

From: [Cindy Weiner](#)
To: [councilmeeting](#)
Subject: My comments for 2021.PH22.7 on May 5, 2021 City Council
Date: May 2, 2021 4:43:43 PM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the May 5, 2021 City Council meeting on item 2021.PH22.7, Update on Committee of Adjustment Virtual Public Hearings

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

I am writing on behalf of the St. Andrew's Ratepayers Association **in support of the recommendations proposed by the Planning and Housing Committee**, in particular, the request for an independent public review of the current Committee of Adjustment process, which unfairly puts residents at a disadvantage.

The April 6, 2021 Report for Action from the Chief Planner and Executive Director states that public hearing notices are sent out between 20-24 days in advance of a hearing, but our experience is that these notices are often not received until 7-10 days in advance, giving residents little time to inform themselves, get expert advice and prepare a submission to the committee.

The entire process is weighted in favour of the applicant. Abundant time is given to the applicant to prepare for the hearing, yet residents have a matter of days. Why can't affected residents and residents' associations as well as ward councillors be informed of the variance requests at the time they are submitted? Or during the review process which takes place far in advance of the hearing date? Perhaps it should be incumbent on the applicant and/or the Committee of Adjustment to notify impacted residents at the time an application is submitted.

Additionally, the hearing notice is in English only and some homeowners do not speak English and have no idea what the notice is about and/or cannot communicate to the Committee in their own language. Notices should be available in other languages, or there should be the option to request notices in other languages.

In many communities, such as St. Andrew's, houses are occupied by renters or may be vacant, for sale, in the process of a sale, etc. so the current, prospective or new owner does not receive the hearing notice. It has become the responsibility of the neighbours or Association to try and track down the owners, which is often difficult or not possible. A solution needs to be put in place to assure the owner receives timely notification. Perhaps the Committee should ask for confirmation that the notice has been received.

Lastly, from the perspective of residents, the definition of what constitutes a "minor" variance appears to be arbitrary. There should be clear parameters to define what is considered a "minor" and what is considered a "major or unsuitable" variance request.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and we urge you to vote in favour of an independent public review of the Committee of Adjustment process in order to ensure it is equitable for all affected parties.

Cindy Weiner
President, St. Andrew's Ratepayers Association

