

Deputation EY22.6

Grant Evers

President

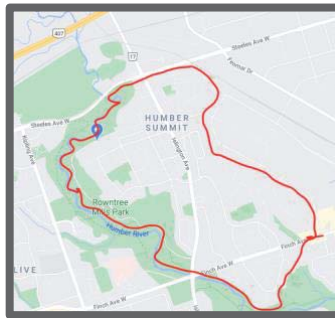
Humber Summit Residents' Association

March 3, 2021

3400 Weston Road and 2405 Finch Avenue West - Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law
Amendment Applications - Preliminary Report (Ward 7)

Personal: Grant Evers
President, Humber Summit Residents' Association
Serve on Liaison Committee of the Metrolinx/Mosaic Transit Finch West LRT
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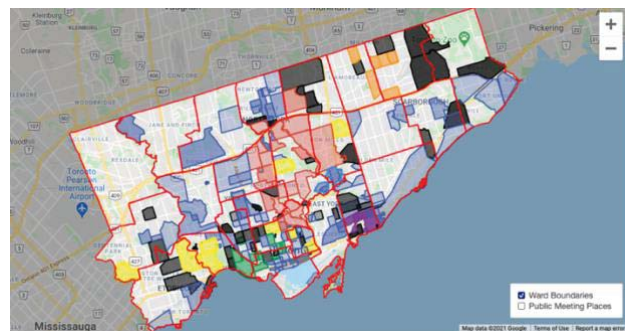
Map of Humber Summit Residents' Association Catchment Area



Although our principal focus is the Humber Summit community that is located north of Finch Ave., east of the Humber River, south of Steeles Ave. and west of Milvan Dr., we are interested in development that will affect the north-west quadrant of Toronto.

Map of Toronto Residents' and Ratepayers' Associations

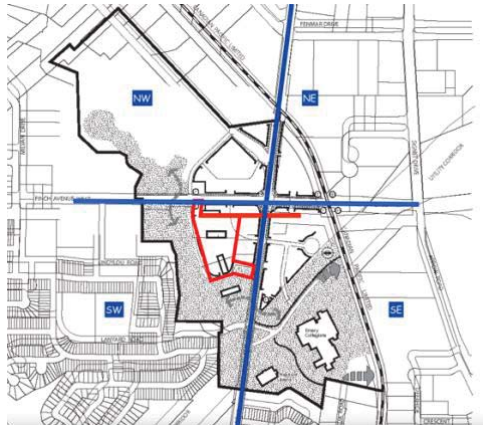
North-West quadrant of Toronto is largely unrepresented by Residents' Associations. This is particularly noteworthy because proposed developments tend to lack scrutiny here by those who will be most affected.



Source: <https://tango.to>

Issue Today: To evaluate a proposal by the proponent to build a 36-Floor Rental Tower on a site which presently has 2 26-floor Rental Buildings

Emery Village Secondary Plan



Emery Village Secondary Plan

MAP 26-2 Structure Plan

Secondary Plan Boundary	Area for Streetscape Improvement	Possible Future Commuter/Transit Station
Existing and Potential Building Edges	Open Space	Proposed Off-Road Path
Possible Location of Local Roads	Significant Corner	Note: The proposed alignment and location of specific projects remains conceptual at this time. These concepts are subject to further review through the applicable environmental assessment process established under the EA Act.
Possible Road Extensions beyond Secondary Plan Boundary	Potential Pedestrian Connections	
Possible Location of Local Lanes	Gateway Feature	

December 2010

Recommendations by City Planning

1. Staff schedule a **community consultation meeting** for the application at **3400 Weston Rd. and 2405 Finch Ave. W. with the Ward Councillor**
2. **Notice** of meeting be given to **landowners and residents** within **120 metres** of the application site

Background:

The Proposal:

- This **36-Floor tower** consisting of **517 units** is the beginning of **Phase 3 of 4 Phases** for the redevelopment of the quadrant at the Weston Rd. and Finch Ave. intersection.
- The By-Law giving authority for this development is the 2002 Emery Village Secondary Plan which was approved by City Council and the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)
- The concept was conceived from the outset by the former Councillor for Ward 7, the Emery Village BIA and the proponent
- Phase 1 consists of a 26-Floor residential rental tower; 2 10-floor rental-buildings which are complete; the ground floor, fronting Weston Rd. is to consist of retail businesses which remain largely vacant

Phase 1 Buildings (complete) – South-east quadrant – Weston Rd. and Finch Ave.

