



April 5th 2024.

Ms. Olivia Chow
Mayor
Toronto City Hall
100 Queen St. W.
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
mayor_chow@toronto.ca

RE: Deputation to the Planning and Housing Committee: Ensuring Equitable Tenant Representation in TCHC's Tenant Advisory Committee

Dear Mayor Olivia Chow and Esteemed Members of City Council and the Planning and Housing Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of Neighbourhood Pods TO (NPTO), a consortium of grassroots organizations, community workers, and advocates united by the mission to enhance the economic livelihoods and overall well-being of low-income individuals and communities across Toronto. Formed in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic through a city-funded Mutual Aid Project, NPTO embodies a network dedicated to resident-led and community-focused programs and initiatives.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit this deputation focused on agenda item PH11.7 - Progress Update on Toronto Community Housing Corporation's (TCHC) Tenant Advisory Committee, as outlined in the report from the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, dated March 15, 2024, and the accompanying Terms of Reference.

After reviewing the provided documents and considering the critical role of the Tenant Advisory Committee in shaping the future of tenant engagement within TCHC, we wish to emphasize the importance of adopting an equitable and fair approach to the engagement and selection of TCHC tenants to serve on the Committee.

Equity and Fair Representation:

It is paramount that the process for selecting tenant representatives on the Tenant Advisory Committee be rooted in principles of equity and fairness. The current approach, which sees the landlord (TCHC) and its owner, the City of Toronto, selecting tenants, raises concerns regarding the potential for bias and the undermining of genuine tenant representation. To truly reflect the diverse voices within TCHC communities encompassing a broad range of ethno-racial backgrounds, languages, abilities, genders, sexual identities, and socio-economic statuses, it is essential that tenants themselves have a significant role in selecting their representatives.

Recommendation for Tenant Selection Process:

We strongly recommend that a more democratic process be implemented, allowing TCHC tenants to elect their representatives to the Tenant Advisory Committee. Such a process would not only align with TCHC's vision for fostering vibrant communities through diverse and inclusive engagement methods but also ensure that all tenants have a voice in decision-making processes that impact their housing and communities.

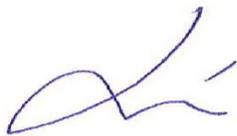
Challenges and Moving Forward:

The challenges encountered in 2023, including issues related to attendance and membership changes, highlight the need for a robust and transparent selection process. As the committee seeks to fill vacancies and adjust its operations, now is the opportune time to revisit and revise the selection process to ensure it is as equitable and representative as possible.

In conclusion, NPTO stands ready to support TCHC, the City of Toronto, and the Planning and Housing Committee in developing and implementing a more equitable and democratic tenant representation model. We believe that by working together, we can build a Tenant Advisory Committee that truly embodies the diverse and vibrant spirit of Toronto's communities, ultimately leading to more effective and impactful tenant engagement.

Thank you for considering our deputation. We look forward to the opportunity to collaborate on this important matter and are hopeful for positive changes that respect and empower TCHC tenants.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Walied Khogali Ali', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Walied Khogali Ali

Coordinator

Neighbourhood Pods TO (NPTO)

The Neighbourhood Pods TO (NPTO) embodies a consortium of grassroots organizations, community workers, and advocates, all rallying under a unified mission to bolster the economic livelihoods and enhance the overall well-being of low-income individuals and communities across Toronto.