



Planning and Housing Committee

November 25, 2021

RE: PHC 29.14: Committee of Adjustment – Status Update

In my capacity as board member for the LBNA I've attended Etobicoke York panel CoA hearings fairly regularly monitoring applications in our neighbourhood.

We appreciate the CoA facilitating a forum so that building matters may be discussed with the members of the public.

During the pandemic, the WebEx Zoom format has worked quite well and, in some ways, made the Committee of Adjustment hearings more accessible to the residents. We would hope that some form of virtual access for public participation continues once we are through this difficult time.

The staff report attached to this item mentions that time clocks for speakers as well as Agenda numbers have been provided for the YouTube viewers - to provide transparency. Great idea. Is it possible to have that resource available to the people speaking to an item during the CoA as well?

Checking in at the beginning of the session and waiting for several hours for a file to come up deters many members of the public from participating. Having a running tally of what Agenda Item is being discussed and a timer would be very handy for those tuning in to speak to an item on the agenda. The chair advises speakers when they are running short on time, wouldn't it be better to have a countdown clock that the speaker could also see?

We are still encountering late additions of material to the file, specifically Staff Reports, often after the deadline for posting a written comment from members of the public. There's even been cases where documentation has not been filed before the hearing takes place. This makes it difficult for members of the public to fully understand the City's position on an application, leaves no opportunity to contact staff regarding any questions and to make a reasoned response to an application.

Can it not be required that all reports and information on an application be publicly available before the notices for the CoA Hearing are sent out? We appreciate the volume of material that staff are managing, but it is even more difficult for volunteers who are doing this on top of their full-time jobs to scramble under extremely tight time frames.

Perhaps the applications are moving too quickly through the system and more time should be provided for Planning and/or Forestry to submit their reports and still give neighbours and members of the public a chance to respond?

In looking at the dates of applications and dates of CoA hearings, we question the need for twice a month Committee of Adjustment Hearings in Etobicoke and would ask that consideration be given to going back to once-a-month CoA hearings.

We would welcome the opportunity to participate in the further consultations and discussions on this topic.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andy Choles".

Andy Choles
Director, Long Branch Neighbourhood
Association

Email: longbranchnato@gmail.com