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**EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MAY 7, 1997**

UDZ-96-39 - METROPOLITAN TORONTO HOUSING COMPANY LTD.
Zoning Amendment Application to permit a 22 unit, 2-3 storey,
townhouse development at an overall density of 0.90 F.S.I.
Location: 175 Cummer Avenue
WARD 11

As directed by the Committee, at its meeting held on April 9, 1997, appropriate notice of this public meeting was forwarded to all concerned.

The Committee had before it a Supplementary Staff Report dated April 30, 1997.

Also before the Committee were written submissions from the following individuals:

1. Teresa Tonini, 107 Cummer Avenue, North York, Ontario, dated April 29, 1997.
2. Maurice Crawford, 949 Willowdale Avenue, North York, Ontario, M2M 3C3, dated April 28, 1997.
3. David Tang, Gowling, Strathy & Henderson, Barristers & Solicitors, Suite 4900, Commerce Court West, Toronto, Ontario, M4L 1J3, on behalf of the applicant, dated April 29, 1997.
3. Brian Noakes, Chair of the Willowdale Manor Tenant Committee, 175 Cummer Avenue, Apt. #311, North York, Ontario, M2M 2E9, dated May 7, 1997.
4. Brian Noakes, Chair of the Willowdale Manor Tenant Committee, 175 Cummer Avenue, Apt. #311, North York, Ontario, M2M 2E9, dated May 1, 1997 (including a petition containing 79 signatures of residents in Willowdale Manor indicating their support for the application)
5. Lizette L Zuniga, The Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company Limited, 20 York Mills Road, 3rd Floor, North York, Ontario, M2P 2C2, dated April 30, 1997.

The following individuals addressed the Committee:

1. MRS. MANSON - 91 CUMMER AVENUE:

Mrs. Manson indicated that she has lived in the area for the past 37 years. She also indicated that none of the residents are in objection to the proposed improvements to Willowdale Manor. However, they were opposed to the proposed townhouse development. The proposed development would have a negative impact on the residents of Willowdale Manor because they would be facing a massive wall. She made reference to some of the statistics produced by Statistics Canada stating that there is an aging population and based on those figures, these lands should be set aside for further expansion to Willowdale Manor and Cummer Lodge. She was also disappointed in the comment she has heard that his application is a "done deal" and hoped that the Committee would take into account the concerns of the residents. She commented on the traffic congestion in the area and pointed out that because of the curvature of Willowdale Avenue at the intersection of Willowdale and Cummer there is a blind spot. This poses a safety hazard not only for motorists but pedestrians as well. In concluding she requested that the rezoning application be refused.

2. MR. GORDON ROSS, 145 SILVERVIEW DRIVE:

Mr. Ross indicated that he had the same concerns as the previous speaker. He also indicated that all levels of Government should recognize that there is an

aging population and that there will be an increased need for seniors housing in the future. He believed that these lands will be needed to expand Willowdale Manor, in order to meet those needs. This location is ideal for seniors housing because it is in close proximity to the public transit system available along Yonge Street.

3. MS. ANNE BROOKE:

Ms. Brooke indicated that she was appalled by this application. She was concerned about the applicant selling this greenspace for further intensification of the site and the precedent it may set for other similar sites. She believed the objective should be to increase the greenspace rather than covering it up with more development.

4. MR. STEVEN FAGYAS - 16 REVCOE DRIVE:

Mr. Fagyas indicated that he has gone through Willowdale Manor and has observed for himself the conditions which those residents have to put up with. He was surprised to find that the Planning Department does not have to look at the need for seniors' housing. In his opinion, the Planning Act does intend planners and Council to take into account the population for which they are planning for. Planners take into account affordable housing and housing for families with children by requiring applicants to provide playground and recreational areas. He believed it was within the mandate of Council to look at the need for seniors' housing. He also requested that an opinion be sought from the City Solicitor on this issue. In his opinion there was also a number of other urban design and transportation issues that were not fully examined. He commented on the traffic congestion on Willowdale Avenue and felt that in light of the current traffic volumes on that street intensification of this site should be looked at more closely. In his opinion these lands provide an excellent opportunity for the City of North York to enhance the existing vistas and streetscape. He concluded by requesting that the application be refused.

5. MS. JOCELYN PHILIP - RESIDENT - WILLOWDALE MANOR - APT. #430:

Ms. Philip indicated that she has been working closely with the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company and Staff to improve the Willowdale Manor building. She was fully supportive of the application as were the 200 residents which she represented. She also wanted to acknowledge all the other individuals from Willowdale Manor that were in attendance.

6. MS. PAULINE COOKE - RESIDENT - WILLOWDALE MANOR:

Ms. Cooke indicated that she supported the project wholeheartedly. The sale of a portion of these lands for the proposed townhouse development will allow the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company to undertake the renovations which are needed at Willowdale Manor. She was looking forward to the new flower garden which would be located on the west side of the property and the other amenities that would be provided. She also wanted to acknowledge the other residents of Willowdale Manor who were in attendance but would not be addressing the Committee.

