

Re: Item 29.8: 36-44 Eglinton West
From: Tom Cohen, chair of Eglinton Park Residents' Association
Date: 4 January, 2022

Dear members of the NYCC

I hope that you are well and that, in this difficult month, you and your families remain so.

I will speak very briefly at NYCC on January 6 concerning item 29.6. I wish to recount the following brief history of EPRA's involvement in the history of this site.

Eglinton Park Residents' Association is based on the nine square blocks east of Eglinton Park and northwest of the Yonge-Eglinton intersection. We have in our zone a very mixed population, with renters and owners in the seven current apartment towers and the one tall co-op, and in two midrise apartments, and in single-family houses, both modest and substantial. Our own board has always had members from a great mix of races, religions, and nationalities, coming from every continent except, so far Australia and of course Antarctica. We are both owners and renters, We strive to represent everybody in our crowded small piece of the city, a microcosm of Toronto.

Some ten years ago, a developer proposed 48 storeys at 36-44 Eglinton West. EPRA was alarmed: the proposed building, on its small site, was twice the height of the tower next door, at 411 Duplex. Accordingly, we appeared before the OMB, as did other citizens' groups. We, and the city, wanted 25 storeys. In the end, the tribunal almost split the difference, awarding the owner 39 (up 14, down 9). Not the best, but a compromise we could live with.

And then, for years, nothing happened, and we, and others, mused that the developer, then in his eighties, had desired to secure permission for a substantial tower, the better to sell the parcel at a good price. so we waited, and watched, for almost a decade.

When Midtown in Focus, the long and careful study, was done, our RA took energetic part, as did so many other citizens, as individuals or members of local organizations. That plan set up good ground rules for orderly development in midtown. And then, in 2018, the present provincial government rewrote that plan, lifting the upper limits and otherwise loosening the controls on countless sites in midtown, this one included, which suddenly went from 39 to 65.

Out the window went the original court decision, and out went all the careful planning. We know, as a citizens' group, that the province has tied our hands, but we still feel indignant at the carelessness here, both with process and with good sense: a super-tall building on a tiny plot, one that, as we heard at the public hearing from the developer's own hired planner, takes a great deal, in sky and light and services, and gives back nothing whatsoever to the public and its realm.

Tom Cohen, chair of EPRA