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March 1st, 2021

Planning & Housing Committee
City of Toronto
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

RE : PH21.1 – Support for Modular Supportive Housing & Minister’s Zoning Orders

Chair & Members of the Planning & Housing Committee,

Volunteers from our **HousingNowTO.com** civic-tech and open-data project have closely following the rapid-approval and delivery of the first two MODULAR HOUSING sites that have recently been completed on long-surplus City-owned lands at Harrison (Ward 9) and Macey (Ward 20).

We congratulate the City on delivering both those sites within eight-months of their original-proposals, and providing a total of 100-units of new supportive-housing in existing “stable-neighbourhood” zoned areas via the appropriate use of Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZOs). We look forward to seeing the same speed and scale of delivery on the two new modular-housing sites that now proposed at Cummer (Ward 18) and Trenton (Ward 19).

Many of volunteers are east-enders who also support out-of-the-cold and similar programs on the Danforth. We have seen the ugly and paranoid language being used in some of the East York discussion groups when discussing supportive-housing the site proposed at Trenton and Cedarvale. The fear-mongering you can clearly see in the comments on the [change-dot-org on-line petition](#) that Charlotte (Jenkins) Parnham submitted to your committee are frankly as wrong as they are unsurprising. It is the same kind of language that we have seen from local residents on both of the [previous modular-housing sites](#) in 2020, and every time a new out-of-the-cold program-site tried to [establish itself in a new Church](#) over the last 20+ years.

The City of Toronto has a target of creating 18,000 new supportive-housing units by 2030. We literally need to be creating 2,000 new units like these modular housing sites every single year for the next decade. There is simply no way to deliver on the City’s affordable-housing targets that won’t upset people in every neighbourhood. This is a time that will call for your political leadership to repeatedly do the right thing despite local-protest.

Our volunteers fully support the use of Minister’s Zoning Orders (MZO) on all of the City’s modular-housing and housing now sites, as they are the only way to avoid many Resident’s Association in the City abusing the process to drag-out the approval of new affordable-housing for an additional 2-3 years on every single proposed site by filing a TLAB appeal.

We would also suggest that it is now time for the neighbours around the Trenton site (and all Torontonians) to do a little soul-searching as we approach the one-year anniversary of the COVID-19 lockdowns in Toronto.

We all know there are already homeless encampments in East York, including ones in the parks and ravines near the proposed-site on Trenton. The choice for the Stan Wadlow neighbourhood-groups is not “*do we want people who need supportive-housing in our neighbourhood*” – the choice today is “*would you rather those people be out-of-sight in a tent in your local ravine, or in safe and supportive permanent housing on this parking-lot?*”

Our volunteers are always willing to share open and accurate data on affordable-housing with any City Councillor or community that requires it to help ensure your on-going success in meeting the City of Toronto’s HOUSING 2030 approved targets.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Richardson", with a horizontal line underneath.

Mark J. Richardson
Technical Lead – [HousingNowTO.com](https://www.housingnowto.com)