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Building developer accused of cutting down trees on Toronto property it doesn't own yet



A developer accused of chopping down trees across the city to make room for their multiplexes allegedly cut down more on a property it doesn't own yet. Brandon Choghri speaks with frustrated neighbours about the latest allegation against Modcity.



By **[Brandon Choghri](#)**

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A building developer accused of illegally cutting down trees across Toronto has had another allegation made against them.

Residents in the Dufferin Street and Eglinton Avenue area say developer Modcity came and cut down several trees on a property on Kirknewton Road late at night on a lot they don't actually own yet.

"They cut down one big tree ... there was two other trees here. In the video, you'll see one of them still standing, the other one was cut down," said local resident Stephanie Pacheco. "They came back because now that tree is no longer there so I was up until about 2:00 in the morning so it must have been sometime after that they came back and cut down that tree."

The property on Kirknewton near Dufferin and Eglinton has been sold to Modcity but it doesn't close until late May. After workers were caught cutting down trees, the actual homeowner, put up a 'No Trespassing' sign

"It's absolutely disgusting, to be blunt, they come in, they do whatever they want, they completely break all the bylaws," shared Pacheco. "They obviously don't want to get permits because once the city gets involved it becomes a hassle to them so they wanna get ahead of the game, they're gaming the system essentially."

It's the latest in a long list of infractions that neighbours and city councillors have accused Modcity of committing including **chopping down an 80-year-old honey locust tree** after city staff specifically told them they were not allowed.

The developer was also **allegedly caught going into a neighbouring yard** to try and cut down someone else's tree.

Killing or injuring a mature tree in Toronto comes with a maximum fine of \$100,000. The City of Toronto currently has nine open investigations into Modcity, but that hasn't stopped them from doing business.

"They break the rules, they get more permits and more permits and more permits and we reach out and nothing is done," shared Pacheco.

Just around the corner from the home on Kirknewton is another Modcity property on Ennerdale Road where workers started demolishing a house before they had any permits.

A City of Toronto examiner's notice was issued over this lot and now it sits half-destroyed with neighbours fearing it could damage their properties.

Residents have accused Modcity or other developers of submitting false documents to the Committee of Adjustment to give the appearance of community support.

At a recent meeting where variances were proposed at a property on Donlea Drive, they listed four supporters at a Modcity property on Eglinton.

"We were all shocked by it because at that time no one was living there and in fact, the City hadn't granted them any occupancy permits yet, to this day I don't think there's anybody living there," Karin

Hwang, who lives next to the Eglinton development, said

CityNews reached out to the developer for comment but did not hear back.

Councillor Rachel Chernos Lin is bringing a new motion to council this week to try to crack down on this kind of behaviour, by fact checking the documents that are brought to Committee of Adjustment.

“This resonates with people because it is a place where community often voices their concern, so we want to make sure that community voice is heard that it’s accurate,” said Chernos Lin.

Councillor Chernos Lin’s member’s motion on documents submitted to Committee of Adjustment will be debated by council Thursday afternoon.

It also follows several changes that councillors have made to protect the City’s tree canopy including stronger enforcement and compliance tools. A full list of the changes can be found **on the City’s website.**



Tree branches can be seen on a property near Eglinton and Dufferin, allegedly cut down by a developer who had not yet gained possession of the property. CITYNEWS

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