

The following is my presentation to the March 10th, 2026 meeting of Planning and Environmental Committee

The Canadian Institute of Planner's website has one constant theme; it is to plan for the creation of healthy communities. Planners are there to help protect heritage and neighborhoods. This proposed change in zoning does not protect the neighbourhood at all. It does, however, in an election year, provide politicians with a declaration that they have created large numbers of so-called affordable housing units. Rather than hold a developer to standards that weren't just plucked out of the air but were developed over the years to protect property values, they are prepared to bend and create a special zoning (R9-7) for anyone who wants to build these affordable housing units. Affordable to whom, certainly not the neighbourhoods surrounding them. The 'Dollars to Doors' initiative further encourage developers to maximize unit numbers with Grants of up to \$45,000 per affordable unit created.

We know from experience that crowding people into such accommodations will create problems and apartment slums. For example, one city affordable housing project [i]currently has over 10% of the units uninhabitable due to damage caused by bad tenants and good tenants afraid to exit their homes. To compound the problem landlords are virtually handcuffed and can't get rid of bad tenants quickly and easily as Tribunals can take months or even years to evict by which time the damage is virtually irreparable without massive expenditure.

Telling a developer, they must shrink the footprint of a planned building and yet keep the desired unit count will only exacerbate the issue. The R 9–7 designation is not planning, it's appeasing; appeasing politicians and developers so that they can claim to have created massive numbers of housing units to rid our streets of the homeless. Out of sight – Out of mind – for now!

With regards to the Parking issue

Let's face it, in Canada, a car is almost a necessity, and council has recognized that and just last week requested a change in new construction parking requirements. Now zoning is to require one parking space per unit, yet this planning report ignores that. Why?

In a neighbourhood already facing parking issues with homes designed in the aftermath of the war years it was never envisioned that a family could own two, three or even four cars. Currently we can find a designated single-family property with as many 6 to 8 cars. This property at 929 Cheapside will have an overflow of cars and local neighbours and streets will suffer the consequences.

As a retired Condo Property manager, who had a portfolio of 1400 units at retirement, I can tell you there is inadequate space allotted for snow storage. The number of available parking spaces will suffer with each subsequent snowfall, further exacerbating the overflow of vehicles onto adjacent streets and properties.

Setbacks

Why do we have setbacks? Setbacks are a buffer between the private zone and the public one. The city of Toronto's website states that zoning isn't there to ruin your fun it's there to keep the neighbourhoods liveable. When planning your building envelope, it is what's left after the setbacks and other constraints are applied. It is the part of the lot where the main building is allowed to exist. If the envelope is small, you can still build but you just need a plan that behaves and fits the existing

envelope, Do Not Change the zoning to fit the developer but insist on the existing zoning constraints and tell them to design to fit that envelope.

The developers and City Hall are trying to pour 2 L of water into 1 L container. The overflow be damned. In this case, it is the taxpayers who will pay the price of this overflow. This site is too small to accommodate 105 units. Send the plan back to the developers and tell them to come back with one which fits the neighbourhood and preserves property values. That is what Zoning regulations are supposed to do.

At the March 10th, 2026 meeting of the Planning and Environmental Committee dozens of Carling Height residents attended and presented arguments during the Public Participation portion. Neighbours unanimously objected to this inappropriate ultra-high-density high-rise in a mature single-family community. They suggested that a more appropriate and acceptable solution would be medium density development such as townhomes, or a 4-storey walk-up. In addition, objections were raised about reducing setbacks to next to nothing, inadequate snow storage, and vastly inadequate parking of less than half of current council's recommendations of one per unit. While City Planners suggested Zoning be changed from R1-5 to overly lenient R9-7 with no less than a further 9 changes PEC could see that the proposal was inappropriate, overly dense and would not fit in the neighbourhood. They voted 4 to 1 against and we strongly suggest that council do the same.

The argument presented by the Deputy Mayor that the proposal be accepted because otherwise it goes to the Ontario Land Tribunal and is out of our hands. We have rules (By-Laws) and the developer knew the limits when purchasing the property. If you capitulate to all and any developer's demands you might as well scrap all Zoning By-Laws. Stand up for our community standards and existing By-Laws. If it goes to the Tribunal, which proports to support strong, healthy communities and the public interest, a Strong response by Council sends a message of London's resolve to enforce it's standards.

Send the plan back to the developers and tell them to come back with one which fits the neighbourhood and preserves property values. That is what Zoning regulations, supported by City Councillors, are supposed to do.

Stephen and Patricia Ord

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