

SWANSEA MATTERS — VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

Planning and Housing Committee — Chair Perks Questions and Exchanges

Item PH28.2: 21 Windermere Avenue (Swansea Mews) — February 26, 2026

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| Committee | Planning and Housing Committee, Meeting 28 |
| Item | PH28.2 — 21 Windermere Avenue (Swansea Mews) |
| Date | February 26, 2026 Committee Room 1, City Hall, Toronto |
| Chair | Councillor Gord Perks |
| Members present | Councillors Nunziata, Matlow, Crisanti |
| About this document | This document extracts exchanges where Chair Gord Perks directed questions to deputants or staff, and the responses given. Procedural remarks (calling names, setting timers) are included where relevant to context. The post-deputation Committee Q&A of staff appears in a separate companion document. |

Section A — During Deputations

The Chair opened the item, introduced deputants, and facilitated the deputation process. He asked after each deputation whether committee members had questions. Selected exchanges where Chair Perks made substantive interjections or questions are included below.

🕒 32:25

Chair Perks [*opening the item*]

We now go to item PH28.2, 21 Windermere Avenue. We have deputants. The first deputant is Greg Homonylo. Hi, Greg. Good to see you again. Settle in. You've got five minutes.

🕒 37:25

Chair Perks [*to Greg Homonylo*]

Your time is up. Thank you very much.

🕒 38:00

Chair Perks

Are there any questions for Greg? Seeing none, thank you very much.

🕒 1:58:08

Chair Perks [*during recess, to City Planning staff — Alex*]

Alex, if you're still listening — I checked into the planning and development rationale document. Does it come up on the screen? So it sounds like what's happened is that the application information centre website that lists all the reports is sending people to an appendix of the development rationale. Has that been corrected?

City Planning Staff (Alex)

That'll be corrected. It's already been corrected. I am so sorry for that, but it was submitted appropriately and it was reviewed by staff. If you want to go take a look at it, it's available now. My apologies to everyone.

🕒 2:21:59

Chair Perks *[closing deputations]*

Seeing none, are there any other members of the public who wish to make a deputation on this item? Seeing none, that completes the deputations. Are there any questions of staff?

Section B — Chair's Questions of Staff (Post-Deputations)

After all committee members concluded their questions, Chair Perks posed his own questions to City Planning and TCHC staff. These begin at approximately 2:33:31 in the session recording.

🕒 2:33:31

Chair Perks

There's been a suggestion that there's a problem with the water table. Is the building going to be into the water table, or above it? Can someone give me a little information on that?

Nion *(Acting Director, Engineering Review)*

In terms of the water table, the reports that have been submitted in support of the application indicate that the water level varies from anywhere from 2.84 metres below surface to almost 5 metres below surface. The design of the building, as I understand it, does not reach the water level.

Chair Perks

So — sorry, I'm a bear of very little brain — in plain English that means the building is going to be above the water table?

Nion

Yes.

Chair Perks

Okay. Thank you.

🕒 2:34:47

Chair Perks

There was a suggestion that no consultation took place in terms of alternative designs. My memory is that actually there was an initial design where we got feedback that too much density was near the neighbourhood, and that the design was altered to move the density away from the neighbourhood. Am I correct in my memory?

City Planning Staff

Through the chair — we'll respond to that very shortly.

TCHC Staff

Through the chair, I might be able to add some context from TCHC. The IDP that was approved in 2025 had a range of housing contemplated between 700 and 850 total units. Through the planning and design process of the zoning application, following the IDP approval, that number is now proposed at 649 homes — which is below the lower end of that range contemplated in the initial development proposal. This was an intentional move to balance both the financial viability with the need to bring more than just housing to this property, and to thoughtfully plan a development that was sensitive in its transition to the surrounding neighbourhood and adds substantially more open space, amenities, and commercial and community space to the community.

Chair Perks

Thanks.

