



Real Estate Council of Ontario

Media Release

Issued: April 4, 2007

FORMER REAL ESTATE BROKER SENTENCED TO 5 YEARS IN PRISON

On Monday, April 2, 2007, Courtney Wallis Simpson was sentenced to five years in prison and ordered to pay restitution to her victims of \$4.5 million after she was found guilty of Fraud Over \$5,000 last fall. Ms. Wallis Simpson also received two years in prison for charges under the *Real Estate and Business Brokers Act* to run concurrent to the criminal sentence.

In September 2006 Courtney Wallis Simpson pled guilty to 22 charges under the *Real Estate and Business Brokers Act*: 2 counts of maintaining more than one real estate trust account; 11 counts of obstructing an investigator; 8 counts of obstructing an inspector; and 1 count of furnishing false information in an application. Ms. Wallis Simpson pled guilty to the criminal charge in August 2006.

In November 2005 a freeze order, freezing bank accounts of York Region Realty Inc., was issued by the Director under the *Real Estate and Business Brokers Act*. Ms. Wallis Simpson was the principal broker of York Regional Realty Inc. On November 11, 2005, the Registrar issued proposals to revoke the registrations of Courtney Wallis Simpson and York Region Realty Inc.

On December 2, 2005, the York Regional Police Central Fraud Unit arrested and charged Ms. Wallis Simpson with a number of fraud-related offences. While operating York Region Realty between June 2003 and October 2005, Ms. Wallis Simpson defrauded more than 60 investors by taking payments that were to have been invested in mortgages. It is now known that none of this money went into mortgages and this was just an elaborate "Ponzi" scheme.

In addition to the victims of the "Ponzi" scheme, Wallis-Simpson also defrauded many would-be purchasers of commercial real estate by misappropriating real estate trust deposits. According to York Regional Police, the total loss to investors and would-be real estate buyers was approximately \$15 million of which \$6 million was recovered for the victims.

Wallis-Simpson operated numerous bank accounts to keep her scheme from collapsing.

The registration of York Region Realty Inc. was terminated on December 12, 2005. The Notice of Proposal to revoke the registration of Courtney Wallis Simpson was appealed to the Licence Appeal Tribunal. On June 16, 2006, the Licence Appeal Tribunal directed the Registrar to carry out his proposal. The registration of Ms. Wallis Simpson was revoked on June 16, 2006.

York Region Realty Inc. was located at 6072 Main Street in Stouffville, Ontario.

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PUBLIC ADVISORY

Real Estate Council of Ontario

Courtney Wallis Simpson and York Region Realty Inc.

Updated: Sep 13 2006

RECO is taking all appropriate action pursuant to the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act (the REBBA) and the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 (the REBBA 2002) with respect to York Region Realty Inc. and Courtney Wallis Simpson. The REBBA 2002 came into effect on March 31, 2006.

York Region Realty Inc. was registered under the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act (the REBBA) with an office located at 6072 Main Street in Stouffville, Ontario. The principal broker of York Region Realty Inc. was Courtney Wallis Simpson.

Courtney Wallis Simpson

On November 11, 2005, the Registrar issued a Notice of Proposal to Revoke the registration of Courtney Wallis Simpson. The Notice of Proposal to Revoke was appealed to the Licence Appeal Tribunal.

Courtney Wallis Simpson was registered as an employee of Century 21 Royal Windsor Realty Inc. on January 6, 2006.

Under the REBBA 2002, the Registrar has the authority to order an immediate temporary suspension of registration where it is in the public interest to do so. The Registrar, by order, temporarily suspended the registration of Courtney Wallis Simpson on May 1, 2006 for a period of 15 days.

On May 15, 2006, the Licence Appeal Tribunal (LAT) Ordered that the Suspension Order Courtney Wallis Simpson is under extend and remain in effect until June 16, 2006. On June 16, 2006, LAT directed the Registrar to carry out his proposal. Therefore the registration of Courtney Wallis Simpson was revoked on June 16, 2006.

On September 11, 2006, Courtney Wallis Simpson pled guilty to 22 charges under the REBBA. Sentencing in this matter has been scheduled for March 6, 2007.

York Region Realty Inc.

On November 2, 2005 a freeze order, freezing bank accounts of York Region Realty Inc., was issued by the Director under the REBBA. On November 11, 2005, the Registrar issued a proposal to revoke the registration of York Region Realty Inc.

The registration of York Region Realty Inc. was terminated on December 12, 2005.

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