



NEWS - Toronto & GTA

Committee moves to kick thugs out of TCHC buildings

Sue-Ann Levy

Yesterday at 9:36 PM



In a unanimous vote, Mayor John Tory's executive committee approved a proposal to seek changes in provincial laws that will allow drug dealers or gang bangers who have taken up residence in a TCHC building to be evicted or removed for cause. (ERNEST DOROSZUK/TORONTO SUN)

article

The mayor's executive committee sent a clear message Wednesday to the criminals preying on law-abiding Toronto Community Housing Corp. (TCHC) tenants: We want you out.

In a unanimous and long-overdue vote, the committee approved a proposal by Mayor John Tory to seek changes in provincial laws that will allow drug dealers or gang bangers who have taken up residence in a TCHC building to be evicted or removed for cause.

"I'm frustrated ... I'm angered ... I'm depressed at going to these buildings ... hearing seniors talking about their feelings of safety and security," said Tory. "We need these changes to bring a degree of sanity to the homes in which our tenants live."

The motions need to be endorsed by full council but judging from the support on executive committee, councillors on the left and right of the political spectrum agreed enough is enough.

“Strong action needs to be taken at this time ... this has now received a fevered pitch,” said Coun. Paula Fletcher, who nonetheless while on the TCHC board five years ago did nothing about the problem.

But councillors Frances Nunziata and Cesar Palacio were adamant about the need for evictions for cause when they sat on the TCHC board and reiterated their concerns Wednesday.

“We need to show we’re very serious about getting guns and gangs out of TCHC,” said Palacio. “It’s about time to bring that dose of tough love (to TCHC).”

I’ve been on a crusade for the past two years to make evictions for cause a priority at TCHC and pointed out in a recent column that no formal request had ever been made to the province by City Hall to change the laws.

During a recent morning tour of drug-plagued 155 Sherbourne St. with tenant Teresa Da Silva, I witnessed a young man shooting up, a drug dealer trying to gain entry and two highly intoxicated women lingering at the 11th floor elevator carrying a half-empty bottle of Jack Daniels.

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