



Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario  
Centre ontarien de défense des droits des locataires

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**SUBMISSION TO THE  
PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE OF THE  
CITY OF TORONTO**

**REGARDING  
REPEAL OF THE NEW ZONING BY-LAW**

**May 10, 2011**

**SUBMISSION TO THE PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT  
COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF TORONTO REGARDING REPEAL OF THE  
NEW ZONING BY-LAW**

The Advocacy Centre for Tenants Ontario (ACTO) is a community legal clinic funded by Legal Aid Ontario to provide legal services to low-income residential tenants across Ontario. Many of those tenants live in rooming houses in the City of Toronto. On their behalf, we appealed the rooming house provisions of By-law 1156-2010 to the Ontario Municipal Board. These provisions maintain the existing inconsistent zoning treatment of rooming house among different parts of the City. In our view, this represents bad land use planning and unlawful discrimination against the people that live in rooming houses.

In January 2010, this Committee deferred consideration of the report of the Chief Planner on rationalization of rooming house zoning across the City until November of this year. The Committee's decision contemplated a process of consultation and dialogue leading to improved zoning regulation of this important source of private-sector affordable housing. The existing zoning patchwork was carried over in the new by-law and approved by Council on the understanding that this discussion would continue.

As a result, we support the repeal of the new zoning by-law as it applies to rooming houses. The approach in the new by-law is wrong and should not have been adopted. However, the old by-law has the same approach and it needs immediate review. We are here to ask you to re-affirm the January 2010 decision of this Committee that the matter be brought back to you in November after an opportunity for further public consultation. The Chief Planner advises at page 6 of his report to Council on April 8, 2011 that the Planning Department cannot carry out the supporting work for this process. We ask that you direct the Chief Planner to find the time to consult and report to the November meeting of this Committee.

Rooming houses continue to exist in all areas of the City, whether or not Council chooses to grant them status as a legal use. However, by forcing them underground, you put the tenants of this housing at risk and you open the door to cash-based businesses that exploit students and newcomers. The result, as reported in the *Star* this weekend is “little rabbit warrens with enough space for a bed, a desk and perhaps a kitchenette tucked into a closet”. City planning - and the enforcement process that goes with it - is designed to prevent these unsafe and unhealthy conditions. Please ensure that rooming house regulation comes back to this Committee as scheduled and that the Planning Department carries out the work needed for its proper consideration.