



## The Annex Residents' Association

June 17, 2014

Planning and Growth Management Committee  
10th Floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queen Street West  
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2

Re: PG34.22 - Towards a Functional Committee of Adjustment

The ARA has reviewed the recommendations that Councillor Jaye Robinson has made to the Planning and Growth Management Committee and agrees that these represent very good improvements to the current system and approach.

Specifically, we have made notes for each recommendation.

1. The Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, be directed, in consultation with other city staff, as appropriate, to report in the first quarter of 2015 to the Planning and Growth Management Committee with concrete recommendations to improve the functioning of the Committee of Adjustment related to minor variances, including, among other things, the feasibility and cost implications of:
  - a. Expanding the public hearing notice area beyond 60 metres of the subject property;  
*Any expansion of the communication area is welcomed. Notices so often go to absentee owners and the residents/tenants need to be alerted. Is it possible to send notices to residential occupiers?*
  - b. Extending the timeline for the delivery of the public hearing notice beyond 10 days;  
*15 or more days would be preferable*
  - c. Improving the manner, form and content of the public notice and the public notice sign;  
*The more information the better. Changes described in clear English would be appreciated.*
  - d. Alternative mechanisms or means to engage surrounding neighbours prior to public hearings;  
*Direct communication with approved Residents Associations would be appreciated.*

- e. Improving the training and ongoing professional development of Committee of Adjustment members;

*We are not aware of the current training regimen but would, of course, support more training.*

- f. Requiring relevant professional experience or education as a qualification for appointment to the Committee of Adjustment;

*This sounds like an excellent idea. However, defining and then finding these professionals will be difficult.*

- g. Requiring a new notice and public hearing for any revision and/or significant revision to a Committee of Adjustment application;

*Sounds reasonable.*

- h. Requiring a city planner to be on hand during public hearings of the Committee of Adjustment to answer questions from Committee of Adjustment members and the public;

*We fully support this suggestion.*

- i. Audio-visual recording or audio recording of Committee of Adjustment panels; and

*This seems to be self-evident as an improvement. It is always astonishing to go to the OMB and realize that no records are kept that can be searched by the public.*

- j. A public participation strategy, including the development of a comprehensive guide, to ensure that the public is well informed about Committee of Adjustment processes as well as how to effectively engage in Committee of Adjustment hearings.

*Specifically we need more understanding of what constitutes a minor variance. Variance creep over the past decade has made the term "minor" moot.*

Respectfully submitted,

David Harrison  
Chair  
Annex Residents' Association

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