Phase 1 Building 1 Tower



Buildings 2 and 3 (joined)



Weston Rd. View

Vena Way View



Residential Units: 664

Phase 2 – South east quadrant (under construction)

2 Towers – 26 and 30 Floors



Number of Residential Units: 514

3400 Weston Rd.

2405 Finch Ave. W.

Phase 3

Presently 2 Buildings circa 1980?



Number of Residential Units:
517 and Day-Care facility



Proposal: to construct a **36-Floor Tower** on the site of 3400 Weston Rd. property and 2405 Finch Ave. W. The original buildings are to be maintained.

- Height (107.39 m including mechanical penthouse); a 5-storey podium with day care facility at north end
- Number of Residential Units: 480
- 298 one-bedroom (62%); 156 two-bedroom (32%); and 26 three-bedroom (5%).



Required Amendments to Zoning:

1. Emery Village Secondary Plan
2. City of Toronto Zoning By-law 569-2013
3. Former City of North York Zoning By-law 7625 (as amended)

Summary – Amend By-Laws in order to permit the construction of a **36-floor apartment building** where the current maximum number of floors is 6, with the exception of allowances to increase the number of floors to 12 in exchange for commensurate Community Benefits.

Evaluation:

Selected Planning Staff Concerns:

- Whether the application is contextually appropriate and whether it fits with the planned and surrounding built context;
- Built form transition and proximity to adjacent low-scale residential properties;
- Appropriateness of the proposed building's height, massing, density, setbacks and stepbacks;
- Conformity with the 45-degree angular plane from the property line of the adjacent low-scale residential properties;
- The provision of an appropriate mix of dwelling units and adequate location and size of amenity space;
- Ingress and egress to site from Finch Ave. and Weston Rd. are inadequate

Principal Concerns:

- Genesis of the redevelopment of Weston and Finch community: a concept put forward by the former Councillor of Ward 7 and the Emery Village BIA beginning in 2002. **No residential input was sought.**
- Development of the project was granted to **one development company**
- The project is **financed largely by taxpayer money: Federal, Provincial and City Financing with the goal to build Affordable Housing**
- **The Emery Village Secondary Plan** proposed buildings between **3 storeys – 6 storeys**; this proposal is another **36 floor tower – this development project is out of control; under the original secondary plan, it could go as high as 18 storeys with community benefits; this proposal doubles the number of floors.**
- This Proposal Calls for **Extreme Intensification**

How Did This Come About?

- **Increases in Height in exchange for Community Benefits. Community Council and City Council agreed to the idea of increasing the supply of affordable housing and creating a First Nations Park**
- Confirmed at OMB Hearing, March 2020 (a) prior to the issuance of the first above grade building permit, the owner shall pay to the City the sum of \$1,000,000 to be used in the Emery Village Secondary Plan Area and allocated towards:
 - o (i) the construction of the First Nations Park;
 - o (ii) parks and open space improvements;
 - o (iii) significant corner and gateway features along Finch Avenue West;
 - o (iv) path(s) through the abutting hydro corridor to Emery Village Collegiate Institute; and
 - o (v) potential pedestrian connections (bridges);

This project began in 2002, yet 19 years later there is little evidence of “Community Benefits” in the vicinity of Weston and Finch.

The community should have input on how Community Benefits are identified and monies allocated. Our previous Councillor claimed to be the community.

