



# Councillor Jaye Robinson



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**February 28, 2023**

**To: Planning & Housing Committee**

**Re: PH2.5 Committee of Adjustment – Consultant Review**

Dear Committee Members,

In 2021, City Council requested a consultant review of public participation in the Committee of Adjustment (CoA). After a lengthy review and robust consultation, the consultant's recommendations for how we can make the CoA more fair, transparent, accessible, and efficient are before you today.

I regularly hear from residents across Don Valley West who are disillusioned with the process and feel that residents cannot effectively participate in CoA hearings with the resources currently available to them. In 2014, I moved a [motion](#) requesting solutions to many of the issues identified in the consultant's report, including public notification, professional development, and procedural fairness. While improvements have been made in recent years, it is still challenging for many residents to review complex proposals and learn about how to engage with the Committee in the short timeframe they are provided.

In particular, many are concerned by the applicant's ability to amend a proposal up to the day before the hearing. Unless the applicant chooses to communicate with neighbours in good faith, participating residents only learn about these changes in real time at the public hearing, at which point they do not have an opportunity to review the revised plans or provide comments. I am encouraged that City Planning will be reviewing this practice, as recommended by the consultant.

In addition to the one-year work plan, this report contains four longer-term recommendations related to providing detailed Decision Notices, eliminating substantive application revisions after Public Notices have been issued, establishing commenting guidelines, and reviewing the CoA service delivery model. While I understand that these recommendations are more complex in nature, they will have a meaningful impact and I am requesting for them to be actioned expeditiously.

With the authority to make significant land-use decisions, the CoA plays an important role in local communities across Toronto. It is imperative that the process is clear, transparent, and accessible, that residents can easily access the information they need to take an informed position, and that hearings are conducted fairly.

Below, I have included four recommendations that will be moved by the Committee Chair on my behalf. Thank you in advance for your consideration and support.



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## **Recommendations**

That Planning & Housing Committee:

1. Direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to begin undertaking KPMG recommendation number eight related to an applicant's ability to substantively revise an application after public notice has been distributed as part of the work that will begin in 2023 and report back to Planning and Housing Committee with an update in Q1 2024.
2. Direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to consider requesting panelists to inquire whether applicants have attempted to consult with interested parties when an application is substantively amended after public notice has been distributed if this practice is not eliminated, along with other strategies to improve dialogue between applicants and neighbours.
3. Direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, in consultation with the City Clerk, to consider including timestamped links to the Committee of Adjustment public hearings that are livestreamed on the City's YouTube channel on the Application Information Centre as part of the effort to provide more detailed Decision Notices, similar to the timestamped links that are now attached to City Council decisions on the newly revamped TMMIS website.
4. Direct the Chief Planner and Executive Director, City Planning, to accelerate the recommendations for active implementation and further study contained in this report.

Sincerely,

**Jaye Robinson**  
City Councillor  
Ward 15 – Don Valley West