

Blue Door begins construction on 'deeply affordable' redevelopment project



A redevelopment project in Newmarket will have an impact on unhoused residents in northern York Region.

On November 29, local dignitaries, including Newmarket-Aurora MP Tony Van Bynen, MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy, and members of Newmarket and Aurora Councils, joined the Blue Door team to help break ground on the redevelopment of Kevin's Place, which has served as a transitional housing location for more than a decade.

The project, Building New Beginnings, will see the existing century-old building, which has taken up just 30 per cent of the property's footprint, redeveloped into a 14-unit stacked townhouse project 'designed to better meet the immediate needs of the community while also providing pathways to long-term housing stability.'

'Blue Door has maximized the limited space to offer as much emergency housing support as possible, however, the time has come to create a new Kevin's Place to serve the community more directly and improve the quality of life for low to no-income families, adults, seniors, and youth,' said Blue Door in a statement. 'The redevelopment will include increased capacity, ensuring accessibility for all individuals, new and updated facilities, and expanded support services.'

Joined by members of the United Way Greater Toronto, which has helped fund the project, MP Van Bynen, on behalf of Federal Housing Minister Sean Fraser, said the project is a step in the right direction for the community.

'Everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to call home,' he said. 'Reaching Home funding for this project in Newmarket will go a long way in ensuring that people in vulnerable conditions have the support they need.'

In one of his final acts as York Region Chair, Wayne Emmerson, whose retirement was effective at the end of the day in which the ceremony was held, said 'safe, secure and affordable housing is essential for everyone.'

'York Region is dedicated to working with our community partners to increase housing options and we are pleased to see meaningful action with Blue Door's groundbreaking at Kevin's Place,' he said. 'Through the Community Housing Supply Grant Pilot Program, we are helping to fund Blue Door to build new affordable housing units and provide homes and supports for those in need. Our collaboration with partners is vital to fostering strong, caring and safe communities.'

Added Michael Braithwaite, CEO of Blue Door: 'This redevelopment is a great example of how the non-profit housing sector can create deeply affordable and supportive housing to serve our most vulnerable. We are grateful to all of our partners for their support of this important housing development, and are hopeful it's one of many to come as we work together to tackle the current housing

and homelessness crisis.?

By Brock Weir