

AH10.2.1

Affordable Housing Committee Deputation

June 25th 2018 meeting

Agenda item AH10.2 – Creating 606 Affordable and 422 Mid- Range Rental Homes in Toronto: Results of the 2018 Open Door Call for Applications

Attn: Dela Ting
Committee Administrator
City Clerk's Office
Secretariat – Boards & Committees
Scarborough Civic Centre
150 Borough Drive, 3rd Floor
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My proposal as Kehilla Residential Programme's Executive Director for additional permanent affordable housing through our non-profit agency was not approved under the recent Open Door Funding Proposal call. I am not here to plead our case, though it was a worthwhile proposal to add a floor of 22 units on the roof of one of our buildings, but to caution your Committee that your endorsement of the capital funding recommendations predominantly to large developers or numbered companies except for a small allowance to one developer contracting with a mental health service provider, sends a very strong message to the non-profit sector, "leave it to private sector developers." I understand that this improves the optics as they can produce the volume of units you need to claim the success of this program. However, the compromise is higher rents than the not-for profit sector and a 20 year affordability clause on average. Non-profit housing is permanently affordable.

The non-profit sector may not be as cost effective as the private sector, but we have a proven track record of successfully housing 'hard-to-house' tenants; tenants at the top of the City's waiting list, many of whom are living in shelters and who desperately need decent affordable housing. Failure to fund more non-profit proposals will condemn the City to building shelters as the solution to homelessness. This is not a good use of the City's resources.

Any incentives awarded to the non-profit sector in the past to help them build or be an inviting partner to developers are now available to private developers as well. The not-for-profit sector cannot expand to meet demand without further new investment, or we are relegated to being caretakers of our existing portfolios. At risk is the creation of new permanent affordable housing and the much needed supports and assistance to the most vulnerable living in non-profit housing. And forget about addressing the City's long waiting list, what is being built is not affordable to them.

I am not advocating the past model of stand-alone projects, hopefully our sector has moved on. New models and approaches are required. Kehilla, for example, approached developers 5 years ago to fund a private rent assistance program now helping 200 households, where they live in private market rental housing. We could not have built a project of that size in that time frame, raised the capital or found suitable inexpensive land. And we will continue to pursue this model in new developments through referral agreements with the developers and bring the affordable average market or 20 per cent below market rents down to truly affordable rents by applying our private rent assistance of up to \$300 a month. We are also working with a

coalition of developmental service agencies and developers on inclusive design in high rise private rental and condominium buildings.

My objection is weighting non-profits submissions on the same basis as large developers. It is not an equal playing field. Non-profits were encouraged to submit proposals in the briefing session of this proposal call. Responding to these extensive proposal requirements is costly in both time and money for small non- profits with limited staff resources.

There are some things you can do to send a positive message to non-profits. Make it easier for them to apply. Points should be awarded to projects that provide perpetually affordable housing or to projects that have a 50 year or longer affordability period. Points should awarded to projects that provide housing to most vulnerable residents of our City and points should be awarded to housing providers who partner with community agencies that provide support to residents. Assist with final planning approvals of these projects. And “open more doors” for non- profits and co-ops to apply through to get the waivers and deferrals as a prerequisite to applying to the new National Housing Co-Investment fund through CMHC.

I encourage you to vote for the motions before your Committee today which can bring these recommendations into play.

I appreciate the opportunity to present a non–profit perspective to you. I value and appreciate other City supports to this sector, the work of the Affordable Housing Office and the City Councillors who continue to be strong voices for affordable housing.



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