

200 Devonshire Parking and Accessibility Policy

Hello Comittee and Council members,

My name is Michel Van Houdt, and I own 200 Devonshire Ave, which is located on the North East corner of Devonshire and Murray Street. This building was built in 1967 and it is a purpose built 13 unit building with parking for 13 vehicles.

In summer of 2019 I received notice that the city was completing an infrastructure project to redo the sewers in this area, I was happy about this as the building sits on a low spot on Devonshire causing annual basement floods.

Going back to the 1980's there was recommendations by city staff to replace the sewer trunk but no timeline in place due to funding restrictions on capital projects.

So I met with city staff on site to explain the flooding situation to which they have been very helpful. In our discussions it was brought to my attention that my parking on Murray Street would be affected on some of the more protruding vehicles.

I explained to them that it has been in consistent use since it was built, no tenant has ever received a ticket for parking in these spots, myself or my old owner who has owned it since 1987 has never had any complaints or issues from the city. It has always been in continuous use.

There are exactly 13 spots for the 13 units.

Over the course of the following months, the dialogue changed from "you are going to loose a few spots", to "you need to figure out how much you can fit on your land and the city will work with you"; to "current council requires a sidewalk and it will be going on the east side severely affecting your parking".

I hired Callon Dietz to prepare a survey, and with that information it provided me options for the city, so the choices I presented were variations of trying to use every inch on this piece of land I have, without any use of city property as that discussion was not an option.

The only one option that city staff was potentially open; was to create a one way entrance and then around the building, an exit.

However this option is highly unlikely to work due to issues such as 1) the lack of width between the building and neighbouring fence 2) the minimum building code requirement for basement exits once they are shortened 3) a removal of an existing fire exit 4) current rules with setbacks 5) current parking requirements , 6)forestry approval to removal at least 6 trees...just didn't seem possible.

So at this point I gave up hope and informed all the tenants we would be loosing all our parking.

However 2 weeks ago a LFP article was written stating that a committee put forth the issue to council and a street got no sidewalk!

I am not opposed to a sidewalk, I'm opposed to it on the east side where it will hugely affect the rental units indefinitely.

The reasoning to put it on the east side doesn't factor in the neighbourhood dynamics or the existing infrastructure.

The width, the street lights, only 1 vehicle apron are all on the west side but the primary reason for any pedestrian traffic down this dead end street is to go to the park on the west side. There is no other reason to walk down Murray.

Any foot traffic heading from the east uses Dunkirk place as its known as the "unofficial entrance to the Dad club park"

Since the purpose of the sidewalk on Murray is to get people to the park, It just doesn't achieve this. There should also be a sidewalk on Dunkirk place as well, otherwise what's the point of one 50% of the way?

As of today April 13th, I have clear communication with city staff saying there will no parking given to the residents of 200 Devonshire on the city right of way.

So here is my 4 Asks

1. Delay the project so that city staff can agree that removing all existing parking and displacing 13 residents is unfair, while still pushing through with approval before a resolution is formed.

2. Compromise with current city by-laws, setbacks and regulations and put a sidewalk on east or west side but provide 4 designated parallel parking spots on Murray Street (on city right of way), along with 3 in-front of the building (private lands) and 4 vehicles in the rear (private lands). That will secure a reasonable cost in not relocating the fire escape, basement foundation and will save cutting down 6 trees. This parking has been in place and has never been an issue for the city, or the neighbourhood.

3. Installing a dead end sign on the corner of North side of Murray/Devonshire.

4. Since the purpose of putting a sidewalk on Murray Street is for pedestrians to get the park, it should also be installed on the west side of Dunkirk Place and do what council policy is set out to do, otherwise don't put one at all on the dead end; that is Murray street and keep things status quo.

Thank you for hearing our appeal. Compromise and fairness is all we seek.

Michael Van Houdt

PS. Any reference to Murray Street, is only referencing Murray Street North of Devonshire.