

May 3, 2009

The Shops at Don Mills: Not Built for Local Community

A [news brief titled "Cadillac Fairview unfurls long-term push"](#) offers final proof that The Shops at Don Mills were not built for the local community. It provides details of the extensive, long-term promotional campaign being run by CF to drive traffic to the stores. As the news brief says, the ads are "targeting the primary demographic of GTA women between the ages of 25 and 54." The local community is being shut out.

Those who, in 2006, claimed that this new concept was not a violation of the [Central Don Mills Secondary Plan](#), which states as an objective that change in the community is to be "managed in a manner that retains and enhances the [previously] existing character of the area" and that a further objective is "to strengthen the function of the Don Mills Centre as a community centre" were clearly wrong. We told them they were wrong, but they denied it. How can they deny it now?

The character of the Don Mills Centre, which once was the heart and soul of the community, has been turned upside down and inside out to not only shut out the local community, but also to attract a completely new and different demographic.

All those who, claiming to speak on behalf of the community, did nothing to stop this atrocity and even gave it their blessing, are partners in a great injustice against the local residents, including the many seniors and disabled individuals whose quality of life has been seriously impacted.

Severely lacking in goods and services that would serve the local community, the new outdoor mall has no personality or atmosphere and feels cold and uninviting--there's not even a casual coffee shop where residents could sit down for a drink, a snack, and a chat. By Sunday, May 3rd, the deafening rock music blasting from the ubiquitous loudspeakers had at least been replaced by softer piano jazz, but the odd-looking so-called "clock tower" still conveys the impression of being at some type of midway, as [this excellent Eye Weekly article](#) points out.

For many of us, a walk through "The Shops" is ominously foreboding of the next attack on the community: the planned dislocation of our medical services at 75 The Donway West and the construction of huge condominium towers which, though not yet approved and not even allowed under the Secondary Plan, are being discussed and advertised as though they were a fait accompli. But make no mistake: as long as those claiming to speak and negotiate on behalf of the community continue to go along with the developer's plans while dangling the carrot of a community centre, Phase Two will be implemented just as Phase One was. It is these people you need to go after if you want to save what's left of our community.

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