



Winter 2024 DMRI NEWS

Don Mills Residents Inc.

Please Note all newsletters are now via email or on our website.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, members, supports and fellow residents.
I hope this message finds you well and safe this New Year. I am writing to share with you some updates and challenges our association faces.

You may know that the Province of Ontario has imposed limitations on the City of Toronto's planning authority. These limitations affect how we can shape the future of our neighbourhood. One is the reduction of Section 37 funds, which developers contributed to the City in exchange for increased density or height in their projects. These funds were used to support local amenities and improvements, such as parks, libraries, community centres, affordable housing and even key pieces of infrastructure for the new builds.

Section 37 funds was also a tool that we, as residents, can use to negotiate with developers and influence the design and impact of their proposals. By having a say in how these funds are allocated, we could ensure that the development benefits are shared with the community and that the negative effects are mitigated.

However, the Province decided to replace Section 37 with a new system called Community Benefits Charges (CBC), which limits the amount of money developers pay and the scope of projects eligible for these charges. This means that the City has less funds to invest in our neighbourhood, and we will have less leverage to negotiate with developers.

This is a serious threat to our ability to shape our community. We need to stand up for our rights and interests and demand that the Province respect the City's planning authority and the voice of the residents. We must work with other associations, councillors, and advocates to oppose these changes and protect our neighbourhood.

That is why I am asking you to join the Don Mills Residents Inc. and support the ongoing efforts to mitigate the unrestrained developments. At last count, there are over 70 new buildings going up between Eglinton and York Mills. I also encourage you to share this newsletter with your friends, family, and neighbours and to spread the word on social media. Where possible we would love your help, time, effort and donations. The more we get, the stronger our message will be.

Thank you for your support and involvement. Together, we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

John Cockerill, President DMRI



You can find more information and references about this issue in the following links:

- [Section 37 Community Benefits Charge – City of Toronto](#): This is the official website of the City of Toronto that explains the new CBC system and how it affects the City's planning authority and the residents' voices.
- [SECTION37 Final JK - City of Toronto](#): This brochure summarizes the role and benefits of the former Section 37 system and how it helped build healthier neighbourhoods in Toronto.

[Federation of North Toronto Residents Associations \(FONTRA\)](#)



Don Mills Tenants Stand Firm- Update

The DMRI was one of the first residents' organizations in the city, which included tenants, and not just homeowners, as part of its membership. The DMRI recognizes that all residents within Don Mills are entitled to a voice and representation. For several years, the DMRI has been involved with development proposals for the construction of condominiums, some on the site of existing dwellings (the former apartments at the corner of Don Mills and The Donway East, for example). This type of development seems never ending.

2, 4, 6 The Donway East

At 2, 4, 6 The Donway East, the current owner wants to demolish these buildings and build new condominium towers. There has been a lot of concern about the height and density of the proposed buildings and the traffic implications, especially considering that about 1,500 children attend the three schools across the street. According to law, these tenants must be offered the opportunity to move back into the new buildings as renters and must be given other rights, such as appropriate rent and a moving allowance. The Donway tenants naturally are very concerned about what is going on. All of us can appreciate how stressful and upsetting this situation is for those tenants, who will soon be displaced.

If you are a tenant needing more information, contact The Donway Tenants' Association at DonwayTenants@outlook.ca.

If you are interested in following this development, you will find information on the DMRI website. Currently, the City has asked the developer to change their submitted proposal and we are awaiting information about the new plans

Wingreen Court

Many of you have probably heard the radio ads offering a "simple" investment in residential units by purchasing shares in a building. "Just think", the ad states, "the investor does not have to meet the tenants nor be involved in any maintenance". What this means is that the apartment is owned by an investment company, which hires a management company to take care of maintenance. The old fashioned superintendent simply does not exist. The problem with this scenario is that tenants are far removed from the owner, and if the management company is poor, tenants have little recourse. This type of residential ownership is prevalent in many states in the U.S. and has come under a lot of scrutiny and criticism. In Ontario, as of yet, there is little regulation of this type of investment.

What this has meant for the 9 out of 11 Wingreen Court buildings owned by one company under this type of investment, is that profit is being placed before the recognition that people actually live in the buildings. Every time a tenant moves, the unit is upgraded and the rent goes up significantly. The tenants have been informed that if a certain percentage of units are not upgraded within five years, then the property will be redeveloped. At a recent tenant meeting, many tenants expressed concern that the rent they pay now is almost non-existent in the current housing market and, as a result, there are few places to move to, even if they want to accept the key money being offered. These tenants, too, have a feeling of housing instability.

