backlog. We do not believe that the 7 Scarborough staff will be able to bring illegal MTH into compliance and also handle the new MTH.
- The proposed maximum of 6 dwelling units per MTH (about 12 renters) is out of scale and balance with the residential areas of Scarborough. This represents a tripling of today's legal standard of about 4 renters in Scarborough. The maximum MTH size should not exceed 4 dwelling units in Scarborough.
- The proposed regulations would put no limit on the total number of MTH allowable in the community, the street or even next door. Homeowners and residents would have no legal grounds to object – this is unacceptable.
- On May 27, the MTH team advised us that the City would likely allow numbered companies to obtain MTH licenses. The proposed new MTH regulations could ramp up private sector interest for purchasing and renting out family homes as an investment, right across Toronto. The risk is that rental rates for these upgraded family homes would be a step higher than today's normal room rental rates, due to renovation costs.

The staff report and recommendations generate a number of questions that need to be answered before the Planning and Housing Committee and City Council can make responsible decisions regarding the viability of the proposal and the budget implications.

We have specific questions about plans for enforcement between now and Nov 1, 2022. We do not see a formal Budget for Years 1, 2 and 3 within the proposal. What are the total costs across all Departments for Years 1, 2 and 3? How is the City going to guarantee that the proposal receives the necessary funding through Department budget requests in future years? Will evaluation criteria and key performance indicators be developed and statistics published quarterly?

The significant number of non-compliant, unlicensed and illegal (and often unsafe) MTHs in the City is unacceptable. We strongly recommend that the City first properly deal with the current non-compliant, unlicensed and illegal houses before implementing the zoning amendments and allowing new applications.

We agree with the City's effort to bring MTHs into compliance since they offer an affordable housing option, but the City must place the safety of tenants first by ensuring that the City can effectively enforce the by-laws.

**Based on the current situation and our questions, we ask respectfully that the staff report be deferred until City Council has been provided with sufficient information to determine realistic options and the program is adequately financed to successfully ensure safe Multi-Tenant Houses.**

Sincerely,

Greg Saldanha

Pauline Ling

Murray McLeod, Past President CCA

Greg Olsen, Past President CCA

Dave Currie, Past President CCA

Gord Blackwell

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