7. MR. T. SAWYER ON BEHALF OF THE CONCERNED CITIZENS OF NORTH YORK:

Mr. Sawyer indicated that these lands are being sold by a public housing corporation. It was his understanding that it would cost approximately \$400,000.00 to renovate and up-grade certain units in the Willowdale Manor and yet the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company would be getting one million

dollars for the sale of these lands. He therefore wondered what would be done with the remainder of these funds. He also commented on the history related to these lands and indicated that it was decided years ago that the lands in question should remain open space. He also indicated that in light of the fact that the City of North York has 200 million dollars in their reserve fund, they should expend some of those monies to up-grade the units at Willowdale Manor and retain the balance of the lands for open space. This "jewel" in the area can be retained if the rezoning application is refused.

8. MR. WM. WEST, ON BEHALF OF THE SILVERVIEW HOMEOWNERS' ASSOCIATION:

Mr. West indicated that the Silverview Homeowners' Association represents a number of homeowners in that area. This application was reviewed at their annual meeting it was decided at that time that this proposal should not go forward. He commented on the background history related to this site and pointed out that initially these lands were going to be developed with a high-rise building. After considerable negotiations, the building currently known as Willowdale Manor, was approved. In 1995, this site was reviewed once again by Council as a result of renovations taking place at Cummer Lodge and the fact that a mutual driveway exists between Willowdale Manor and Cummer Lodge. The setbacks were reconfirmed and incorporated into the by-law. He further indicated that there is no question that the units in Willowdale Manor must be up-graded. However, these renovations should have occurred long before the cutbacks by the Provincial Government. He also pointed out that the City of North York was able to help Cummer Lodge with funds to complete the renovations in 1975 and there is no reason why the City cannot do the same now. He supported the renovation of the units at Willowdale Manor but not by selling their front lawn. He also enquired whether Metrohome has approached Metro or the Province for funding to fix the units. He commented on Block "J" sold to Metrohome by the City of North York for the nominal sum of \$2.00 and wondered why the sale of these lands was not advertised so that other individuals who wanted to purchase the lands could do so. He concluded by stating that he was not opposed to the residents of Willowdale Manor. He also believed that just because this area was declared to have a surplus of parkland does not mean that the lands in question should be sold.

9. MR. ROBERT SANDLING - RESIDENT ON CUMMER AVENUE:

Mr. Sandling indicated that initially the land currently developed with Willowdale Manor were proposed for a high-rise development. After considerable negotiations it was decided that the lands would be developed with the existing seniors' building and the balance would remain parkland. This was the commitment agreed upon by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company at that time. This application represents a complete reversal of that commitment. He commented on the traffic in the area and pointed out that it reaches grid-lock proportions on Cummer Avenue during rush hours. He was therefore concerned about increased traffic and additional pressure on Cummer Avenue as result of the increased density. He also believed that allowing this density in the middle of an area zoned R4 purely for financial reasons, was wrong.

10. MS. TERESA TONINI - 107 CUMMER AVENUE:

Ms. Tonini indicated that her dwelling fronts onto Willowdale Avenue and is located directly across from the proposed development site. The location of the windows are such that any development on these lands would have a negative impact on her property in terms of loss of privacy and sunlight. She concluded by stating that she was opposed to the application.

11. MR. BRIAN NOAKES - 175 CUMMER AVENUE - APT. #311:

Mr. Noakes indicated that he lives in Willowdale Manor and was Chair of the Willowdale Manor Tenant Committee. He read his communication filed with the Committee on behalf of the residents of Willowdale Manor and pointed out that the residents of Willowdale Manor are proud to be both citizens and voters of North York. They were therefore somewhat dismayed to hear the vehement objections to the rezoning proposal raised by some of their neighbours. In their opinion the proposal would benefit both the residents of Willowdale Manor and the neighbouring residents. They would gain from the sale of the property through building improvements as well as extensive landscaping proposed along the west side of the building. The proposed townhouse complex would enhance the neighbourhood and would generate additional tax revenue for the City of North York. He further indicated that since this project satisfies the Planning Department's objectives and has been recommended for approval with minor changes, they requested that the application be approved without further delay. Concern was also raised by some of the deputants about the loss of green space in front of their building. In their opinion, the proposed improvements to the landscaping on the west side of the building would be useful to all residents at 175 Cummer Avenue. He also pointed out that all residents in this community have use of the ravine and parkland directly to the south of their building as well as Newtonbrook Park. As representative of the residents at Willowdale Manor, many of whom are "senior" senior citizens with mobility problems, he urged the Committee to take into account their views and petition as an expression of support for this proposal. He concluded by stating that the revenue from the sale of the lands will allow the applicant to improve Willowdale Manor and it will replace funding sources that are no longer available.

