

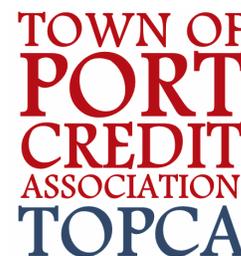
December 19, 2016

By E-Mail to: [OMBReview@ontario.ca](mailto:OMBReview@ontario.ca)

LETTER OF COMMENT

RE: **Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) Review**

PER: [www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page14965.aspx](http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page14965.aspx)



The Town of Port Credit Association (TOPCA) is the municipally recognized residents' association for the Port Credit District, located in south Mississauga on the north shore of Lake Ontario. TOPCA is an all-volunteer, non-profit group which relies on membership support to conduct our activities. We are affiliated with the City of Mississauga through the Community Group Support Program. Now in our 10th year, we are a representative voice for the community's interests with all levels of government and are active in the areas of land use planning, promotion of community events and our own cultural projects.

For many years TOPCA has worked collaboratively with other community groups, the City, and when possible, developers, in order to help realize our local Vision: *'Evolving the Urban Village'*. Throughout this public engagement process we have had much citizen-level experience with the OMB.

The TOPCA Executive has been advocating for reform of the OMB for several years. Our webpage: [www.topca.net/issues/OMB.htm](http://www.topca.net/issues/OMB.htm) documents our past activity, including representation on then-Minister Kathleen Wynne's **Roundtable on the Land Use Planning System** in 2012. TOPCA summarized its position on OMB Reform at that time, in a Letter (July 17, 2012) *to which we again refer you*, posted at: [www.topca.net/documents/TOPCA\\_Letter\\_July\\_17\\_2012\\_re\\_OMB\\_per\\_Jim\\_Danahy.pdf](http://www.topca.net/documents/TOPCA_Letter_July_17_2012_re_OMB_per_Jim_Danahy.pdf) (4p PDF).

More recently (2015, 2016) our president, Mary Simpson, has participated in the **Ministry's Planning Act Working Group** specific to the Committee of Adjustment portion of the land use planning regulatory framework. We consider this a preliminary step before the OMB phase, and the recommended measures that would eliminate the number of cases arriving on the doorstep of the CofA could well apply to the OMB. It was felt at the Working Group that by providing better **clarity** and understanding of the process (including zoning) on the part of residents, that it could effectively eliminate the backlog of relatively simple (minor) variance issues the CofA has to deal with, and thereby free up the Committee's time to focus on the more serious breaches or major variance requests pertaining to the municipality's Official Plan.

Four (4) of our Executive members attended the latest OMB Town Hall held November 17, 2016 at the Port Credit Legion and gave specific, individual input there. In addition we provide the following points:

1. OMB reform shouldn't be about 'tweaking' the process *when* a case is heard (e.g. citizen assistance), but rather about *eliminating* (or at least minimizing) the possibility for developers to use the OMB as a tool (or threat) to work outside the parameters of a municipality's Official Plan ~IF~ the municipality has a provincially approved Official Plan which has already considered all the land use options, including with developer input, at the public consultation stage.
2. Planning by appeal is not good planning. At the very least there should be a 2-year waiting period before any non-compliant applications could even be submitted, so that each new OP revision has a chance to 'breathe' and be applied within the intended context. The Official Plan is indeed a living document, with each new developer 'test' or municipal review being an opportunity for it to evolve, but there should be a resting period after each revision to restore confidence and harmony.

3. Clarity is also a significant procedural issue for citizens and having easy-to-follow websites and more effective lines of support should still be pursued as part of the reform process -- these are valid issues which have been raised through the consultation which should certainly be addressed.

This timely OMB review may allow our fragile planning district of Port Credit to ultimately achieve the community Vision and maintain its village character without the disruption, cost and unwelcome outcomes of continual OMB appeals.

We look forward to learning about the input received and next steps in the OMB Review.

On behalf of the TOPCA Executive,

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President

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Vice-President

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