MEMO

TO: Toronto and East York Community Council
FROM: Councillor Joe Mihevc
RE: Issuance of a demolition permit for the properties 356, 358, and 360 Spadina Rd.
DATE: February 15, 2011

Recommendation:

Staff issue a demolition permit for the properties municipally known and 356, 358 and 360 Spadina Road without the condition of “having a building permit in hand.” (City File Numbers: 09 107382 DEM, 09 107388 DEM and 09 107391 DEM)

Background:

The Canadian Friends of Ohr Somayach – Tanenbaum Centre – College of Judaic Studies, a non-profit organization has proceeded through a lengthy process to obtain the necessary variances and site plan approval to facilitate the construction of a new orthodox synagogue on the above-referenced property. The application process commenced over three years ago, with extensive community consultation that resulted in both City Staff, the local community and myself supporting the applications for minor variances and site plan approval necessary to facilitate the construction of the new synagogue. The Committee of Adjustment approval was in place as of February 18, 2009, with the site plan approval’s Notice of Approval Conditions having been approved on May 6, 2010.

With all of the approvals having been obtained and/or filed in advance of the City’s August passage of the New Harmonized Zoning By-law, City Staff had specifically intended on exempting the organization’s property from the application of such New Harmonized Zoning By-law. Unfortunately, City Staff only included one of the four municipal addresses (the Site Plan Approval Application also included 362 Spadina Road), and as such, only part of the organization’s property is exempt from the application of the New Harmonized Zoning By-law.

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In light of this, I am recommending that the Toronto and East York Community Council allow the demolition to proceed, without the issuance of a building permit.

Please note that it is critical for the organization to complete its final fundraising efforts to be in a position to commence the demolition process, which I am confident will be followed by the commencement of the construction in the summer of this year. The building permit application was filed on February 15, 2011. I am also aware of the fact that City Staff intend to bring forward a report to correct the errors in the New Harmonized Zoning By-law, to include the proper municipal addresses so that our client’s entire site is exempt from the provisions of such new by-law. As a result, I am confident that the organization’s proposed construction will proceed in the summer months, and as such, the site will remain vacant for an extremely short period of time.

Sincerely,

Councillor Joe Mihevc
Ward 21, St. Paul’s West