

An Open Letter to the Residents of High Park Village, our Allied Organizations and RoHPV Supporters

With balcony lockouts beginning today on the building's north side, we're writing to provide a final update on what we've achieved together as a community.

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Minto's initial failures in notification, communication and planning

Residents of High Park Village (RoHPV) was formed as a response to Minto High Park Village's [letter to residents](#) of 255 Glenlake Avenue on June 1, 2022 demanding that residents vacate our balconies of all personal belongings and informing us that our balcony doors were to be shuttered and secured from the outside with no access from June 20 onwards for a duration of three months, during a summer that is set to be amongst the hottest on record.

At that time, residents had many valid and unaddressed concerns regarding air quality, heat issues and the general health and well-being of our families, roommates and pets, as well as unanswered questions about accommodations and compensation for our loss of space, among other concerns.

Minto provided no viable solutions to relocate and store our personal items, and residents were advised that only *"a very limited number of storage spaces [would be] available for resident use on a first come, first serve basis."*

Minto's extremely short notice, with only 19 days between the first notification and the balcony lockout, was entirely unacceptable in our view. In response to concerns, Minto then claimed that [their November 2021 communication](#) constituted proper legal notice, which remains highly disputed and is not consistent with the guidelines outlined in Ontario's *Residential Tenancies Act* ([Part II, Point \(4\), Sub-points 1, 3 and 4](#)) and associated regulations.

Overall, we felt that Minto's notification, communication and planning around the project was both inconsistent and insufficient. In addition to failing to provide proper legal notice, it lacked empathy to tenants and disregarded the basic needs of residents of 255 Glenlake Avenue.

Our “Six Asks”

With the collective action of residents and with support from our colleagues at [The High Park Tenants Association](#) and [The Office of Bhutika Karpoche, MPP \(Parkdale-High Park\)](#), the RoHPV group responded with full force on June 14 through [a cease and desist letter to Minto](#), highlighting their planning and communication failures and demanding Minto's response to the following “Six Asks”:

1. Consult with residents through no less than two Town Hall Meetings.
2. Postpone the project start date until Minto can provide legal notification, and reasonable responses to residents' questions and concerns.
3. Provide clear and detailed information on project timelines.
4. Take reasonable steps to minimize the project's impacts and disruption to residents.
5. Provide adequate, secure storage solutions for residents' furniture and personal items that must be removed from their balconies.
6. Provide fair compensation to residents for lost living space.

The results of your collective action

As a result of this collective effort and after further pressures from our group and allied organizations, Minto has responded to, and in our view, sufficiently addressed all but one of our “Six Asks”.

1. Minto hosted two Town Hall Meetings, the first in-person event on July 13 and the second virtual event on July 26. Over 90 residents attended, asked questions and demanded answers at these events.
2. On June 15, just five days before the originally planned project start date, [Minto announced](#) that they will delay the start of the balcony waterproofing project until, or shortly after, August 2. Ultimately, the [balcony lockouts began on Monday, August 8](#). This resulted in an additional 1 month and 20 days for residents to prepare for the balcony lockout.
3. While some residents' questions remain unanswered, and we feel that some of the answers provided during the Town Halls were either purposely opaque or evasive, we

believe that questions about project timelines have been sufficiently answered by Minto.

As an outcome of those Town Halls, Minto [created](#) and [maintained](#) a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) document, and made noticeable improvements in transparency. Minto now has an opportunity to build on this to do better at communicating with residents. We hope that Minto will maintain this level of communication and look for ways to improve in the future.

4. We think that Minto is making a genuine effort to minimize the project's impacts as a direct result of listening to residents' concerns and making real efforts to address them.

Among these changes, Minto will now require [contractors to use proper dust collection equipment](#), and has now committed to removing window AC coverings on the day that grinding is completed for each unit, so that residents may operate their window AC again as soon as possible. Both of these come as welcome changes.

5. While not all storage needs of residents were met, notably for those that need regular access to their personal items including bikes, tools and other equipment for the duration of the project, as well for people whose items do not meet Minto's storage criteria, we think that their communal storage plan is at least better than their original offer to provide only *"a very limited number of storage spaces"* to residents on a *"first come, first serve"* basis.

We consider each of these as "wins" and **all of them are a result of your support, action and pressure.**

Notably, only one of our "Six Asks" (regarding compensation) remains entirely unaddressed. Minto has not offered compensation to residents to recoup the monetary value of your lost space, as well as for the project's impact on quality of life and reasonable enjoyment of our homes.

In fact, when asked directly about Above Guideline Increases (AGI) as a potential result of this project, Minto reserved their right to apply for such a rent increase and have indicated that they may pursue this. We hope that residents will join us in challenging the AGI application when and if that time comes by attending the Landlord and Tenant Board (LTB) hearing and providing your individual testimonials.

Keeping Minto accountable, together

Balcony lockouts began today, on Monday August 8. Moving forward, our community needs to hold Minto accountable to their commitments and promises, and to expect better from them in hopes that they may restore the faith and confidence of residents and re-earn the right to their motto *"homes, community and trust"*.

Today, our group consists of 136 residents in the RoHPV Facebook Group and 131 subscribers to our email newsletter, and among these two groups, 146 households at 255 Glenlake had signed on as supporters to our “Six Asks”.

We are a lot stronger when we come together and respond collectively and Minto has certainly taken notice, and we hope that they will make better efforts to communicate, plan and execute projects in the future in a more empathetic way that will take more consideration of residents' needs and rights at the start of and throughout the lifetime of all future projects.

The RoHPV Facebook Group will become a group for our community

With the balcony project now underway, we hope that this group can expand to become a real community hub for all residents of High Park Village, including 255 Glenlake, 111 Pacific and 66 Oakmount.

By opening the conversation beyond the balcony waterproofing project and growing our group with our neighbours, we can all benefit in very positive ways.

We encourage everyone in this group to post and share not only about your balcony-related issues, but also about events, updates and happenings related to our buildings, offers and asks for help and support, lost and found items, etc.

The group admins will remain and posts will continue to be screened, just as before, and most posts will generally go up on the day they are written. This is necessary in order to protect the safety and privacy of members and the integrity of the group as a whole and any (respectful) posts related to our building and community will be welcome.

In the coming days and weeks the RoHPV group will evolve, and so may the rules and guidelines which we will share with you in an effort to keep it a positive, safe and welcoming place for the Residents of High Park Village.

It will continue to be a private group, and will remain a safe place for residents of 255 Glenlake, 111 Pacific and 66 Oakmount and to our allies who want to stay informed about our community.

If you have a friend who lives in a High Park Village building, please invite them to our group directly or via this link [RoHPV.com/Facebook](https://www.rohpv.com/Facebook).

Thank you everyone for all of your efforts, advocacy and support!

RoHPV