

# Mall closure prompts teacher's run for office

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Town Crier

Outraged by Cadillac Fairview's redevelopment plans for the Don Mills Centre, a longtime resident of the area has announced he will run against Don Valley West Councillor Cliff Jenkins in the November election.

Teacher John Blair, a resident of the Don Mills area since the age of five and a member of the Concerned Don Mills Residents, said he is running because he feels developers have taken control of the city and city council.

"It seems like this whole city is out of touch with the community," he said. "They don't care about what the community thinks, it's all about the bottom line, it's all about profits."

Blair said he's not sure if he can believe anything Jenkins says anymore because he, along with many others on city council, are too preoccupied with increasing city revenue. Blair also said community concerns need to be given greater consideration.

"Most on council, from what I can see, are very developer-friendly because revenue for the city is what they're after, and developers give them that," he said.

Particularly outraged by the Cadillac Fairview redevelopment of the Don Mills Centre, Blair said that city council should have rejected the proposal outright.

Now that the development is going forward, Blair said that if elected he will fight for Cadillac Fairview to include an indoor mall by using public pressure such as protest marches and citizen organizations and "just trying to appeal to the humanity," he said.

Jenkins said it's healthy to have a wide range of candidates running but that he still hopes to win.

Like Blair, Jenkins said he's been pressuring Cadillac Fairview to build an indoor mall, but said it's a challenge because city council has no legal means to enforce it.

"We only have moral persuasion," he said.

Blair, who last year moved to Yonge and St. Clair so he could walk to ACEit Secondary School where he teaches, is an award-winning short story writer, a novelist and a screenplay writer.

In the past, the 48-year-old was president of the Toronto branch of the Canadian Authors Association, a volunteer tutor for the Toronto Children's Aid Society and ran a small business, Camp Write-A-Way.