



Cliffcrest Scarborough Village SW Residents Association was asked to speak at an event organized by SUN, (Scarborough United Neighbourhoods) with special guest Councillor Matlow in attendance on Tuesday, March 19, 2024.

We were asked to share some of the concerns we are experiencing with development in our Scarborough neighbourhoods. We created the following narrative to help bring to life how Scarborough is changing.

A SHOPPING TRIP IN SCARBOROUGH

Today I'm going to be taking my friend Lynne shopping and I'd like take you along with me for a ride also.

The store is 2 kilometres away. Lynne is 80 and the walk would be too much for her. Lynne likes to bike but it's icy outside and the snow has not melted so not a good idea. A significant walk to the bus stop and three short bus rides would get us to the store but its not efficient and very time consuming. So, looks like we will have to drive.

On the way I drop off my husband at the Go Station, the parking lot is full. Good thing I'm dropping him off or he would have had no place to park.

As I drive passed a new build on the street, I recall a weekend call from an upset neighbour where 5 LARGE mature trees were cut down without permits. With no bylaw enforcement on weekends all we could do is place a call with 311 and lodge a complaint with Urban forestry. Many letters raising concerns for our trees are never responded to and ignored.

This same home then went to COA, (Committee of Adjustment) and variances were approved for this monster build. I remember that when engaging with local residents to prepare for the COA hearing explaining to them that we were not allowed to question why 3 kitchens and 10 bathrooms were needed. You may be interested to know that stats reflect that only 2% of applications that go to COA in our catchment are refused. This is not including the homes that fall within "small residential builds."

As we sit waiting for the red light to turn, I look over at the white and blue sign posted on the side of the road.... any guess's what the sign is for?

The sign shows **outdated** information but I am very familiar with the details. More than 100 residents attended the Community Consultation for this application. Many follow ups and concerns raised with City Teams were never responded to. Despite the fact that the applicant submitted studies that City Staff were not satisfied with, the application was deemed complete and the applicant was able to appeal to the OLT, (Ontario Land Tribunal).

The RA engaged legal counsel and professional planner to ensure that we had a seat at the negotiation table for this part of the process. For the most part we found ourselves in the dark. The City, as lead by their legal team, chose to work with the Developer without **once** engaging with the RA.

This is just one blue and white sign and one experience. These signs can be found all over our city and from speaking with other Residents Associations, they also echo the same concerns. Community Consultations are more like presentations and reports/studies appear to be a check box.

The car behind me honks to let me know the light has turned green and so I continue my drive.

We pass the Doris McCarthy Trail. Lynne mentions, that there were two separate significant landslides that occurred recently just east of the Trail. I remember that I need to send another follow up email to the city. Since 2022 the RA has been asking the City Teams for the studies that report on CUMULATIVE IMPACT of development.

For example, there are 3 immediate proposals with 2 story deep parking lots within a block of each other running parallel to the Bluffs, Data reveals a potential population increase of 2500 residents just from these 3 developments. None of the Avenue Segment Studies look at the BIG picture of all three of these proposals collectively. What will the impact be to infrastructure, traffic & safety, schools, healthcare, environment and our spectacular Bluffs!

Each of the 14 applications currently being reviewed by City Planning in the RA catchment is assessed on a site by site basis, none address the affordable housing crisis or that Scarborough Village has been identified as a Neighbourhood Improvement Area. The full impact to fragile environment with low water tables by the Bluffs is not given due attention. Little consideration is given to how this rapid growth has the potential to destabilize existing neighbourhoods unless looked at holistically.

I turn the corner and pass a condo that was completed 3 years ago, Lynne points that ALL the retail spaces are still empty. I notice a parking enforcement officer is giving out a ticket for a car parked illegally on the road. Looking down the street I can see the overflow parking from condo residents along the street. I complain out loud to Lynne, "Well if they did have stores I don't know where I would park?" The elimination of minimum parking for new developments needs to be reviewed again. Unless there is sufficient transit, there should be parking provided. Nobody wants to park illegally, they do it because they have no other choice.

