

From: [BIA - Albion Islington Square](#)
To: [Planning and Housing](#)
Cc: agnecassociation@gmail.com
Subject: [External Sender] My comments for 2025.PH20.1 on April 10, 2025 Planning and Housing Committee
Date: April 9, 2025 11:45:25 AM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the April 10, 2025 Planning and Housing Committee meeting on item 2025.PH20.1, 7-9 Wardlaw Crescent - City-Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment - Decision Report - Approval

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

To: Planning and Housing Committee

CC: BIA Board Members, Member Businesses

Subject: Direct impact and dissent amongst the business community at Albion and Islington regarding the Wardlaw Affordable Housing project

The businesses at Albion and Islington are a community collective made up of ethnic restaurants, clothing outlets, and **Ontario's highest concentration of 22/24K jewelry stores** in one business district. Facing a serious succession planning issue, most businesses run by seniors – late adults, have no-one to pass the baton to. With most businesses belonging to a marginalized and transient population, the area has been struggling with its own set of problems with crime, and cleanliness.

The new proposed home at Wardlaw Cres., pending its approval, will usher new challenges to the local business community – already surviving severe consequences of the failing economic climate, and a steady problem with crime.

It is easy to forecast how the new housing project might not add to the existing problems at all, but at the same time, if there is even the slightest possibility that the housing ready to bring in seniors, young

adults, and refugees; might add to some of the already pertinent problems – **the whole thing needs to be reconsidered in favour of business owners** that have been operational since decades and crucial to Toronto's small business ecosystem.

With problems like **clandestine waste disposal, organized crime**; including **armed robberies** and **smash-and-grabs**, we have been seeing a shift in clients' priority to shop in our BIA. This clubbed with a possible uprising in **loitering, drug use**, added **garbage disposal issues**, along with a general air of fear amongst shoppers – **BIA businesses will move away** from this once bustling suburban strip mall, and take the walk-in clientele with them. The housing project might not directly result in this, but it would definitely act as a catalyst that speeds up a potential future which works against all efforts given towards the hashtag: **#supportsmallbusinesses**.

A proposed suggestion from the BIA business community comes in the form of **guaranteed Neighbourhood Community Officers from Division 23** that patrol the business area due to a large number of high-value businesses like 22/24K gold jewelry stores, along with community ties that allow the BIA to work in tandem with local service organizations that deal with the residents at Wardlaw Cres. Not wanting to waver from the present facts, most businesses in our community have **expressed their dissent and opposition** about the sudden information about said affordable housing project in their neighbourhood. They believe that further time should be spent towards getting all directly affected local members (residential and commercial) in sync with what is going on – and what might be.

Community projects aimed at relocating affected segments of a population – be it substance abuse, mental illnesses, or societal trauma, are a benchmark of civil society. It forms the foundation pillar of what a community should do to help those in need; however, having to do it while potentially jeopardizing a neighbourhood of an already aching

business community is something that could be reconsidered or restructured.