

Public Hearing
Minor Variance Permission
File No. A0478/17EYK
49 & 51 Springmount Ave
Parts 4, 5, 11 & 12

c/o Nicole Milrose
Applications Technician
nmilros@toronto.ca

Oct. 5, 2017

Committee of Adjustment and Minor Variances

In reference to the proposed construction of 3 new dwellings on the lots of 49 and 51 Springmount Avenue, we the neighbouring residents write with our serious concerns.

While we do not object to 3 new homes being built on the properties of 49 and 51 Springmount we the residents of Regal Heights would like to share our deep concerns for the project. With only one week's notice we were asked to provide our objections. No drawings (beyond architectural) of what the proposed project would look like finished were provided to the community. Only a few residents were given the actual renderings of the project and those images were only shared in the last 24 hours. It would have been transparent and helpful to this process if the developer had included all the drawings for the immediate residents so there was time for everyone to understand exactly what was being proposed. It was also informative to learn that the developer has acquired adjacent properties. This we assume means a continuation of these homes will also extend to those properties in the future. This will irrevocably change the look and feel of Regal Heights and again it would have been transparent and inclusive to disclose to the community the full scope and scale of this project.

We hope that in future discussions of this project there will be more collaborative consultation with the neighbourhood and that the developer will be more forthcoming with all of the information they have available when discussing such a radical transformation. The following itemized list addresses our initial concerns.

1. Loss of green space in front of the existing houses

All the houses on Springmount have extensive amounts of green space in front of the properties. This is a unique feature of Springmount and of Regal Heights and in fact, it is a one of a kind street in Toronto. This is part of the reason that many of us bought these properties. The proposed homes will eliminate this green space in favour of garages, driveways and towering three storey row housing. This is not in keeping with the surrounding properties or the nature of this iconic street.

In addition, the removal of mature trees in the front of 51 Springmount will have a significant loss to the Springmount tree canopy. From the architectural drawing provided it appears that only one mature city tree will be saved. How will the existing large tree be

protected with such a radical grade change? Both the 2nd and 3rd driveways appear to encroach onto the protection of the large city tree. That tree is not at sidewalk/street level and is raised on an incline. If the driveways are at street level then they will have to cut into the roots of this tree. If additional properties are eventually added how will the other side of the tree be protected? It is for this reason that we request that the driveways of the 2nd and 3rd house not be permitted.

2. Sides of garages/houses

It is proposed that the buildings come forward much further than the existing buildings currently do. It is unclear what the sides of those buildings will be or what kind of retaining walls will be erected. What will it look like to walk on Springmount towards Oakwood? Will there be a huge concrete block retaining walls instead of once rolling green space? This would be incredible unsightly and not in keeping with the historical and natural feel that has been part of the Garrison Creek neighbourhood.

3. Integrity of the neighbouring properties with extreme grade change

We are concerned how the adjacent properties on Springmount would be affected by the radical disturbance in grade change. The extreme grade change could have a significant effect on the existing properties on Highview Crescent and on the adjacent properties of Springmount. Studying the environmental impact of this grade change on the health of these neighbouring properties seems prudent and what engineering and/or retaining walls needed to be erected prevent foundational shifting. In addition, we would like to know what the long-term plans the developer has for the adjacent properties.

4. Parking on the street

As many residents of Springmount do not have driveways or garages, street parking is a necessity. There are 3 garages and driveways proposed which will result in a large reduction of available street parking. If the intention of the developer is to continue these homes on the adjacent properties with the same design then this would create considerable parking congestion along the entire length of Springmount.

In addition, driveways reduce the green space and absorption of water run-off. It appears the 2 large proposed driveways on buildings 2 and 3 also encroach the protected space of the only tree remaining on the properties. This large city tree should be protected at all costs as many other mature trees will be taken down. Other applications for driveways on Springmount have been denied in the past for this reason. Most of the houses on Springmount do not have lane way access. These buildings have dedicated alley access at the back of the properties. Why doesn't the design put the garages at the back of the buildings rather than in the front? This seems the most sensible solution as many of the issues the neighbours have with this proposal would be remedied by putting the garages and driveways at the back while retaining more green space at the front. It seems redundant and wasteful to have a driveway in the front and the back of the house.

5. House Style

As full renderings of the houses were only provided to a few residents, most of us only got to see what was really being proposed 24 hours before this letter was due. It was a shock to see how high and forward these town homes are. That the proposed dwellings completely gut the entire hillside and soar high above the existing houses is a radical departure from the integrity, look and feel of the neighbourhood. Our street is a special place for many Torontonians, and we feel strongly that this project, without maintaining some of the green space in the front, would destroy the look of our street.

