

City Council**Notice of Motion**

MM7.21	ACTION			Ward: 18
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Reconfiguration and Additional Improvements to the Modular Housing at 175 Cummer Avenue - by Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Councillor James Pasternak

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Planning and Housing Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Lily Cheng, seconded by Councillor James Pasternak, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning to report to the July 19, 20, and 21, 2023 City Council meeting on the feasibility of reconfiguring the modular housing units proposed for 175 Cummer Avenue to:

a. add one to two additional storeys and examine placement of the modular building, while maintaining a similar number of units, in order to reduce the building footprint of the modular building and maximize the green space and tree canopy preserved on the north-east side of the building for the 600+ seniors living on the same property at Willowdale Manor senior's residence and Cummer Lodge senior's long-term care residence; and

b. add additional parking spaces for the modular housing units and examine the feasibility of creating a separate driveway and entrance from Willowdale Avenue for the 175 Cummer Avenue modular supportive housing units

such report to include

c. a calculation of the cost of reconfiguring the modular units;

d. a financing plan for the cost of reconfiguring the modular units;

e. any delays that would be associated with the revised proposal; and

f. any impacts of the reconfiguration on the current appeal of Zoning By-law 818-2022, regarding 175 Cummer Avenue.

2. City Council request the General Manager Parks Forestry and Recreation, should the reconfiguration of the modular supportive housing project contemplated in Recommendation 1 be possible, to report on adding lawn furniture around the trees that are retained in close proximity to the front door of Willowdale Manor using Section 37 funds.

3. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, in consultation with the Medical Officer of Health, and the General Manager, Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, to explore the feasibility of establishing the modular supportive housing project at 175 Cummer Avenue as an abstinence-only facility, as recommended by the Wellesley Institute, including the number of seniors who would be interested and challenges of operating such a facility and report back by the end of the third quarter of 2023 or earlier if possible.

4. City Council direct that the modular supportive housing at 175 Cummer Avenue be for seniors 59 years of age and older in need of supports who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and not include safe or supervised injection services, and request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to delay issuing a Request for Proposal for an appropriate modular supportive housing service provider until after City Council has considered the report requested in Recommendation 3.

5. City Council request the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to form a multilingual Community Liaison Committee in the third quarter of 2023 composed of seniors from Willowdale Manor, staff from Cummer Lodge, representatives from the neighbourhood, including Mandarin, Farsi and Russian speakers, and the local councillor, to meet on a regular basis to determine community benefits, address concerns and shape the outcome of the implementation of the modular housing project.

6. City Council direct that no construction of the modular supportive housing project at 175 Cummer Avenue take place until after the Community Liaison Committee is formed and the feasibility reports requested in Recommendation 1 and 3 have been considered by City Council.

Summary

The proposed modular supportive housing for 175 Cummer Avenue is currently awaiting an Ontario Land Tribunal hearing while the units sit in storage in Owen Sound at a current rate of \$77,000 per month. The seniors and surrounding community are anxious to settle the matter sooner than later. During the process of proposing this site, serious gaps occurred, most importantly - a lack of listening and consideration for the 600+ seniors who currently reside on the same property. Therefore, the design and site plan were created without consideration of those most impacted by this decision. Further, the units were ordered without the zoning being firm - resulting in the current situation. This Motion addresses some of their main concerns and provides a way forward. We have commitment from the Bayview Cummer Neighbourhood Association that they will drop the appeal if this Motion is passed. This would create the fastest path to implement the stored units and create housing in a way that is harmonious with the surrounding community. Below are the primary concerns of the seniors which are being addressed by this Motion:

1. The greenspace is cherished by the seniors. In conversation after conversation with the seniors at Willowdale Manor they all describe the importance of the green space in the front of the building with old growth trees. Currently the site plan places the 59-unit building right in the middle of this green space. The seniors live in relatively small units, many of whom have mobility challenges. They cannot easily access other options for outdoor space.

2. The seniors do not feel their voices have been heard. Because of lack of accessible consultation in this process, there has been a significant breakdown in trust in the City. Toronto Community Housing Corporation has also proposed AODA renovations to take away their stage (used regularly for programming) and front seating area which are also

important amenities to them. The creation of a Community Liaison Committee that continually checks in on their needs and allows them to speak into the process of implementation is critical for the success of this project.

3. The seniors currently do not have enough parking for themselves or their guests. Many park illegally in fire routes because of the lack of parking. Currently the site plan for the project does not include adding parking, instead it takes three spots away from the seniors and assigns them to staff of the modular supportive housing. A respectful implementation should consider the needs of the current residents.

4. The land was meant for seniors. Although we no longer zone for people, we do create communities around certain demographics in order to best deliver services and create increased opportunities for social connection. We do this especially for seniors which is why there are retirement homes, seniors social housing and long term care. Because this land is already inhabited by 600+ seniors, it makes sense to extend the use and intention of this space to additional seniors. In 1997 there was a proposal for development on the land that was vigorously opposed by Councillor John Filion who stated his wish that any future development should be limited to seniors.

5. Create a sense of stability while diversifying supportive housing options. The Wellesley Institute published a paper "Toronto Supportive Housing Growth Plan: Needs Assessment" that stated that more diversity is needed in our approach to Supportive Housing. One suggestion was to include abstinence-only housing as a choice. Given the fears and vulnerabilities of the residents currently living at 175 Cummer Avenue, an abstinence-only version of supportive housing would reduce the stress of unknown factors on the current residents.

6. Quote from the Wellesley Institute:

"So within Housing First...there's lots of different ways of looking at the core principles... But all of them highlight the importance of choice and no preconditions...And choice is a complicated thing. So if you take a harm reduction approach to supportive housing, that should mean that there's different ways that you can do that. So a harm reduction approach doesn't exclude the possibility of abstinence-only housing. Because if it's truly choice driven, there are some people for whom their ability to manage their substance use means that they need to be away from other users. But others may want something else-- So I think starting from the client outward is the way to think about...what do people need? ...Having said that, there's a huge undersupply [of housing], and so at the same time we have to build up supply. But I think in doing that, [we need] to be thoughtful-- and not just stamp out a one size fits all kinds of approach."

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM7.21