- **Great idea for a First Nations Park – But in a Hydro Corridor? – where people wouldn’t send their children to play – hydro transmission and oil and gas pipelines.**

First Nations support the project as an acknowledgement of “Reconciliation”. Notwithstanding work that has been done on the design of the park, the support of the Emery Village BIA and City Parks, surely, there’s a better location. **A spokesperson for First Nations said, “that’s what we have always done – we’ll take anything (any location) they’ll give us”.**

We should be able to do much, much better for the First Nations – a more suitable location. There are better park-like settings nearby to acknowledge the contribution of First Nations, such as **Lindy Lou Park or Rowntree Mills Park.**



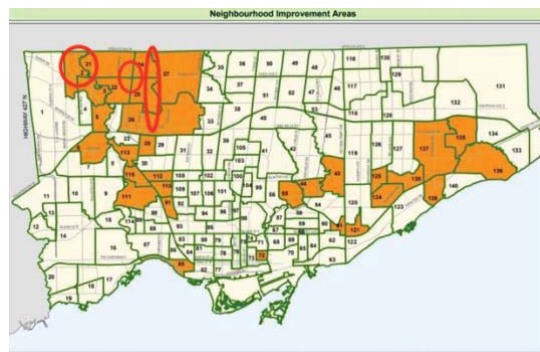
According to the LPAT decision of March, 2020 The *owner* of the *site* shall:

in the event the cash contribution referred to in (a) above has not been used for the intended purpose **within three (3) years** of this By-law coming into full force and effect, the cash contribution may be redirected for another purpose, at the discretion of the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the Ward Councillor, provided that the purpose(s) is/are identified in the Toronto Official Plan and will benefit the community in the vicinity of the property;

When will there be evidence of Community Benefits? **When will the proponent pay the \$!M?** Will it be 2040 after generations have passed through? Some urgency is required. Public realm enhancements shouldn't be just afterthoughts.

- Informing the Local Community – announcement of this review – was it distributed to owners and residents within 120 m.? If so, to the east, Medallion owns the land; did all residents in the apartment buildings at 3400 Weston Rd. and 2405 Finch Ave. W. and residents in the Lanyard neighbourhood receive notification? The radius should be extended to include more people who reside south and west of the site.
- Community Public Consultation meetings for a development should always be held within the community. Phase 2's meeting in 2017 was deferred and then held at the EYCC (14.2 km away).
- Who Says a Policy of Intensification requires towers of 36 Floors? Who Says that such height is a good idea for the betterment of a neighbourhood?
- Weston and Finch is in the heart of a *Neighbourhood Improvement Area*; what is being created is another high density neighbourhood, just like Jane and Finch in Ward 7 and Kipling Ave. north of Finch Ave. in Etobicoke's Ward 1.

Circles - Neighbourhoods of Extreme Intensification
 Kipling Ave. n. of Finch
 Weston and Finch
 Jane St. Corridor



Source: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/8fb8-map-of-toronto-nias-neighbourhood-improvement-areas.jpg>

2016 Demographic Changes in Humbermede:

Population decreased by 1.9% between 2011-2016

Apartment Vacancy Rate -1.9% -2019; 5.7% (Toronto) 2020

Unsuitable Housing 22.9%; Toronto 12.1% percentage of private households in dwellings with insufficient number of bedrooms

Recent Immigrants 10%. Toronto 7%

Humbermede - one of Toronto' 15 worst neighbourhoods for crime (source: <https://newcanadianlife.com/worst-neighborhoods-in-toronto-guide-for-newcomers/>)

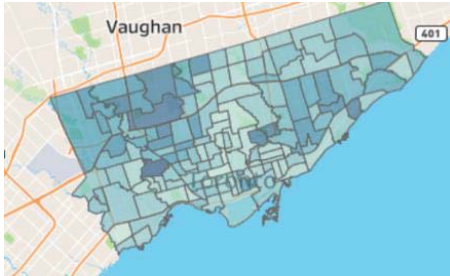
Income	Neighbourhood	Toronto
Median household income	\$57,609	\$65,829
Median family income	\$62,982	\$82,859
Median FY/FT work income	\$41,100	\$55,246
Without income Tax	6.4%	4.7%
Income from gov't transfers	20.5%	9.3%
Poverty (MBM)	24.2%	21.9%
Low income (LIM-AT)	22.6%	20.2%
Low income (LICO-AT)	19.1%	17.4%

Income Data - The average income in Humbermede is below the Toronto average. The solution is not to use all available space to house people. **Employment opportunities need to be created.**

Source:

<https://www.toronto.ca/ext/sdfa/Neighbourhood%20Profiles/pdf/2016/pdf1/cpa22.pdf>

