

BEECH HALL HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE INCORPORATED

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June 12, 2024

Toronto City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M5H 2N2

Attention: Nancy Martins, Planning and Housing Committee
Administrator

**Re: PH13.9 – Renewal of Beech Hall Housing Co-operative Lease -
Community Housing Sector Modernization and Growth Strategy**

Dear Members of the Planning and Housing Committee:

“I think seniors have got a lot of fight in them, regardless of their age, you know we’ve all got years of experience and we’ve got a lot of knowledge, which probably hasn’t been put to the test, till it comes to something like this and we know exactly what we can do. And if we go about it the right way, with the help from supporters, well I think we could almost do anything”. Former resident of Beech Hall from the 1980 “Battle of Beech Hall” documentary.

Beech Hall Housing Co-operative was founded in 1979 with the sole purpose of providing 127 secure bachelor and one-bed room affordable homes to low-income senior residents in the community of Mount Dennis.

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Forty-five years ago our modest and municipally owned affordable homes were threatened and slated to be sold and demolished by the Borough of York (now part of the amalgamated City of Toronto). It was a very bad idea and very poorly thought out. In response we organized: senior residents at Beech Hall, local residents, our local Alderman John Nunziata and the Co-operative Housing Federation of Toronto. We all fought back, and we saved all seventeen buildings and all one-hundred and twenty-seven homes at Beech Hall by creating the first senior's housing co-operative in Canada.

January 4, 1980 was a historic moment, as the Co-operative signed a forty-five year lease with the Borough of York, and we took community control of our homes. A lot has happened in the past forty-five years, but we believe we have more than ably demonstrated our ability and determination to successfully operate Beech Hall as a shining example of the power and potential of seniors working together in delivering non-profit co-operative housing.

Today, June 13, 2024 is also a historic moment. The Community Housing Sector Modernization and Growth Strategy report provides the blueprint for the city to re-affirm its long-term commitment to community housing, and more specifically, the report provides a framework to negotiate a new lease and a proposed service agreement with the Co-operative. At the same time the recommendations in the report recognize our unique governance model and senior's mandate.

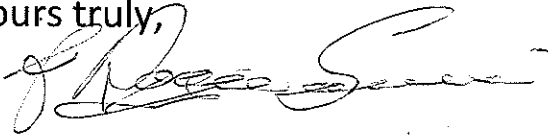
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On behalf of the residents of the Co-operative, the Board wishes to thank Councillor Frances Nunziata for her ongoing support and encouragement. Without her help we would not be where we are today. We applaud city staff for your ongoing work and support, and we look forward to working with the city to negotiate the new lease and proposed service agreement.

We urge the members of the Planning and Housing Committee to approve the report recommendations before you today and forward the item to City Council for final approval at the upcoming meeting on June 26, 27 and 28.

Yours truly,



Roger Sauve
President

Beech Hall Housing Co-operative

