

Submission to the Law Amendments Committee on Bill 467

From the Ocean Breeze Residents Association



Good morning, my name is Celine Porcheron, and I am the president of OBRA, the Ocean Breeze Residents Association. I am here today to state our deep concerns with Bill 467..

Ocean Breeze Village, previously known as Wallace Heights, has a long and proud history of welcoming families and fostering strong community bonds. Our vibrant, diverse, and inclusive neighborhood is surrounded by lush

forests teeming with wildlife and mature trees where children build forts and embark on adventures to the nearby pond. For decades, this community has been the backdrop for countless joyful gatherings, from Pride marches to festive BBQs and visits from Santa Claus. Most of the children here attend the beloved Shannon Park School, which has been a cherished institution since 1952. Ocean Breeze has grown into an affordable, urban village with a unique and cherished character.



But life in Ocean Breeze changed dramatically in 2022 when the property was purchased by a consortium of local developers. Driven by greed and disregard for our community, they have embarked on a ruthless campaign to evict the 1,200 residents, demolish the existing affordable homes, and replace them with high-end condos.

Over the past two years, as our province spiraled into a housing crisis, these unscrupulous developers have forged ahead, sending eviction notices to residents in about a dozen buildings. The first two buildings were demolished this summer, and many more of our neighbors have received notice of their imminent eviction. Despite early assurances, all hopes have been shattered as the consortium retreats behind closed doors, communicating mainly through legal letters that move up eviction dates and offer no assurances.



My neighbor Deborah is being forced to leave earlier than originally stated by the owners. She has not been able to find anything affordable, and will now have to move in with her sister.

A retired gentleman in his 90s, whose wife is in the hospital, has also received the same devastating letter, he told me he doesn't know what he is going to do. Will they too end up in a tent on University Street hoping for a good samaritan to bail them out?

Those of us fortunate enough to be a little further down the queue for eviction and demolition still feel deep stress and despair. My neighbor Julie, with tears in her eyes, asked me to make this point: "Remind them to think of the children! These bulldozers are not just demolishing buildings, they are destroying our community. Our children are being separated from their friends, losing the green spaces where they used to play, and being forced to relocate to new schools. Every day, they walk past the ruins of the homes where their friends used to live, wondering about their own homes, their own futures."

This is our reality, and it is why we must come today and speak up against Bill 467. Housing is a basic human right, yet the current legislation and this bill has failed to effectively cap rents. Rent control must be attached to the units, not the tenants, and the cap must be tied to inflation rates. Fixed-term leases must be abolished! As they are subject to abuse by landlords who use them to abuse renters.



And the clause that enables eviction of tenants if they are just 3 days late in paying their rent? It could only have been written by someone who has never lived a day on the financial edge. We are not a "low-income community"; we are a working-class, even middle-class community, with many households having two income earners. We are the people who cook your meals in restaurants, provide security in public buildings, and collect your garbage. But many of us are scrambling at month's end to pay our bills, needing that mid-month paycheck just to pay the rent. We can only hope that our Premier and his Government will have the empathy and the courage to do the right thing. Our community, our families, and our children are counting on you. Please, please, hear our cries and take action to help Ocean Breeze residents and all Nova Scotia renters.

Thank you.