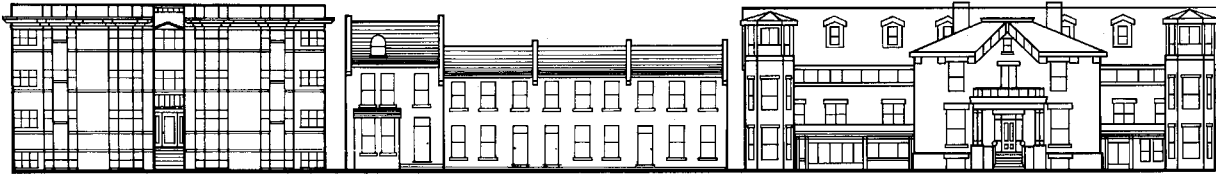


CHURCH ISABELLA RESIDENTS CO-OPERATIVE INC.



TE6.22 - 88 Isabella Street - Zoning By-law Amendment and Rental Housing Demolition Applications

June 20, 2023

Cathrine Regan
Administrator
Toronto and East York Community Council
100 Queen St. W., 2nd Floor
West Tower
Toronto ON M5H 2N2

Ms. Regan and Councillors,

The Church Isabella Residents Co-operative, which I represent, is totally opposed to this development for six reasons - undermines the character and identity of the neighbourhood, excessive height, affordability, traffic congestion on Isabella, excessive use of Al Sparrow Lane and impact on existing buildings.

I sit on the Board of Directors and I am the treasurer. I have lived in my co-op for 43 years. This is my home. Our co-op consists of a three-storey walk-up built in 1917, red brick row houses built in 1867, and the historic Paul Kane House, with a four-story walk-up attached to it. Two of these buildings are situated directly west of the proposed development. Our co-op is part of the Church-Wellesley Neighbourhood, and we are part of the locality officially designated as "The Village."

1. Undermine the character and identity of the neighbourhood

The proposed 62-storey building is totally out of character with our Village neighbourhood. We are deeply concerned that such a gigantic building would significantly change the unique character of our Village community and lead to the demise of our neighbourhood's distinct identity. As can be seen by the developer's choice of comparable properties.

This community has long been typified by human scale shops, individual homes, plus walk-ups and mid-rise apartment buildings on the residential side, and shops and cafes on the retail side. One need only to look at the phalanx of hard glass and metal condos currently constructed on Charles Street to understand that such densities can render our community as unrecognizable and unwelcoming, negatively affecting the quality of life for those who live here.

2. Excessive height

There is no justification for the destruction of this building and replacing it with a much higher building other than all the new buildings in the neighbourhood are taller though not nearly as tall as this will be. The current zoning is for 30 meters, that is, 13 stories. It is ludicrous to propose that a 62-storey building be dumped onto a

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street whose tallest building is, at present, 13 stories. We fear height creep. In fact, the Planning Department is right now examining a proposal for a 69-storey building right next to this proposed 62-storey condo. Approving this proposal could open the floodgates for even taller buildings. What's next? 78 stories like 1 Bloor E.? Or 85 stories, like 1 Bloor W.? This is not Yonge and Bloor. We are talking about Church and Isabella!

Two goals of the Church Wellesley Neighbourhood Association are:

- protect our open sky and keep our green space free from shadow;
- preserve all low-rise blocks on our streets.

Is it unreasonable to entertain a more modest, lower development at 88 Isabella that is in keeping with the distinct character of our neighbourhood?

Yes, the Ford government has mandated that more housing be constructed near subway stations. And yes, 88 Isabella is several blocks from the Bloor-Yonge subway station. All of the buildings that are nearby – behind the proposed building to the east and west and further west along Isabella are all less than 20 stories. The new buildings on the north side of Wellesley, which are even closer to the subway than this property, are less than 40 stories.

But a proposal has been submitted for 570 Church St., for an 18-storey building. This is just north of Wellesley St. E. Another has been approved for the northwest corner of Church St. and Wellesley St. E. for 39 stories. Both are just one block from the Wellesley subway station.

- **88 Isabella, 62 stories, three blocks** from the Yonge-Bloor subway station, and **four blocks** to the Wellesley subway station

The point is that at 62 stories, the 88 Isabella development is substantially higher than those constructed and others proposed that are significantly closer to the subway stations than is the 88 Isabella development.

3. Affordability

The proposal does envision a replacement agreement which does mean that once the current tenants return the units will be affordable. They will not be as affordable as they would be if the building were left standing under rent control.

This project does not create one new unit of affordable housing.

4. Traffic congestion

Isabella Street is a narrow street. It is already congested, particularly in the afternoon rush hours, as a through way for commuters exiting the city using Mt. Pleasant and the Don Valley Parkway. The street is often clogged, the entire length Yonge to Jarvis. As well it can be congested with parcel and mail services, ride-hail vehicles, and food deliveries. Again, witness Charles Street, with its constant traffic congestion at all hours of day and night. We don't need MORE congestion.

5. The Al Sparrow Lane separates our co-op from the proposed development.

The laneway is already congested with cars taking shortcuts, garbage and recycling trucks, service vehicles, and delivery vans. Three apartment buildings have their garbage picked up off the lane. We fear enormous strain on the laneway, as well as damage to our Victorian and Edwardian buildings from the increased heavy use of this narrow lane.

We appreciate that that the developer has redesigned the building so that access to services and underground parking are from the north and not off the lane but that does not take away from the fact that traffic in the lane

will increase dramatically because currently tenants have access to the underground parking from access on the property and do not use the lane.

6. We fear damage to the foundations of our buildings, which still have their original foundations, built on sand. This makes them vulnerable to extreme vibrations, both continuous and pounding. The water table here is high. At 62 stories, the depth to which the developer must excavate to sink his concrete piles to support his building will displace water to surrounding properties. We fear flooding and damage our foundations and similar three story walk ups at 96 Isabella and on the south side of Isabella.

Our buildings are a vital part of the character of our neighbourhood, and they need to be protected from this development, occurring mere feet from us.

In Summary

We at Church Isabella Residents Co-operative want to make it clear that we do not oppose development, but we do **oppose THIS development** as excessive in the extreme. We recognize the need for more affordable housing in Toronto, but this development does nothing to increase the supply of moderately priced housing.

The Church and Wellesley neighbourhood is a unique, vibrant, diverse community. We believe that this proposal will detract from its character and charm, and it could damage our historical co-op homes, which are a vital aspect of Toronto's heritage. It will significantly diminish, not enhance, the lived experience of those who elected you to be their voice. We urge you reject the proposed zoning by-law and this proposal.



N. Donald E. Altman

For the Church Isabella Residents Co-operative Inc.

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