

From: Adam Woodhouse

Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2012 1:10 PM

To: Polhill, Bud; Armstrong, Bill; Swan, Joseph; Orser, Stephen; Baechler, Joni; Branscombe, Nancy; Brown, Matt; Hubert, Paul; Henderson, Dale; Van Meerbergen, Paul; Brown, Denise; Usher, Harold; Bryant, Judy; White, Sandy; Fontana, Joe

Cc: Saunders, Cathy

Subject: Affordable Housing Comments

To All:

I would like to add my comments regarding the one million dollar cut to the affordable housing reserve fund. I believe this is a serious mistake. I don't think the ramifications of such a cut have been seriously considered. If they had, this cut would not have been proposed in the first place.

This reserve fund is integral, and I speak from first-hand experience, in the development of the downtown core (as well as other areas). My business partner, Vernon Martin, and I have used this program for assistance in the revitalization of 392 Richmond, which houses Sumner's Jewelers - a business operator in the downtown core since 1902.

The seven units on the second and third levels were uninhabitable. There was evidence of drug use and possibly prostitution. The amount of work that needed to be done was too much for the previous owner and would have been too costly for any new suitor. The disrepair was also causing serious harm to Sumner's with water leaks, electrical issues (the building is all knob-and-tube), and we also discovered that there was possible access from the second floor with only a suspended ceiling in between. The units were accessible through broken windows from other rooftops. A break-in was only a matter of time and a fire was also a possibility. Under those circumstances, how likely is it that they would be there much longer?

I would also like all of you to consider that without this funding, we would not have invested our own equity. This equity supports the businesses we purchase from, the employees we have hired. We lose a great deal when this funding disappears.

There are dozens upon dozens of buildings just like this all over London. From what I've read, there is a great interest from this council in the revitalization of the downtown core. Well, you can develop a shiny new building for city hall, turn Dundas into a pedestrian walkway and have a beautiful boardwalk along the river, but what's the point if you still have numerous people living on the streets and empty buildings (both residential and commercial) littered all over the downtown core? It's tantamount to expecting a coat of paint to fix a structural problem. These buildings, the business operators, the landlords, and the residents are your grassroots. These are the fundamentals to a strong downtown core, not a boardwalk. What does it say about our council if these problems continue to persist?

I invite any of you to tour 392 Richmond. Perhaps you need to see first-hand what you are going to lose by cutting this funding. We are just about finished the demolition phase of this project. It's a great opportunity to see just how much this building was in need of repair.

Mr.Fontana, I would like to take this opportunity to call you to task. You were the Minister of Housing and worked with the CMHC on numerous affordable housing initiatives. Did you forget where you came from, sir?

I found an interesting quote that I pulled from the web, especially since it's barely six months old.

"Housing is much more than bricks and mortar, it's about people and building lives. Investments to improve current housing, make units more accessible and reduce the waiting list are all strong and positive steps toward a better London."

Any ideas as to who this quote is attributed to? And this is all over a \$7 increase for the average home owner? The tax freeze promise was a mistake. Everything increases - wages, cost of living etc. A tax freeze is essentially a decrease. Don't compound this mistake by making another one.

Regards,
Adam Woodhouse

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Adam Woodhouse
Technical Supervisor
The University of Western Ontario