If you are a tenant or would like to offer help to these tenants, contact Wingreen Tenants Association (WTA) at wingreentenant@gmail.com.

Affordable housing is a huge issue in our city and we, in Don Mills, must advocate that the 1950s low rise apartment buildings are a necessary part of our community and help make Don Mills diverse and vibrant. Owner occupied condominiums have a place in



Don Mills, but should not force our current renters out of a home. It is vital that all Don Mills residents advocate for our tenants as a TEAM (together each achieves more). Further updates will be posted on our website.

V. Quinn

VP, Area 5 Rep.

Community Share Food Bank

Established in January 2004, Community Share Food Bank works in cooperation with community members, local churches, and service organizations. We help alleviate food insecurity among low-income families in the Don Mills area, many of whom are newcomers to Canada. We also have a program to assist our families in navigating available social services and resources. Our mission, vision and values prioritize equity, inclusion, and social justice.

Food bank usage across Canada has risen dramatically in the past year, due in part to challenging economic times and a flawed safety net for the most vulnerable among our neighbours. The number of families visiting our food bank has in fact doubled since August 2022, which is very alarming indeed. We are now feeding over 1,200 individuals per month. We do all this with 80 active volunteers, two part-time employees, and an engaged board of directors.

Your support is crucial to the success of our work. Can you help? Please go to our website to donate online.

<https://www.communitysharefoodbank.ca/>

Alternatively, cheques may be mailed to:
Community Share Food Bank 33 Overland
Drive North York ON M3C 2C3.

Thank you for your generosity,

Chandra Vir





Toronto Police Service & Crime Prevention

Constable Roberts recently gave an excellent talk to a group of residents concerned about several incidents of car thefts and home break-ins in the North East quadrant of Don Mills.

Here are some safety tips from Constable Roberts:

- Always tell someone if you are home when they knock on your door. Don't open the door to strangers and check their identification if they claim to be sales or service people. Call the police if you notice any suspicious behavior.
- Mark your property with a Trace Identified pen or a unique identifier. This will make it harder for thieves to sell your valuables and easier for the police to return them to you if they are recovered.
- Record the contents of your home or car on paper or video and store it in a safe place. This will help you make an inventory and file a claim if anything is stolen.
- Consider installing a home security system or a steering wheel lock for your car. These devices can deter burglars and carjackers by making it more difficult and risky for them to break in or drive away.
- Don't leave your keys or fobs near the windows or doors of your home. Thieves can use devices to capture the signal and unlock your car remotely. If you have a second car, park it behind the one that is more likely to be targeted.
- Don't announce your absence on social media or your answering machine. Thieves can use this information to plan their attacks when you are away. Ask a friend or neighbor to check on your home or car regularly and collect your mail.
- If you witness a crime in progress or suspect a break-in, call 9-1-1 immediately. Don't enter your home or car if it has been tampered with. Don't touch anything until the police arrive and collect evidence.
- Good neighbors who are interested in what is going on in and around the neighborhood are great protection for you and all the residents.
- By following these tips, you can make your home and car less appealing to criminals and more secure for yourself and your family. Remember, crime prevention starts with you!

Constable Roberts also provided a link to see the number and type of incidents in our local area.

It is: <https://data.torontopolice.on.ca/>.

He is willing to meet and talk to any interested groups and neighbors about Crime Prevention. He can be reached at 33 Division, Email: 10184@tps.ca, Phone: 416-808-3395.



Demovictions in the Don Valley: A Closer Look at the Rising Concern

In the heart of Don Valley East, a pressing urban phenomenon known as "demoviction" is unfolding, raising eyebrows and concerns among the local populace. The term "demoviction," marrying demolition with eviction, spotlights a situation where tenants face eviction due to their homes being earmarked for demolition to pave the way for new developments. This trend is particularly stark in our area, where four low-rise rental buildings are currently under the specter of this urban redevelopment strategy.

Among these, the case of 48 Grenoble stands prominent. This nine-story, 109-unit rental apartment building nestled in Flemington Park has recently secured the city council's green light for demolition. The plan? A transformation into twin skyscrapers of 43 and 41 stories, perched atop a 6-storey podium, introducing an impressive 994 residential units, including 109 to replace the rentals lost to demolition. Meanwhile, 3 Swift Drive, 7 & 11 Rochefort Drive, and the trio of 2, 4, and 6 The Donway East buildings are currently navigating the application process for redevelopment with the City of Toronto.