6. Length and inconvenience of construction on neighbourhood and risk to pedestrians

This is a very large project and will take a long time to complete. The inconvenience and disruption to a very quiet street should not be discounted and all available measures by the developer should be put in place to cause the least amount disruption. Noise, garbage, workers parking on all available street parking must be considered. Strict guidelines for construction hours and where workers should park should be clearly understood and enforced.

In addition, the intersection where Regal Road and Springmount meet, at the site of the proposed dwellings, has long been a tricky intersection for pedestrians. With regular family trips, twice daily to Regal Road Public school, this intersection is often dangerous to cross. With stop signs on each of the three corners, and an abnormally wide road way, cars often fail to come to a complete stop. With construction vehicles, more parked cars and bins littering the corner it is sure to make an already difficult intersection more treacherous. Consideration and a clear plan needs to be devised in order to make that corner safe for pedestrians while giving motorists clear vision of all three stop signs.

7. Driveways into intersection

The proposed project has the driveways at street level. These driveways will come out directly into the 3-way intersection of Springmount and Regal Road. This is a dangerous idea, that multiple driveways back out into an already problematic intersection. This design either needs to be completely rethought from a traffic safety point of view or the developer needs to work with the city to redesign the intersection of Regal and Springmount.

8. Loss of low income housing and eviction of long term residents

Given the current loss of affordable housing in Toronto these 2 properties on Springmount have long been rental units. Some of the tenants in these buildings have been there for over 20 years. The disruption of their homes and their subsequent eviction is a loss for the neighbourhood as a whole. These tenants should be given as long as possible to find alternate places to live and for the longer-term elderly tenants some compensation for finding and moving into higher cost dwellings.

9. Environmental Assessment of flooding and loss of water absorption

The proposed properties will remove a vast section of open green space and trees that absorb a large amount of water run-off. Springmount was built on the banks of Garrison Creek and every year there is a large amount of flooding at the intersection of Springmount and Regal Road, on the exact site where the properties are proposed. Were the proposed properties to meet street level it is very likely that the water run-off from the entire length of Springmount

would run into those properties. The banks of Springmount are there for a reason, they provide a channel for the water to flow. A thorough environmental assessment of the impact of losing all the water absorbing landscape and the raised hill is needed to determine the flooding impact on an already overloaded sewer system and on the newly developed properties.

These are some of the initial concerns we have about this project which will disrupt our entire neighbourhood for years and change forever a historic Toronto neighbourhood. We hope that the developers, Welleby Holdings and the architect, have an interest in working with the Regal Heights neighbours, specifically those on Springmount and the corner of Regal Road to address our concerns for their project so that we can have a harmonious working relationship and embrace the new homes as part of our community.

Sincerely,
The Residents of Regal Heights

Vince Valeri - 8 Springmount Ave
Tulin Valeri
Trisha Scantlebury - 10 Springmount Ave
Alex Stephen
Odette Sajti - 12 Springmount Ave
Chris Sajti
John Tuttle - 14 Springmount Ave
Mary Vite - 16 Springmount Ave
Marcello Vite
Alessandra Vite
Andrew Kaye - 61 Springmount Ave
Cara Kaye
Julia Creet - 63 Springmount Ave
Jennifer Wigmore - 65 Springmount Ave
David Storch
Shannon Kohlman - 67 Springmount Ave
Timothy Sawa
Mary Anne Quance - 69 Springmount
Dave Barnes
Melissa Frew - 73 Springmount Ave
Matt Bedard
John Sanderson - 75 Springmount Ave
Jill Schmidt
Alex Cameron - 83 Springmount Ave
Lorna Cameron
Rita Ruben - 91 Springmount Ave
Bill Tewkesbury
Joey Mandel - 97 Springmount Ave

Mike Mandel
Susan Noakes - 99 Springmount Ave
John Keating
Arthur Dacks - 107 Springmount Ave
Alex Anderson - 125 Springmount Ave
Hellen Doorn - 28 Regal Road
Daniel Cummings - 31 Regal Road
Tova Rose
Carlo Bastianutto - 36 Regal Road
Esther Bui
Anne Hassel - 37 Regal Road
Jim Hassel
Lynda Lemberg - 41 Regal Road
Anne Primrose - 43 Regal Road
Suzanne Durand - 54 Regal Road
Florence Watts - 57 Regal Road
Beth Marcilio - 79 Regal Road
Jack Nicholzen - 89 Regal Road
Linda Genova - Regal Road
Patty Murray - 23 Glenholme Avenue
Zoey Adams - 103 Lauder Ave
Melanie Plet - 20 Highview Crescent
Ryan Barry
Allan Novak - 30 Highview Crescent
Robert Tait - 50 Highview Crescent