



November 22, 2021

10th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Nancy Martins

RE: PH29.2 The City of Toronto's Review of Laneway Suites – Monitoring Program and Zoning Bylaw Amendments – Final Report

Dear Deputy Mayor Ana Bailao, Chair and Members, Planning and Housing Committee

FONTRA members have participated in City Planning's consultations.

We are concerned about 2 particular proposed changes that relax current regulations; the increased permitted height and the blanket exemption for walkways. Such decisions should not be based on Committee of Adjustment decisions without evaluating their reasons, if any, and without evaluating impacts on abutting neighbours. Or developed just to ensure compliance.

Proposed Increase in permitted height from 6m to 6.3m –

We are pleased to see that the consultant's recommendation of 6.75m is not accepted. We question as to whether the additional .3m is really needed. The technical advice we have received is that a building can be successfully built with a height of 6m. (See attached planning opinion)

FONTRA requests that

The proposed amendment regarding "Increasing the maximum permitted height of a suite from 6.0 m. to 6.3 m. NOT be approved.

Proposed exemption for walkways of up to 1.5 m wide from the requirement for soft landscaping for lots in excess of 6 metres

The report states that "maintaining soft landscaping is important for many reasons, including amenity, storm water retention, growing space for trees, and combatting the urban heat island affect". The report also provides the rationale that the 85% lot area requirement for softscaping will result in a comparable relative requirement to that for houses without laneway suites. Given the importance of building up the permeable surface in residential neighbourhoods, the proposed significant exemption for a 1.5m wide walkway is not needed.

- Most lots will be able to accommodate the accessibility standard of 1.5m for a walkway area within the 15% hardscaping limit and narrower walkways will be even more accommodated. Narrower walkways should be encouraged to ensure more softscaping.
- Why provide for an exemption of 1.5m just for the short distance from the main house to the laneway suite? There is no required walkway width for access from the street to the main house and only .9 m is required between neighbouring houses for emergency use.
- The accessibility standard of 1.5m walkway will only be needed only in the limited cases where 2 wheelchairs have to pass each other. For others the exemption will just provide more paved area for other uses and reduce compliance with the 85% softscaping objective.

**FONTRA requests that
The proposed amendment for an exemption for a walkway against the 85% soft landscaping allocation NOT be approved.**

Yours truly,

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CC Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and
Executive Director, City Planning
Graig Uens, City Planning

The Federation of North Toronto Residents' Associations (FoNTRA) is a non-profit, volunteer organization comprised of over 30 member organizations. Its members, all residents' associations, include at least 170,000 Toronto residents within their boundaries. The residents' associations that make up FoNTRA believe that Ontario and Toronto can and should achieve better development. Its central issue is not *whether* Toronto will grow, but *how*. FoNTRA believes that sustainable urban regions are characterized by environmental balance, fiscal viability, infrastructure investment and social renewal.