



Executive Committee
City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

July 2, 2013

Re: EX33.17 Update and Next Steps of Proposed Redevelopment of Seaton House and Revitalization of George Street

To: Executive Committee members

I am writing to you regarding the update and next steps for the redevelopment of Seaton House. We support the move for redevelopment and the City of Toronto's plan to provide a mix of services including an emergency shelter, a long-term care home, a service hub and affordable housing.

However, we have two specific concerns about the recommendations. First, these recommendations are coming forward before the City has adopted its Housing Stability Service Plan. The latter will be considered in the Fall. The recommendation to reduce the number of shelter beds from 543 to 100 at Seaton House is a serious change that should be considered within the context of the larger service plan review. For this reason, we suggest that no decisions be made about number of shelter beds until the Fall, and in conjunction with the Housing Stability Service Plan review process.

Second, we are especially concerned with the impact of the loss of shelter bed capacity for single men, moving from 543 to 100 beds at the Seaton House location. As you are aware, there are serious problems with shelter bed access for people who are homeless at present.

The staff report does not address the implications for men's access to shelters that will result from drastically decreasing the number of beds. This is surprising given the recent issues raised about lack of access to shelters for people who are homeless. In a short survey of Toronto shelter providers conducted by Social Planning Toronto earlier this year, overwhelmingly shelter providers reported a need for additional emergency shelter space. There is nothing in the staff report to suggest that this need will be adequately addressed in the redevelopment or what the impact will be on other men's shelters.

While it is important to create a range of shelter and housing options, including long-term care homes, it is also essential that the emergency

MAIN OFFICE

2 Carlton Street
Suite 1001
Toronto, ON M5B 1J3
T: 416.351.0095
F: 416.351.0107
info@socialplanningtoronto.org
www.socialplanningtoronto.org

Community Offices

Etobicoke
The Shaver Homestead
450 The West Mall, Suite 205
Etobicoke M9C 1E9

Scarborough
2100 Ellesmere Road Suite 327-E
Scarborough M1H 3B7

York/West Toronto
1652 Keele Street
Toronto, ON M6M 3W3

ANC Mount Dennis
1366 B Weston Rd
Toronto, ON M6M 4R8

shelter system be appropriately resourced to meet ongoing emergency needs. While some excellent long-term care and housing options may be created in the years to come, we are concerned that the emergency shelter system will be even more stretched to meet emergency needs. The staff report does not address this fundamental question.

We believe that these critical questions about the Seaton House redevelopment should follow the adoption of the Housing Stability Service Plan, and both should ensure proper access to emergency shelter for those in need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beth Wilson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Beth Wilson
Senior Researcher