

Candidate wants residents to take back neighbourhood

FANNIE SUNSHINE

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Communities need to retain control over neighbourhoods and should decide which developments are approved.

John Blair, who is running for the Ward 25 (Don Valley West) council seat in the upcoming municipal election Nov. 13, said developers have too much control over cities and residents should have a say in what does and does not appear in their neighbourhoods.

"There is always some developer that comes in and the community is up in arms," he said. "They don't care about the neighbourhood or what the residents want. Developers are very important, but they have to understand what their proper place is."

Blair, 48, who had lived in the ward for more than 40 years until moving to the Yonge Street and St. Clair Avenue area several months ago, decided to run for office after witnessing the outcry over the redevelopment of the Don Mills Centre into an outdoor mall.

Blair, who has remained active in the fight to preserve an indoor shopping centre in the Don Mills Road and Lawrence Avenue area, said he's in the process of familiarizing himself with other issues in the Don Mills community, such as property tax.

"I don't want to be a one-issue candidate, I want to focus on the community and what the community wants rather than what the developers want," Blair said, adding he would move back to the ward if elected.

A private school teacher, Blair is the former president of the Toronto branch of the Canadian Authors Association and has volunteered with the Toronto Children's Aid Society and Eva's Place. He is also a member of the David Suzuki Foundation.