One might wonder, amidst a housing crisis marked by scant supply and sky-high rental prices, why the uproar over augmenting housing stock? The answer lies not in the bricks and mortar but in the lives housed within these low-rise buildings. Predominantly inhabited by newly arrived immigrants, seniors, and individuals reliant on fixed incomes, these buildings are more than mere structures; they represent homes, stability, and community.

Take the case of 48 Grenoble, where the developers have extended an offer to the dislodged tenants, including three months' rent, coverage of moving expenses, and rent gap payments to cushion the financial blow during their involuntary nomadic phase. While this might appear a fair deal at first glance, the devil, as they say, is in the details. The primary bone of contention, as voiced in the meeting convened by the developer and the City of Toronto, hinged on the rent gap payment calculation.

Consider a hypothetical tenant of 48 Grenoble, snug in a two-bedroom apartment under an old lease agreement at \$1,400 per month. The developers plan to peg the rent gap payment to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) 2022 average rent for a similar apartment, which stands at \$1,779. This arithmetic translates to a \$379 monthly rent gap payment. However, this figure pales in comparison to the ground reality, where, according to rentals.ca, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Toronto hovers around [\\$3,314](#), leaving a staggering \$1,535 gap from the CMHC's average, a sum not covered by the developers' calculations.

As the narrative of development in Don Mills Central unfolds, with numerous low-rise buildings poised for demolition, it's crucial to acknowledge that this is not an anti-development stance. The housing crisis is real, and the need for more housing is undeniable. However, the plea is for more responsible, compassionate, and considerate development that recognizes and respects the profound impact on the tenants displaced by these projects. In this spirit of community and advocacy, we, at Don Mills Residents Incorporated, stand committed to supporting our residents, ensuring their voices are heard, and their rights safeguarded.

For further insights into demovictions and how they affect our community, please visit www.nodemovictions.ca.

Ahmed Patel





Get Involved

We are a local volunteer organization. Your donations are important to fund the work and challenging overbuilding by developers and the city. Every dollar is important. If you can afford to donate, then please use the form on the back page or via the website.

Equally important are donations of skills, expertise, effort, and time Here are a few of the areas in which you might help:

- Communication
- Development Appeals
- Fundraising
- Newsletter
- Research
- Website and Social Media

If you would like to be involved, please get in touch with us directly at volunteer@dmri.ca

A Final Word

A heartfelt message to all residents, supporters, members, and donors,

As we embrace the new year of 2024, we want to extend our warmest wishes to each and every one of you and your families. We hope that the year ahead is filled with moments of joy, laughter, and cherished memories shared with friends, family, and neighbors.

In the spirit of community, let us continue to look out for one another, offering kindness and support whenever it's needed. We are fortunate to call Don Mills and Canada our home, and it's a privilege to live and work in such a wonderful place.

To all of you, we want to express our deepest gratitude for your unwavering support throughout the years. Your contributions and dedication have been the foundation of our community's strength and resilience. As we continue in 2024, we wish you all good health, boundless happiness, and the fulfillment of your dreams.

Thank you once again for being a part of our incredible community, and here's to a year filled with hope, prosperity, and togetherness.

The DMRI Board and Volunteers



JOIN THE DMRI

Member support enables the DMRI to achieve our objectives and to maintain Don Mills as one of the best places to live in the City of Toronto. Members are encouraged to participate in the Annual General Meeting. The membership runs from the date of joining for one year. Automatic renewal notices are sent just before the anniversary of joining.

Membership fees are \$25.00 per household per year. Please also consider adding a donation when you join or renew your membership with the DMRI. Your support helps to pay for the legal and other costs associated with representing Don Mills and all its residents at the municipal and provincial level.

Thank you for your support.

www.dmri.ca

There are two ways to join Don Mills Residents Inc.

Payment via Canada Post

Return the membership form along with a cheque to:

DMRI P.O. Box 47528, Don Mills ON M3C 3S7

Online Payment

www.dmri.ca/become_a_dmri_member

Complete the form on the membership page.

Select and pay by credit card. If you'd like to make a donation, please do so at the same time.

You can also scan this QR code with your cell phone and the web page will load automatically for you.



Note that the DMRI is not a registered charity, therefore, tax receipts are not provided.

If you have any questions, please contact membership@dmri.ca

DMRI Application/Renewal

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Address _____ Postal Code _____

Phone # (____) _____ Email Address _____

☐ Annual Membership \$25.00 ☐ Donation \$ _____ Total Amount \$ _____ Date: _____

Please Note: The DMRI is not a registered charity. Tax receipts are not provided.

Comments: _____

The Newsletter is sent by Email to save costs.

DMRI P.O. Box 47528, Don Mills ON M3C 3S7

Or pay electronically via the DMRI website