12. MR. MARVIN SADOWSKI, CHAIRMAN OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS, ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT:

Mr. Sadowski indicated that the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company has given this project long serious consideration before coming to this point. In order to enhance the quality of life and living conditions for the residents at Willowdale Manor, renovations to the units are required. One of the mandates of the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company is to maximize its assets. In their opinion, the addition of 21 townhouse units would not have a detrimental impact on the well-being of the residents. In fact it will improve the well-being of the residents because the units will be up-graded and the landscaping will be enhanced substantially. The proposal will also enhance the neighbourhood. He also pointed out that the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company has over 100 buildings in Metropolitan Toronto and many of these buildings require improvements. They have plans for other buildings in Metro and they are trying to carry out their mandate notwithstanding the cut backs in funding.

13. MR. KARL JAFFARY, SOLICITOR, ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT:

Mr. Jaffary indicated that the applicant has meet all of the standards requested by Staff in terms of transportation and design details. He also indicated that the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company is required to maximize their assets. In his opinion, the land in terms of density is underutilized. In answer to one of the comments made by one of the deputants that this is a "done deal", he stated that it can be considered a done deal in the sense that the proposal meets all of the standards of the City of North York. In his opinion, the proposed development is acceptable and desirable from a planning point of view. The issue on whether these lands should be acquired for parkland is something which the Committee must decide. However, his client would have to receive fair market value for those lands. The fair market value is approximately the amount referred to in the memorandum from the Parks and Recreation Department. He urged the Committee to make a decision and forward the matter to Council. Also, staff can determine whether the lands should be sold for parkland. The objective is that this matter be resolved as quickly as possible. He also stated

that the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company has over 100 buildings in Metropolitan Toronto many of which require renovations. The applicant has never stated that all of the monies received from the sale of these lands would be used for improvements in this community. While some of the funds would be used to renovate the existing Willowdale Manor, the remainder of the funds would be for the capital up-grading of buildings owned by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company.

14. MR. CRAWFORD - 949 WILLOWDALE AVENUE:

Mr. Crawford indicated that in conversations with residents of Willowdale Manor, it was his understanding that many of them believe that the proposed townhouses will ghettoise the area. In addition he believed that the covenants agreed upon by the Metropolitan Toronto Housing Company years ago when Willowdale Manor was approved, should be kept. He believed that the lands in question should be maintained as greenspace. He made reference to Block "J" and believed that allowing this development could be the "thin edge of the wedge". In his opinion, Block "J" should remain vacant. The City could permit the townhouses on the balance of the lands if the Municipality feels it must approve the application. Excluding Block "J" would still allow the applicant sufficient funds to renovate Willowdale Manor. He concluded by stating that he would like to see this remain as open as possible.

15. AN AREA RESIDENT:

This area resident who did not register his name with the Committee indicated that if the City does not approve the rezoning, the fair market value of the lands in question would not be one million dollars which was the figure alluded to by the applicant's representative. He also commented on the traffic congestion in this area and pointed out that the intersection of Cummer Avenue and Willowdale Avenue is a high-accident intersection. He was therefore opposed to any development that would make the situation worse. He also stated that he grew up in Prague which has very little greenspace and he would hate for the City of North York to turn into one of those areas in Prague.

A discussion followed during which time Councillor Filion, the Ward Councillor, indicated that there is no question that everyone supports the renovations to Willowdale Manor and he would be prepared to put as much time as he can to find the money to renovate those units. However, he was not prepared to sell off the greenspace in front of 175 Cummer Avenue. He further indicated that he was able to obtain a copy of the Planning report prepared for this site approximately 30 years ago and it is quite clear in that report that this entire site was being considered for parkland. The compromise that was reached after considerable negotiations was the existing building known as Willowdale Manor. He believed that it was Council's intent at that time that the existing greenspace remain as such. However, Council, at that time, neglected to designate some of the vacant land in various areas of the Municipality as greenspace. In terms of Block "J", Metro purchased the land for a nominal sum of \$2.00 however there was no condition in the agreement of purchase and sale that the lands in question should remain as greenspace. As sympathetic as he is for the renovations to Willowdale Manor, he believed that it was inappropriate to sell the greenspace. The only other possible exception would be if the lands were to be developed with additional seniors' housing. There is an aging population in Willowdale and there is a shortage of sites that have access to public transit. In his opinion, the proposed development is only a short term solution in trying to get funds to renovate the units at Willowdale Manor. He therefore suggested that the application be refused and prior to this matter being considered by Council he would do his utmost to investigate other possibilities in obtaining funding to undertake the renovations at Willowdale Manor.

Motion: It was moved by Councillor Filion that the application be REFUSED.
The voting on the motion was as follows:

FOR:

Filion
Severino
Minnan-Wong

ABSENT:

Feldman
Berger
Flint

The motion was declared by the Chairman to be carried.