

From: Wellington Tenants Committee

Sent: September 10, 2021 2:44 PM

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Subject: Please vote NO to Medallion's development application for 195 Wellington St S, which would result in demo-viction of 32 families

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To the Mayor, members of Council, and Planning Committee,

We are a group of tenants living at 195 Wellington Street South. We have formed a tenant association to support each other and organize together to improve the conditions in the building.

Our building has 142 units. It has four sections: A, B, C, and D Block. The rent is affordable, or at least one of the more affordable options in the city. Most of the people who live here are low-income – seniors, new immigrants, students, people on OW and ODSP. We are working-class people. There are lots of problems in the building with disrepairs, pests, mold, etc. but we live here and try to make the best of it, as it is what we can afford.

Our landlord is Medallion Corporation. They bought the building in 2011. In 2014, Medallion submitted an application to the City of Hamilton's Planning Department to rezone the property and build a 20 storey building. Medallion wants to demolish the northeast section of the existing building (D Block) to make way for this new building. The remaining A, B, and C Blocks are supposed to be retained. From what we understand from reviewing the landlord's application files, demolition of the D Block would result in the eviction and displacement of 32 households who currently live here.

Our understanding is the city's planning department did not respond in time to Medallion's application, so Medallion appealed to the Ontario Land Tribunal (then Ontario Municipal Board). Parties to the application include Medallion (represented by Quinto Annibale and Brendan Ruddick of Loopstra Nixon LLP), the City of Hamilton (represented by Andrew Biggart and Christina Kapelos of Ritche Ketcheson Hart & Biggart LLP), and the Niagara Escarpment Commission (represented by Demetrius Kappos). Our understanding is the lawyers have come to a settlement which they will present to Hamilton City Council ahead of the final Ontario Land Tribunal Settlement Hearing scheduled for September 28, 2021.

We would like to appeal to you to vote "no" to approving this settlement agreement and allowing this development to go ahead. Those of us who live in the D Block are very concerned about being evicted and displaced if our homes are demolished. There is currently no plan in place to help us.

We sent a letter and petition to Medallion management on August 6, 2021 (attached). We asked the following questions:

1. *Is Medallion proceeding with its original plan to evict tenants from 32 units in the D Block, in order to build a new tower? Which unit #s are planned to be demolished?*
2. *What is the approximate timeline for evictions, demolition, and construction?*
3. *What is Medallion proposing to do to help tenants facing demoviction? Financial compensation? Temporary housing during construction? Units in the new building at the same rent?*
4. *What is Medallion proposing to do to help tenants in the A, B, and C Blocks who will have to deal with years of construction noise, dust, rodents, etc.?*
5. *Why is Medallion renting out units in the D-Block to new tenants when they become available? This is not right. They should be kept empty. Why isn't Medallion letting D Block tenants move into units in the A,B,C Block when they become available, at the same rent, rather than renting these units out to new tenants?*

To date, we have not gotten any response from Medallion.

We are very worried about our future. Most of us pay rents in the range of \$600-\$800 per month. If we are evicted from our homes for this development, we will struggle to find new apartments we can afford. The average market rent for a 1-bedroom apartment in Hamilton is now \$1,300 or \$1,400 – double what many of us are currently paying.

Before this development application is approved, we ask that Medallion be made to commit to the following supports for the 32 households facing demo-viction:

- Rehouse us during the construction period, at the same rents we are currently paying. This could be in empty units in A, B, or C Block, as they become available; or in other Medallion buildings in Hamilton; or with a third party.
- Set aside units in the new building for us to move into, if we choose, at the same rents we are currently paying.
- Pay for moving costs and utility reconnection fees.

We believe these are reasonable requests. This would be the difference between housing and homelessness for some of us. This would be a small cost for Medallion, relative to the profits the company will make on the development.

It is difficult for us to make sense of and participate in these development application processes. We are not lawyers or urban planners, and we don't have endless amounts of time to take off work to attend meetings and hearings. But we know that the decisions made by city staffers, lawyers, planners, and politicians affect our lives in significant ways. We are counting on you to advocate for us and represent our interests against developers and landlords with big pockets.

We ask that you delay approval of the development application for 195 Wellington St S until our concerns can be addressed.

Sincerely,
195 Wellington St S Tenant Committee