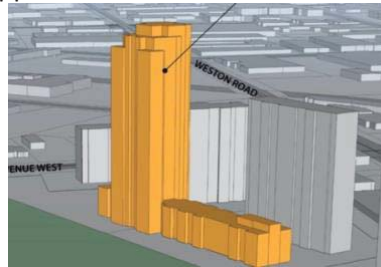
- Goal of Provincial Policies and Toronto's Official Plan – is to offer a **mix of housing alternatives** (e.g. stacked townhouses, street townhouses, apartment buildings with fewer floors)
- **Transition to Residential Neighbourhoods** – no transition – invades 45° angular plane
- **Lindy Lou Park should be a site for neighbourhood improvements** – Community Benefits
- **Covid and Problems of Poverty in north-west Toronto** - what Covid has taught us is that high density is a breeding ground for transmission of disease; jamming people into high towers is unhealthy; few people can use an elevator at one time. High towers are undesirable for families (e.g. Chalkfarm Dr. Wilson and Jane; local schools had some of the lowest achievement results in City of Toronto)



Covid Cases/100 000

North-West quadrant of Toronto has had higher incidence of Covid cases throughout the pandemic as illustrated by the darker shades on the map

- **Structure of Proposed 36 Floor Tower** – will block sun in afternoon; ground areas will become enclosed cavern, creating opportunities for undesirable activities



- **City of Toronto Tall Buildings Guideline:**
"Tall Buildings are desirable, but they don't belong everywhere. Tall Buildings come with larger civic responsibilities and obligations than other buildings."

The lack of social cohesion in communities with a preponderance of tall buildings coupled with poverty is a consequence of a lack of foresight.

- How many towers do we need at Weston and Finch? Proponent is proposing **10**.
- **3415-3499 Weston Rd.** has a **Walkscore of 63**. Clearly there needs to be infrastructure which makes walking more convenient
- Lack of Retail – after two years at 3415-3499 Weston Rd., there's one pharmacy, a doctor's office and one other business. No other retail businesses or restaurants have located there. The storefronts remain vacant with for lease signs
- Considerable landscaping enhancements need to be done at 3400 Weston Rd. and 2405 Finch Ave. which look barren and desolate
- **The Finch West LRT** will be a positive addition to the Finch corridor - thousands of people will use it to get to work and school. **The Emery stop on the LRT** should not become known as the poor people's stop.

- **Why are there few submissions from residents on this Agenda item? Weston and Finch is a marginalized community** with many newcomers and residents whose lives are too filled to devote the time to “fight City Hall”. Compare the response of the community to this proposed development with the community response in central Etobicoke when Humbertown plaza was to be torn down.

Conclusion

People need space; they will not thrive if policymaking creates conditions where people are living too close together.

A policy of intensification need not mean that tower after tower is constructed within the Weston and Finch quadrant. In the 1960s and 70s, one apartment after another was built along Jane St. In the 1980s and 90s, the same happened on Kipling Ave., north of Finch Ave. If Council continues to promote the construction of residential towers at heights of 36 floors at Weston and Finch, it's very probable that it will become the 21st century Jane and Finch and Kipling and Finch with large underserved populations – a high incidence of poverty and a community struggling with public health and crime.

The Result of Excessive intensification: if this project goes through then ten years from now the City will desperately try to provide badly needed social services which could have been mitigated if uncontrolled development had been toned down.

A goal of the Emery Village Secondary Plan was to create a balance of mixed-housing. The preponderance of rentals will create a long-term problem. There needs to be a mix of housing. The Weston and Finch quadrant is becoming highly intensified. So far, there is no evidence of “community benefits” being derived from this new development. For example, why has there not even been a proper pathway created to Emery Collegiate?

The proposal to construct a 36-floor rental apartment tower on a site where there are already 2 26-floor apartment towers is inappropriate. **If this project were to be approved, it should be a much smaller version than the original concept.**

Since Weston and Finch is a marginalized community, it is even more incumbent upon Councillors to advocate for what's best for the residents - not agree to second-best. Would you allow another 36-Floor tower in your backyard? As you well know, choices that are made today will impact our city in the coming years.