



November 30th, 2024

To: Etobicoke York Community Council
Attention: Councillor Amber Morley

No Demovictions' comments for Item EY18.6 - 4875 Dundas Street West - Official Plan Amendment and Zoning By-law Amendment Application

We are writing to you today *to strongly urge you to vote to deny item EY18.6*, which would demolish the 56 purpose-built rental units at 4875 Dundas Street West and displace tenants amidst an affordable housing crisis.

We have been in contact with the tenants at this building, and support them in asking for this application to be denied at the Etobicoke York Community Council—an application that only stands to benefit the developer, Forest Gate, at the expense of the tenants.

Demolition and redevelopment applications like this one are often approved at Community Councils across Toronto because they theoretically increase the supply of housing on the land. In practice, these developments are part of the worsening problem of land speculation by developers—where affordable housing is destroyed in favour of the promise of more housing, which is supposed to eventually lead to lower housing prices across the market.

Even though this development proposes to build 488 units, 432 of them will be market condominiums. According to Statistics Canada, investors bought 37,580 of the newly constructed condominiums in Toronto between 2016-2021, accounting for 56.7% of new builds. These projects are not about building more housing for people and families, they are about increasing the return on investment for a select few.

The exact type of housing we need in the middle of an affordability crisis is being demolished at sites like 4875 Dundas Street West, and are being replaced by expensive condominiums that are being bought by investors and sold back to tenants at a premium without rent control. The only beneficiary of this development is the developer who will sell the new units, and the investors who will purchase them.

If we care about preserving the limited supply of purpose-built rental buildings in this city, we would not allow applications like this to be approved; because after 20 years, the 56 rental replacement units at 4875 Dundas Street West can be turned into market units by the landlord.



As a tenant coalition, we are not against development. We fundamentally support building dense housing—but not at the cost of displacing vulnerable tenants into the middle of a housing crisis where the vacancy rate in Toronto currently sits at [1-1.2%](#).

A healthy vacancy rate, according to the CMHC, is above 3%. Removing dense housing from the market for 3-5 years, which is serving the needs of the people who live in it, is going to pressure tenants into making difficult decisions in a competitive housing market, including being forced to:

- Leave Toronto to find housing they can actually afford; leaving their support systems, livelihood, and local community behind
- Spend more of their personal income on rent just for the privilege of staying in their neighbourhood, allocating less money towards food and other basic necessities
- Rent an apartment with no rent control, with the potential of moving multiple times during their time of displacement due to annual rent increases that rent gap payments do not cover
- Sleep rough or stay with friends or family, during a time where various levels of government are moving towards criminalizing homelessness

These examples are not anecdotal, but represent the reality that many of the displaced tenants we have worked with face.

In addition to the hardships associated with being displaced, the landlord, Forest Gate, has been engaging in unethical management practices, including not adequately cleaning or maintaining the existing units or building. This is a manipulative tactic used by landlords to drive tenants out of their units, thereby reducing the number of pre-application tenants who the landlord would be required to compensate through rent gap payments and moving costs. All tenants deserve to be treated with dignity throughout the duration of their tenancy, and landlords who engage in this behaviour should not be allowed to serve no-fault evictions.

I want to be clear that we are deeply familiar with the City of Toronto's Rental Replacement by-laws, and do not believe (through our own lived experiences) that they meaningfully address the concerns being outlined by tenants at this, or any site.

I have to be honest: I am tired. Tired of writing letters that no one reads. Tired of seeing application after application for the demolition of affordable rental buildings be approved by City Councillors who will never experience the suffering that their decisions will cause tenants.

We urge you to be the first Community Council to vote to deny a demoviction application in Toronto. It is a vital first step in opposing developments that do not serve to benefit the broader community or improve affordability. We also ask you to meaningfully engage and work with the



tenants at this site, consulting with them on more than one occasion to ensure the long-term stability of their tenancy at this site. It should be a vital part of the process in any proposed development that impacts people's homes.

And because there is currently no meaningful enforcement in the demoviction process, the unfortunate outcomes that we outlined above are not being tracked, recorded, or followed-up on to ensure that harm to tenants is being mitigated. We have also seen numerous tenants, at various stages of the demoviction process, have their rent gap payments withheld, be forced to sign new leases with different terms by their landlord upon returning, and have their Section 111 agreements be outright violated. **And if you do not have a sympathetic City Councillor or City Planner with capacity to support you, there is no recourse for these tenants.**

Please deny this application, meaningfully engage and work with the tenants at this site, and contact us nodemovictionsontario@gmail.com to further discuss how we can work together to ensure that developers can no longer engage in these predatory practices, building a City that is accessible and equitable for all.

Sincerely,

The No Demovictions Team