

From: [Joanne Knutson](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Subject: My comments for 2020.PH14.8 on June 29, 2020 City Council
Date: June 28, 2020 7:35:15 AM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the June 29, 2020 City Council meeting on item 2020.PH14.8, Modular Supportive Housing

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

I am writing to express Habitat Services' support for the development of Modular Housing projects in the city of Toronto. More specifically, at this point in time, I would like to express support for City Council to request that the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing make a Minister's Zoning Order to amend the zoning regulations to permit the construction of the modular housing proposals.

Habitat Services subsidizes non-profit and private sector housing for Persons with Lived Experience of the Mental Health System. We are well aware of the desperate need for affordable supportive housing in our City.

In 2017, the City of Toronto agreed to fund Habitat Services in acquiring, subsidizing, monitoring, and providing supports for up to 150 new units of supportive housing. These units would provide permanent or transitional housing for men from the Seaton House shelter as part of the City's George Street Revitalization (GSR) Project. The search for owners and operators of vacant units has been exceptionally challenging in the Toronto market, where dynamics of both gentrification and the financialization of housing are at work. A number of landlords who were prepared to develop affordable housing were thwarted in the planning process. Despite the city's desperate need for supportive and affordable housing, roadblocks in the development of single room occupancy dwellings can prove insurmountable. All City departments and the Province of Ontario should be paving the way for more affordable supportive housing in our City, not hindering it.

Sadly, in 2020, Habitat Services has seen the loss of three homes from our portfolio, housing a total of thirty-eight tenants. These homes provided affordable, permanent housing for decades. The potential loss of licensed rooming house stock in Toronto further diminishes housing options available to low income individuals with lived experience of the mental health system. Meanwhile, the Access Point has a steadily growing list of almost 19,000

unique individuals waiting for supportive housing. The housing crisis in Toronto demands action. Habitat Services implores City Council to take all necessary steps to facilitate the creation of affordable supportive housing. The modular housing proposals deserve Council's full support.

Sincerely,
Joanne Knutson,
Executive Director,
Habitat Services

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