

Roundtable on Ontario's Land Use Planning System

Purpose of Roundtable Meeting

The Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing is hosting an invitation only roundtable with individuals and representatives from the municipal sector, certain stakeholders, community groups and experts to engage in a comprehensive discussion on the land use planning system, including the appeal process.

Meeting Objectives:

- To facilitate an exchange of current information among participants, including the use or potential use of existing tools (e.g. development permit system, local appeal bodies);
- To generate an understanding of how the planning system, the OMB and the entire appeal process are viewed by the various stakeholders (e.g. identify what works and challenges); and,
- To identify ideas for potential improvement to any part of the system or processes within it.

Meeting Date:

June 19, 2012 - 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Location:

Father Madden Hall
Carr Hall, St. Michael's College,
University of Toronto
100 St. Joseph Street
Toronto , ON, M5S 1J4



Meeting Materials:

- The terms of reference, meeting agenda, and supporting documents will be provided at the meeting.
- Snacks and refreshments will also be made available

Background:

- Land use planning involves managing our land and resources. It helps each community to set out goals about how it will grow and develop and to work out ways of reaching those goals while keeping important social, economic and environmental concerns in mind. It balances the

interests of individual property owners with the wider interests and objectives of the whole community.

- Good planning leads to orderly growth and efficient provision of services. It touches all of us and helps us to have the kind of community that we want.
- The Province has provided the legislative basis for land use planning in Ontario and through the Planning Act sets the ground rules for planning. The Province also provides policy direction on matters of provincial interest through the Provincial Policy Statement and Provincial plans.
- Within this structure, municipalities establish their own goals for their community and set the rules that control how development will occur. They also make most planning decisions that implement the planning system and those decisions determine the future of their community.
- Planning is often controversial. People have different ideas about what planning outcomes are desirable, so disputes are bound to arise in any planning system.
- Since the Ontario Municipal Board is an adjudicative tribunal, issues that reach the Board are often controversial and can result in decisions which are viewed unfavourably by some of those who have an interest, including the general public and municipalities.
- As part of the Planning Reform Initiatives in 2004 and 2007, the government undertook comprehensive consultations with the public, municipalities, stakeholders, and Aboriginal communities. These reforms included new provincial policies and Planning Act changes.
- Although there have been major changes to the Planning Act regarding the land-use planning system as a result of Planning Reform, the planning system including the appeal process, still faces a number of evolving challenges.
- Many municipalities have not implemented the reforms such as updating official plans and zoning by-laws as they have resource issues (both financial and staffing), and competing time commitments. As a result, it may take years to see the majority of the benefits from the reforms.
- As appeals involve various interests, it can be difficult to reconcile all interests while applying applicable provincial and municipal policies. Also, the proceedings before the Board have become more court-like, which some have suggested has restricted public participation due to financial barriers. Municipalities have also identified costs as a significant concern.
- The invitees to the roundtable meeting include individuals and representatives from certain stakeholders and experts such as municipal representatives, citizen's groups, legal community, planning experts, and the development community. The invitees have knowledge of the land use planning system, appeals and the OMB.
- The roundtable provides an opportunity to identify issues, perspectives and problems with the system, and ideas for improvement.