



neighbourhood pods TO

July 8th, 2024.

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

RE: Deputation on the Proposed Development at 191-201 Sherbourne Street by Fitzrovia

Dear Mayor Olivia Chow and Members of the Toronto and East York Community Council,

I write to you on behalf of Neighbourhood Pods TO (NPTO), a collective of grassroots organizations, community workers, and advocates committed to securing affordable housing and promoting responsible development in our communities.

NPTO supports the requests outlined by the residents of 191 and 201 Sherbourne Street, also known as Sherbourne Estates through their letter dated June 28, 2024, to express our deep concerns regarding the proposed development by Fitzrovia, a for-profit rental developer, at the aforementioned address.

Our community is highly concerned about the potential conflicts of interest that may arise from the involvement of Councillor Chris Moise, who chairs the Toronto and East York Community Council and has received significant campaign contributions from Fitzrovia. According to the news article "Could a Campaign Donation Benefit a Developer?" by The Bridge News, there is an inquiry into whether campaign donations could influence the approval of such developments. We respectfully request that Councillor Moise recuse himself from the consideration of item TE15.9 to avoid any perception of bias or conflict of interest, as stipulated in Chapter 192 of the Public Service, Toronto Municipal Code, specifically the Conflict of Interest clause.

The residents of Sherbourne Estates have a long-standing connection to this community, with some having lived there for over 15 years. They have witnessed significant changes in the neighborhood and feel uniquely positioned to offer an important perspective on this proposal.

Key Concerns and Points for Consideration:

1. Overdevelopment and Zoning Violations: The revised proposal still represents a significant overreach, necessitating major zoning and other exemptions. Without substantial downsizing and modification, this proposal should be rejected as detrimental to the neighborhood, its residents, and broader city-building principles.

2. Affordable Housing: While more rental housing is needed, the proposed non-conforming and outsized towers fail to address real rental housing needs, particularly in terms of affordability. The proposal does not provide sufficient affordable housing to meet the community's needs.

3. Community Impact: The extreme densification proposed will exacerbate the existing pressures in the area, particularly in terms of affordability and social infrastructure. Moss Park is already experiencing significant developmental and speculative pressures, and this project would only intensify these issues.

4. Negative Social and Economic Effects: The proposal would likely contribute to an upward spiral in rents, increasing unaffordability and displacing long-term residents. The addition of premium rental units would do little to alleviate the chronic homelessness and social issues in the area.

5. Lack of True Community Benefits: The proposed community benefits, such as the small park and landscaping efforts, are inadequate and fail to offset the significant concessions being sought. The proposal lacks a genuine commitment to the broader social responsibilities and needs of the neighborhood.

6. Environmental and Heritage Concerns: The proposed development would destroy existing green spaces, negatively impact local ecology, and pose a threat to migratory birds. Additionally, there are concerns about the preservation of heritage artwork on the property.

7. Ongoing Disruption and Poor Management: The current and proposed construction activities have caused and will continue to cause significant disruption to residents. The proponent's management practices have often been inadequate, and there are serious concerns about compliance with the Ontario Disabilities Act and the Residential Tenancies Act.

In conclusion, this proposal seems calculated to benefit the developer with little regard for city residents. We urge city planners and council members to enforce zoning and bylaw variations strictly and to prioritize developments that genuinely address the housing affordability crisis while maintaining the social and economic health of the city. There are preferable alternatives that the city should insist the proponent explore.

We also acknowledge the efforts of the following Moss Park residents for their advocacy: Alan Solman, Amir Ghorbani Pour, Audi Etoffe, Brian Dust, Carolyn Rock, Chris Syu, Colin Perkel, David Jubinville, Emilia Mahdian, Jason Fulmer, Jennifer Kerwood, Jerome Major, Jessica Clausen, June Yates, Justin Bain, Kim Rabjohn, Liam Marecak, Madison Rose, Manny Pillai, Mashayla Ritchie, Nic Melder, Pat Perkel, Saarang Ahuja, Samia Saad, Summer Jones-Fielding, and Colin Perkel.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to a constructive discussion on July 10th and urge you to consider the long-term impact of this development on our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Walied Khogali Ali', written in a cursive style.

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.