

From: Vivien Chen [REDACTED]
Sent: July 29, 2010 12:46 AM
To: Horchik, Dan
Subject: Requesting for changing the street number of my house

Dear Dan,

Let me introduce myself. My name is Vivien Chen, living at 4 Edward Roberts Dr., Markham L6C 0E2. It is my first time writing to you. I hope you could help me to get my house street number changed from No. 4 to No. 2.

In Chinese culture, 4 is a number deemed unlucky as its sound resembles the word for death.

I have been living in Markham since 2001. My first house was a townhouse with street number 24. To myself, I am not very concerned about the number. But later, my parents immigrated in Canada and lived with my family. They were very concerned about the number. They said they loved living in Canada, But the only thing bothering them was the street number of our house. Considering their concerns and the growth of our family members, my husband and I decided to buy a new detached house in the new community at Victoria Square developed by Monarch. When looking for the lot on the site planning paper in the sales center, we decided to choose the first house on the street. I was assuming that the street number for the first house should be either 1 and 2. My parents were so happy when I promised them that this time we would definitely not getting the number connecting to 4. It was my fault that I did not know Markham's rule for street number assignment that the first house street number starts with 4, as unassigned 2 is reserved for corner lot. After the house was closing and we found our house was assigned number 4. This was really like a bolt from the blue to my parents and also to myself. Then we made a very difficult decision. We decided to sell the house. We had our house listed for sell right after the closing. After three months, we did not get any offer. Our agent told me that most of the potential buyers were Chinese and they expressed that they liked the house, but not the number. As I already sold the townhouse and there was no hope that we could sell the new house very soon, we decided to move in the new house. Actually we all liked this new community. My parents also made a lot of new Chinese senior friends here and they enjoyed gardening. But I noticed many times that they sighed when looking at the street number plate in front of the house.

In May this year, my father was diagnosed in the early stage of cirrhosis of the liver. He has been seeing the specialist. We are all very worried about his health situation. One day, my mom talked to me very seriously. She said they really did not like the house number. The number 4 makes them very uncomfortable. She was very concerned about my dad's health. I knew she was connecting the number with my dad's illness. She wanted me to try my best to see if there was any possible to replace it with 2. She said she understood that if the number was 14 or 24, it was not possible to change it. But our house is the first house on the street, there is no house using number 2. She cannot understand why we cannot use number 2. She hopes the change of the number would bring good luck to my dad's health. I did go to the town's development services office, but my request was rejected at that time.

Several days ago, one of our friends told us a good news that it is now possible to replacing No. 4 with No. 2. She said she read the news on the newspaper some time ago. There are 4 cases similar to my situation in Markham. All of them have been approved to use No. 2 and get rid of No. 4 recently through the help of their councillor. My parents and I are so excited to know this news. We finally can see the light of hope. I went to the town's development services office the other day and was told that I need to write to you for help.

Dear Dan, I hope you could understand my parents' culture background and their concerns. They are over 70 years old and it is not easy to change their thinking. My intension is to make them feel comfortable and happy living in my house.

(They are my dependants and they cannot afford to live by themselves.) I sincerely hope you could help me to have my house number changed to 2, since this number is available on my street, and based on the approval of the four similar cases.

Thank you in advance for your great help. You may not imagine how this change will mean to my family especially to my parents.

I look forward to hearing from you. You could reach me via email [REDACTED] or you could call me during day time at [REDACTED] (work number).

With best regards,
Vivien Chen