🕒 2:36:44

Chair Perks *[second round of questions]*

Along the same lines, I know that there was substantial and separate consultation with the tenants, and that when they saw the initial design, they felt that they wanted some of that courtyard feel that they used to have. So the submission was altered based on that feedback. Am I correct in my memory on that?

TCHC Staff

Yes, you are correct in that there is an elevated courtyard and rooftop gardens included in the proposal, and ongoing engagement with tenants will take place to further design those features and outdoor and indoor amenities with the project.

🕒 2:37:26

Chair Perks

I've also heard a suggestion that we should just replace like for like — that we had a townhouse form there and we should just put a townhouse form back. When Swansea Mews

was built it was in the mid-1970s, and if I just looked it up, the population of what is now the city of Toronto was about 2.2 million and it's now more like 3.3 or 3.4 — almost 50% bigger. We are approving more density now than we were 50 years ago. Is that fair?

City Planning Staff

Through the chair, certainly — we are approving significantly higher densities currently than we would have been back in the day when Swansea Mews was originally developed.

🕒 2:38:16

Chair Perks

Okay. And when you were reviewing this, did you look at some of the densities, say, in the same area — immediately to the south and to the west of the site?

City Planning Staff

Through the chair, we did look at adjacent developments, and there are adjacent developments of similar height and density in the area.

🕒 2:38:40

Chair Perks

Okay. Thank you. Those are my questions. Does anyone wish to speak?

Committee Members

No.

Section C — Closing Statement Before the Vote

🕒 2:38:52

Chair Perks *[closing remarks]*

First of all, I want to thank everyone who's been engaged in this process. There's been an awful lot of useful feedback, some of which we've been able to accommodate and some of which we haven't. Of critical importance here are the 140-odd households who lost their housing — and they lost it because of a bizarre construction technique that, frankly, our Chief Building Official at the time said he had never seen before. He called around to other chief building officials in North America and they'd never seen it before either. It was a thing where concrete was glued to concrete instead of being solid pieces. That's an historic fact we can't go back and fix. The company that built it, the Ontario Housing Company, doesn't even exist anymore. This is one of the buildings that the province downloaded onto the City of Toronto without adequate capital repair funding. The context for development has changed. We

simply can't build back the Toronto that we had 50 years ago. We're seeing right across the city more density. The thing that's different in this case is that instead of that density being driven by speculative condominium investments where little shoe boxes are being traded like casino chips, this is actually designed to meet the needs of families. One of the very few developments I've ever seen where not only are we meeting the city's requirements for two- and three-bedrooms — which are profoundly exceeding them — two-thirds of the units here are going to be two- and three-bedrooms. So mixing a careful review of the kinds of densities we're seeing in the surrounding area, mixing the need for transition down to some of the existing housing, mixing also the need to not just build rent-geared-to-income but to build rent-geared-to-income and market housing together to get a healthier and more sustainable mix — takes us to this building. This is something when there's a development proposal there's a lot of controversy and a lot of anxiety, but this is something that ten years from now I think the city of Toronto is going to look back on and feel immensely proud of. This is the kind of housing that we need to build more of. For the last 20 years we've been building too much of the wrong thing. And that's why we've seen a real estate collapse. Instead of building housing that people actually need, we've been building investor units. As a result we've had a market bubble that's burst. The other side of course is that, as some of the questioning revealed, there's a tremendous demand for affordable housing, and I'm very proud of the Toronto Community Housing staff, City of Toronto development review staff, the tenants at Swansea Mews who participated in designing this, and all of the folks who've made suggestions, some of which have been brought into this. So it's not just with clear comfort, but actual excitement, that I'm going to be supporting this, and I hope all the members of the committee do, and I hope all of council does.

 2:42:59

Chair Perks

I'll be moving the staff recommendations. Anyone else wish to speak to the item? Seeing none, all those in favour? Opposed? If any — that carries.

*Source: Verbatim transcript, Planning and Housing Committee Meeting 28, February 26, 2026.
Timecodes reference the start of the recording. Companion document: Full Deputations Transcript. Name correction applied: Greg Homonylo.*