

Watch my deputation at TEYCC Meeting April 3rd 2024 here:

<https://youtu.be/RIFxpnNfuwg?t=9064>

Dear Councillor Saxe, Mayor Chow, and Councillors,

I am writing to you as a concerned resident of the community regarding the proposed development at 171-175 Lowther Avenue and Dalton Road. As someone who resides in affordable, multiplex, rent-controlled housing at 34 Dalton Road, I urge you to **refuse the current proposal, which includes Official Plan [OP] redesignation and a Zoning By-law Amendment.**

Having grown up in cul-de-sacs and sprawling highways before moving back to Toronto, I recognize that the need for transit-oriented development is critical to connect people to the urban fabric of our city. Most young adults I know live in multiplex situations for affordable, rent-controlled, and high quality of life that co-living offers. This includes the three surrounding multiplexes and multi-tenant houses directly adjacent to my house. Low-rise housing and dense communities are complimentary.

The development at 425 Bloor Street serves as a positive example of transit-oriented development that respects existing communities. The compatible Mixed-Use OP land-use designation and abutting arterial road of this proposal will offer a variety of retail, public realm, and institutional opportunities without displacing any existing affordable housing units. It demonstrates that development can be both progressive and inclusive, benefiting all residents of our city.

Now compare this to 171-175 Lowther Ave. and Dalton Road. The city planning report claims that "the proposed redesignation would permit the development of an apartment building" which "**is compatible** with the Neighbourhood Designation **south and west**" without offering supporting evidence of this compatibility, while thoroughly describing the compatibility to the north east Walmer Road Apartment Neighbourhood designation.

City staff have rejected the claim that this OP amendment would set a precedent for other sites. Yet the planning report recommends a Neighbourhood redesignation by justifying that a precedent has already been set by the neighboring buildings on Walmer

Road. City staff additionally have noted that they have "100 more proposals like this one". So either this sets the precedent, or the precedent has already been set. Either way, it is evident that developers are eyeing similar properties for redevelopment, putting affordable housing in Neighbourhood-designated sites at risk if they can so easily be amended at council (we heard as much at the TEYCC April 3 meeting from Walter Weigel's deputation).

Louis Reznick's (the applicant) newly stated commitment to purpose-built rentals rings hollow when it is made clear that **affordable, rent-controlled homes are up for grabs to convert into apartment buildings with no affordable units**. These rentals will come at a price tag that no one in my situation will be able to pay. I want to stress that not all housing is created equal; this housing is exclusive and unattainable.

Over the past two years, too many of my friends and colleagues have faced eviction and demoviction, a trend that will only worsen if proposals like this are approved. While rental replacement programs exist, they only serve to **transition tenants to market-rate housing** [for buildings 6 units and under], **leaving low-income renters like myself priced out of the city**. This is nothing short of gentrification, pushing out those who can least afford it.

The original 2022 4.5-storey proposal of 171-175 Lowther Ave. retained the three heritage homes and developed an infill property of 22 units. Already having gone through a period of 7% dwelling growth from 2011-2021 (<https://censusmapper.ca/#17/43.66627/-79.40645>) and 40% higher density than the citywide average in other Neighbourhood designated sites (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2021/ph/bgrd/backgroundfile-173165.pdf>), the west block of Dalton Road until Brunswick Avenue **surpasses the density minimums even when considered as a part of PMTSA**. The infill units would have additionally increased density, while respecting the site context and avoiding adverse impacts on the surrounding properties. And most importantly, it would have retained the commitment to the Official Plan that allows myself and the thousands of other low-income renters to continue to live in the city.

In conclusion, I **urge you to prioritize the needs of existing and future residents and reject the current proposal.** We need development that respects the fabric of our community and ensures affordable housing for all. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Rebecca Arshawsky  
34 Dalton Road

*Please add my comments and letter to the agenda for the April 17, 2024 Toronto City Council meeting on item 2024.TE12.5, 171-175 Lowther Avenue - Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Application - Decision Report - Approval*

*I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.*