



**MORE NEIGHBOURS
TORONTO**

Dear Members of Toronto City Council,

RE: MM 7.21 - Reconfiguration and Additional Improvements to the Modular Housing at 175 Cummer Avenue

About More Neighbours Toronto

[More Neighbours Toronto](#) is a volunteer-only organization of housing advocates that believe in building more multi-family homes of all kinds for those who dream of building their lives in Toronto. We advocate for reforms to increase our city's ability to build more homes in every neighbourhood. We are a big-tent organization with members across the political spectrum who are committed to counterbalancing the anti-housing agenda that has dominated Toronto's politics, created an affordability crisis, and cost burdened a new generation of aspiring residents. We are firmly committed to the principle that housing is a human right and believe Toronto should be inclusive and welcoming to all.

Position

More Neighbours Toronto urges City Council to vote against Councillor Cheng's motion to once again delay the modular housing at 175 Cummer Ave.

The City showed great leadership when it voted to approve the rezoning needed to provide permanent, supportive housing for those who need it most. More Neighbours volunteers were among the supporters at the [April 4, 2022 community consultation](#), and supported this project both via [written communication on PH 31.13](#) and [in-person deputation on PH33.3](#). Reconfiguration at this stage would mean abandoning the existing 59 homes, which have already been built and are sitting in storage, adding huge costs and risking further delays.

As Councillor Cheng has noted many times, the City has a budget crisis. Her incisive questions during the budget process confirmed that supportive housing is the most cost-effective method for addressing homelessness. These homes that should be in place at 175 Cummer Ave. are sitting in storage in Owen Sound at a cost of \$77,000 per month, despite a plan that would allow them to help with an increasingly pressing need in Toronto should the provincial Ministerial Zoning Order materialise or the OLT appeal allow it.

There has also been strong support for the existing plan. Although the City moved with great urgency on the rezoning, they still undertook extensive engagement in 2021-2022, with four virtual public meetings in addition to in-person engagement in the local community and at the neighbouring seniors' residence. One resident of Willowdale Manor travelled in person to the [April 27, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee](#) to applaud the City for the way it had addressed neighbours' concerns, including with building modifications; he also condemned the disinformation that was being spread by local groups and politicians.

More Neighbours heard strong support from many in the local community. It is unfortunate that a few residents do not see the advantage of new supportive homes in Willowdale, but ultimately it may not be possible to satisfy everyone and Council needs to show leadership both in acknowledging the limits of engagement to satisfy a small group of individuals, and in moving forward with serious and meaningful action to address homelessness. It is also unfortunate that these few residents are asking that addiction treatment on-site be abstinence-only, which has not been proven effective and which goes against evidence-based, contemporary addiction cessation practices based on the principle of harm reduction.

Many councillors have already seen the success of modular supportive housing in their own wards. This success relied on the experience of City-selected service providers to determine the supports needed rather than dictating what services should be available. We need to scale this work up by replicating that success in more parts of the city. The only thing that separates 175 Cummer from 111 Macey, or 540 Cedarvale, or 321 Dovercourt, is the politicization of this site by multiple levels of government.

Please vote against Councillor Cheng's motion in order to keep 175 Cummer Ave. on track for the fastest implementation that the province will allow.

Regards,

Colleen Bailey
Alena Parkinson

More Neighbours Toronto