Traffic is backed up here, the city is again doing some infrastructure work. *I tell Lynne that a friend that lives in the Birchmount area shared with me that a report for from the Basement Flooding Improvement Study Team for just the Birchmount area indicates "A probable total net cost to the City of \$339M for the recommended works on public property". I looked into the studies for our area and they are still not complete. How can City Planning can move forward with mass development without understanding current and future limitations of our infrastructure?*

As we sit in traffic, I observe traffic going in the opposite direction and notice 3 buses pass, one right behind the other using one of the red bus lanes. Then I don't see any buses for some time. Traffic starts to move and as I come down the road towards the store, my car hits a big pot hole and Lynne comments, "In the 40 + years I have lived in this neighbourhood I do not recall the roads being in such disrepair, and what are those battered white poles along the road, what is happening to our city? "

I notice Tony walking his dog and pull over to say hello. He tells me he has made another call with regards to the build next door to his home. Review of the Toronto Building Permit Status page for this site reveals many failed inspections in addition to many calls by residents for safety violations over the last 3 years.

I comment that I remember when this house was a "suspected" rooming house for more than 2 years occupied anywhere from 2 to 15 renters with multiple cars on the driveway. Calls were made to 311, MLS and Fire Dept for investigation at least once a week for the entire two years to enact enforcement for potential bylaw violations with no real consequence. Lynn comments, "Wow that's 5 years you have been dealing with that build Tony! I am concerned for the homeowners that will buy those homes" and we all agree.

Tony points to 8 other homes recently purchased by developers on his street alone. He explains that there is group of investors, architects, and builders who have amassed an overwhelming inventory of homes in our local neighbourhood. One of them recently was in the news for having his building licence evoked. Lynn asks "Will these homes become rooming houses also?" I share that these homes will likely sit empty or become "POP up rooming house". These homes will probably never get registered or be brought to compliance, they are a temporary step in their very organized process by a group of developers as they wait for permits to be issued. These homes are easy to identify, unkept lawns, overflowing cars, not enough garbage bins etc.

I tell Lynn that the home next door to me is a “suspect” rooming house also. I often walk around picking up garbage that has blown over from the house next door. I have spoken to the tenants before and told them they should ask their landlord for more garbage bins, 2 is not enough for 10 people. **They ask me to please not say anything, they do not want to risk being evicted.**

“That sounds like a real problem” says Lynne. I agree and tell her its going to get much worse.

I go on to explain that despite many RA and resident letters raising concerns Multi-tenant Housing will be permitted in Scarborough as of March 31st. Toronto has NOT received enabling legislation from the province to allow inspection; Without a tested framework for MTH that has proper controls and remedies in place, these significant and abrupt policy changes have the potential for unforeseen and unintended impacts on residents and entire neighbourhoods.

The RA participated in ALL the recent EHON initiative consultations, again these appear to be presentations and check marks in the process. *Letters were sent with no response.* We have yet to see what the challenges and impacts of the approved Multiplexes and Garden suites will be as well as the not yet approved Major Street initiative.

It is a frightening to consider the future of our neighbourhood knowing rooming houses want to be expanded, the city continues to approve more **Condos** and push the **EHON initiatives** without evaluating full impact. Furthermore, these builds **will NOT deliver the much-needed affordable housing the city needs.**

While I help Lynne unload her shopping from my car, Peter will speak to you all with regards to some of the concerns we saw during our drive today.

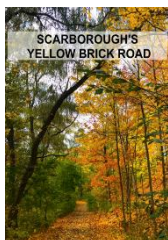
Thank you for joining us for a drive through our special neighbourhoods.

Thank you to SUN for organizing this event and Councillor Matlow for reaching out to meet with us.

It was a pleasure to connect with so many Community Leaders in Scarborough, you are all amazing! Thank you for all you do!

Sincerely,
Marina Tadenc & Peter Thachuk
Cliffcrest Scarborough Village SW Residents Association

www.cliffcrestscarboroughvillagesw.ca/about-us



**For anyone that is not familiar with this part of Scarborough have a look at,
“Scarborough Yellow Brick Road” a memory book created by the RA.**

John Smee of the Bluffs Monitor created a virtual copy of the memory book,
<https://www.bluffsmonitor.com/wp-content/uploads/flipbook/122/book.html>

Printed copies of “Scarborough’s Yellow Brick Road” are also available at your local library,
<https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/detail.jsp?Entt=RDM4386915&R=4386915>