

Deputation by Catherine Lemke

Re: Opposition to Zoning By-law Amendment – 66 Third Street (PHC 23.3)

Good morning. My name is Catherine Lemke, and I have lived on Third Street with my husband for over 50 years. I am in my eighties, and I am here today as someone who has devoted a lifetime to this neighbourhood—a quiet, caring community that we love deeply.

I stand before you not out of anger, but out of deep concern—for my neighbours, for fellow seniors, and for the future of Third Street. The proposed zoning by-law amendment to allow for a four-storey municipal shelter at 66 Third Street is not just a planning decision—it is a decision that will forever change the fabric of a neighbourhood where people like me have spent our entire lives.

I want to begin by addressing a fundamental issue of transparency. As of the time of writing this, Article 13 related to this project still has not been made publicly available. We are being asked to provide feedback and live with life-altering decisions without the most basic information—such as the confirmed height of the building. We are told clarification will come just before the meeting. That is not meaningful public consultation, and it denies us our democratic right to speak with full knowledge.

From what we do know, the proposal calls for a four-storey structure on one of the smallest shelter sites in the city. No other shelter of this size is being proposed on such a small lot, on such a narrow street, nor on a residential street. This is not compatible with the zoning, the neighbourhood, or the needs of either current residents or future shelter clients.

This mega building will overshadow the modest one- and two-storey homes we have cherished for generations. It will block the sun from our porches, our living rooms, our balconies, and our gardens. It will loom over the homes of other seniors, including those in the adjacent low-rise (Woods Manor Senior's TSHC apartment building) who will lose their sunlight, privacy, and peace. This is not thoughtful urban planning—it is disregard for the lived experience of seniors and working families alike.

The proposed shelter would bring a 40% increase in site population, including 50 (possibly more as city officials have said) residents and at least 10 staff, is proposed—yet there is no plan for parking - for staff or shelter users. There is no access to high-order transit here. We are not downtown. A single trip to a hospital or essential services by transit from this area can take up to two hours.

The plan also calls for the removal of the only existing public parking lot—26 spaces gone. For a street like Third, where most homes have one or no driveway spots, this will be devastating. In winter, seniors like myself rely on accessible street parking. Without it, something as basic as buying groceries will become a major hardship. There is no nearby supermarket—none. Imagine seniors walking blocks through snow or ice with bags in hand, simply because we can no longer park near our homes - those spots will now be taken up by shelter staff, not to mention visitors and service providers that go to Woods Manor. Where will they park? Third street. It's important to note that most homes on Third street do NOT have private driveways or onsite parking so they have to park on the street. This is further complicated in Winter when snow builds up, the available street parking

reduces to less than 30% of what is available in the better weather. When snow removal is needed, the lot provides the only place where residents can move their cars to facilitate snow removal. The removal of this lot will effectively double the need for resident parking which will put an incredible strain, particularly on the seniors and mobility challenged who currently reside on Third Street and in Wood's Manor.

Then there's garbage. With no space to store the large volume of bins, we are now being told waste pickup may happen every other day. That's more noise, more disruption, more truck traffic—and still no real solution. The narrow sidewalks cannot accommodate this. The impact on safety, accessibility, and public hygiene will be significant. And in an older neighbourhood like New Toronto, there is an unspoken consequence of construction and garbage mismanagement: rats.

Let me be clear—I believe in helping vulnerable people. I believe everyone deserves housing, dignity, and care. But this is not the way to do it. What's being proposed does not support the shelter residents, and it certainly does not support the long-time residents who built this community. It's being done to us, not with us.

We are not asking you to reject compassion—we are asking you to use wisdom. Please, find a site that is truly suitable—where services are close, transit is available, and space allows for proper planning. Do not choose expedience over good planning.

We are not against shelter. We are against inappropriate development that puts both current and future residents at risk. We deserve better than this. The people who will live at

66 Third deserve better than this. And this neighbourhood, our home of more than 50 years, deserves better than this.

I respectfully urge you—reject this zoning amendment. Protect this community and plan for something that works—for everyone.

Thank you for listening.

Catherine Lemke

Third Street Resident since 1973