

See your investment grow **75** times over.



thestar.com

Developer revises plans for controversial condo

But Beach neighbours vow to continue to battle five-storey complex they say doesn't fit the area

October 12, 2007

BRETT POPPLEWELL
STAFF REPORTER

Three aging Toronto homes in the city's trendy beaches area have temporarily averted demolition after a community outcry sent developers of a planned low-rise condo complex back to their blueprints.

Architect Dermot Sweeny and his associates at Sweeny Sterling Finlayson and Co. had proposed the demolition of three houses on Neville Park Blvd. – a dead-end residential street that runs from Queen St. E. to the lakeshore – to make way for a five-storey condo complex. Sweeny is one of the project's developers.

But his plans to build the luxury condos were opposed by area residents. Their grievances were many, ranging from traffic and environmental concerns to principles of precedence.

Mostly, residents fear a new low-rise complex perched atop the picturesque cliffs overlooking the beach will set a precedent that future condo development along the historic waterfront is acceptable.

Daniela Kim, 38, lives across the street from the proposed site. She wouldn't have moved into her home four years ago had the complex been there, she says. "It hits a soft spot because I've got three children. This is where we want to grow old and raise our family and to have that hideous building on our street, I can't think rationally about it. Even if they revise their plan, I won't be happy about it," she said.

"It doesn't fit with the rest of the homes here. This is a residential street and it's just going to add way too much congestion on the street. My kids will no longer be able to play outside the house. I'm not an irrational mom, but I'm speaking as a mother with a concern for the neighbourhood."

Sweeny has decided to revise his current proposal, but local residents are already preparing to oppose whatever revisions he makes.

"The fight is not over by any means," said Patricia Graham, who's lived on Neville Park Blvd. for 10 years. She's particularly aggrieved by the prospect of a revised version of the condo blocking her view of the lakeshore. "Five storey-condo and I look out my window at it, I don't think so," she said.

Sweeny's working to revise the plans to meet the bylaws and intends to file a proposal for a condo complex in the same location.

"I've put up with some really slanderous, hideous remarks," said Sweeny of his encounters with residents. "But I happen to be a good architect and a citizen of the city. I don't run away from my projects."