



April 6, 2021

12th floor, West Tower, City Hall
100 Queen Street West
Toronto, ON M5H 2N2
Attention: Marilyn Toft

RE: MM31.10 Improving Virtual Community Consultation Meetings for Development Applications

Dear Mayor Tory and Members of Council,

The South Eglinton Ratepayers' and Residents' Association (SERRA) expresses *strong support* for Councillor Robinson's Motion to be considered by City Council at its meeting of April 7, 2021.

Development applications in the Yonge – Eglinton area continue to arrive and consequently, Community Consultation meetings are a necessary step in the application review process.

City Planning has done a remarkable redesign of the Community Consultation process from an in-person to a virtual format. However, after a number of those meetings, it is clear to us that the in-person process of a community meeting is not easy to replicate in a virtual format.

Some of the concerns are:

- the effectiveness of virtual meetings versus in-person meetings ... it just takes longer for an exchange of comments.
- there is no opportunity for attendees to become familiar with the application prior to the start of the community consultation meeting (as there is with in-person meetings)
- there is currently little sense of a "community" since attendees have no visibility of other attendees.

We agree with Councillor Robinson, that there should be a review of the virtual community consultation meeting, in consultation with members of the public, and we would be interested in participate in such a review.

Looking further ahead to the time when Covid-19 pandemic restrictions are lifted, we would recommend resumption of in-person Community Consultation as the standard process and the use of the virtual process under exceptional circumstances.

Respectfully,

Andy Gort,
President, SERRA

cc. Councillor Jaye Robinson, Ward 15
Gregg Lintern, Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning
Kerri Voumvakis, Director, Strategic Initiatives, City Planning
SERRA Board