

January 28, 2025

Dear Executive Committee,

With regard to item 2025.EX20.13 and the proposed motion “Toward Municipal Autonomy and Effective Local Governance”, by Councillor Josh Matlow and Councillor Jamaal Myers, we share a few relevant Annex events that may affect your vote.

In early 2024, residents on Dalton Road and nearby became belatedly aware of a developer’s application to allow a 40m tall apartment building right next to two-storey dwellings in a supposedly stable residential area. Residents’ concerns were raised during a brief public meeting in late December 2023, and at an ARA meeting in early 2024, though were unheeded by our Councillor, who later blamed the Province of Ontario for imposing financial sanctions on applications that were not processed within the province’s prescribed period of time. Although our councillor did arrange for “after-the-fact” community meetings, she later informed us it was all “too late”.

The 171-175 Lowther (and Dalton) Development application for an Official Plan Amendment and Rezoning from “Neighbourhood” to “Apartment Neighbourhood” was approved by City Council in April, 2024. This despite the protestations of the Dalton Road Residents Group, the Annex Residents’ Association’s “Planning and Development” committee, FONTRA, and FOSTRA. Subsequently, in May 2024, the Dalton Road Residents’ Association and another concerned citizen filed appeals with the Ontario Land Tribunal (OLT). In June 2024, that right of appeal was stripped from us retroactively by the province’s new legislation – Bill 185.

Although we don’t think the Province was the only accountable party here, we do see the provincial government’s threats of deadlines and

finances to be imposed on Toronto City Council as a significant part of the reason this application was rushed through by Planners and Council, without adequate community consultation. What is indisputable is that our appeals were retroactively and undemocratically terminated at the provincial level, due to the pre-summer legislation of Bill 185. Thus, the province has effectively stifled its citizens' voices.

Despite the challenges imposed on us by the municipal and provincial entities, we remain committed residents of the Annex and Toronto. We support densification with further emphasis on "middle density" – the kind of gentle density both Province and City say they strive for. We maintain our interest in addressing the housing crisis and other collective needs in a thoughtful and progressive way that supports both the current and future residents of our community and the greater GTA.

We believe a task force on *Municipal Autonomy and Effective Local Governance* could allow Toronto citizens and City Council to see both the merits and concerns around the formation of a more autonomous City. Such a plan could illuminate the current provincial government's bullying and undemocratic pronouncements, and allow our City Councillors and Planners to make more thoughtful, community-informed decisions.

We support Councillors Matlow and Myers in their pursuit of further research around a new arrangement with senior levels of government that would ensure Toronto has the independence necessary to better support current and future residents of Canada's largest city.

Sincerely,

Terri Hawkes

On behalf of *Dalton Road Residents Group*

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