

# Cut trees fuel development rumours

## Residents are concerned Cadillac's actions mean they want to buy the post office too

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Town Crier

Residents in the Don Mills area are outraged at the changes happening throughout their community and fear the eventual loss of the area's services and landscape.

Concerns the developer, Cadillac Fairview, plans to take over even more land

around the former Don Mills Centre have been ignited after four trees on Lawrence Ave. and eight trees that line The Donway West near the post office were cut down. Rumours are running rampant that the developer is in negotiations to buy the post office and possibly tear down the nearby medical building it purchased last year at 75 The

Donway West.

Don Valley West councillor Cliff Jenkins said he is unaware of any negotiations between Cadillac Fairview and the federally operated post office.

A spokesman for Cadillac Fairview couldn't confirm or deny whether or not the company was interested in acquiring the property, but said Cadillac Fairview does not currently own the post office.

However, he said following the removal of the trees,

city staff went out to the area to confirm the proper trees were removed.

"Any trees being cut down, you can bet those will be replaced," said Chris Wood for Cadillac Fairview, adding this was done in accordance with the development plan.

Councillor Jenkins said a staff report identified 11 trees to be in poor condition, which would permit their removal, but several residents in the area said the trees removed were full and healthy.

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"They were not diseased," said Eileen Gollert, an area resident. "They were full bloom locus trees, they gave a nice shade. Not only did they look nice, they gave a nice leafy shade which is needed."

"Our whole community is being uprooted," agreed Maria Turcotte, an area resident.

Turcotte said she was not aware of any advance notice of the trees being cut down and she will call the city to express her concerns.

"We're always being told to take care of our environment, and yet somehow that doesn't apply to larger corporations," she said, referring to Cadillac Fairview.

In July, Cadillac Fairview told the *Town Crier* no plans exist to tear down and redevelop the medical

building.

However tenant leases have not been renewed past 2010 and many have expressed concern about the lack of upkeep to the facility.

"There seems to be this feeling of insecurity with Cadillac taking care of the building," said Turcotte.

She said there have been concerns about the elevator and the air conditioning.

Wood, on behalf of Cadillac Fairview, said the company intends to bring the building up to "Cadillac Fairview's standards" and that it is an ongoing project.

As Cadillac Fairview moves forward with its plans to redevelop the centrally located Don Mills Centre into condominiums and an outdoor retail strip, residents say they fear their community may eventually lose

all its services.

Lorraine McEwan, who grew up in the Don Mills neighbourhood and is now raising her own family there, said she and her family have relied on the medical services, from dentists to doctors and pediatricians, at 75 The Donway West for 25 years.

"These services, they are the backbone of the community," she said.

Among her many frustrations with the changes, McEwan said she is especially concerned the new development will not provide an indoor shopping area, something she and other residents repeatedly lobbied Cadillac Fairview for.

Jenkins said though the outdoor mall concept appears to be a done deal, development plans are still being negotiated between city staff and Cadillac Fairview and he expects them to be finalized in the next couple of weeks.

He is hoping to negotiate for up to one acre of land from the developers to build a community centre where the Don Mills Arena now sits.

"I'm endeavouring to see the final agreement before it goes to the OMB," he said.

Jenkins said creating a community centre is important for the area and the key thing at this point is to try and secure some parkland for the area he said is lacking sufficient green space.