

## Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association

C/o Jane Hawkrigg  
65 Navy Street  
Oakville, Ontario  
L6J 2Z1

Ms. Bin Newell  
Manager of Community Planning  
Planning Services Department  
Town of Oakville  
1225 Trafalgar Road  
Oakville, Ontario  
:L6J 5A6

February 7, 2003  
(forwarded by email)

### **Re: Request for Comments on Proposed OPA Amendment regarding the Planning Process and the Public**

Dear Ms. Newell:

At our January meeting, the Board of Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association reviewed the November 20, 2002 Staff Report on "The Planning Process and the Public" and provide the following comments for your consideration:

- As an Association, we have participated actively over the last number of years in a number of ways in the Town's planning process
- We support Council's resolve to allow for more effective involvement of the public in the planning process. As citizens of the community, we believe that it is in everyone's best interest to ensure that we as citizens are provided the opportunity to participate effectively in planning for what the future looks like in the Town we call home.
- It is our understanding that the Official Plan is the principal policy statement regarding future development of the Town of Oakville and as such any changes or updates to it require careful consideration. As a result, we are very concerned about the proposed policy recommendations for change regarding public input.
  - Rather than the specifics in Part B, Goals and Objectives which you have outlined, we believe that it would be more appropriate to consider guiding principles for public participation (as outlined in the Milton example you provided). We would suggest the following:

Goal: To obtain public and agency input on planning and development matters

- Objectives:
- To provide for effective notice procedures to promote public awareness
  - To design consultation processes that enable citizens to participate in key stages of the planning process including Official Plan, Secondary Plan, Zoning Bylaws, Similar Planning Studies, etc.
  - To provide for balanced representation in all consultation processes

We believe that this approach provides assurances to the citizens of Oakville that the Town is committed to their involvement while enabling the Town to maintain appropriate flexibility to design and implement citizen involvement processes that make sense for the specific planning initiative

- o The Stakeholder Advisory Committee concept which allows for a wide citizen representation makes sense. However, rather than using this mechanism on a “project by project” basis as your first objective suggests – we would recommend that consideration be given to establishing a regular citizens advisory body that would have a specific term and a regular role to play in reviewing planning
- o We are unanimously opposed to your second objective “*to encourage developers to pre-consult with the public prior to submitting a development application that may generate public interest*”.

We do not believe that this recommendation fits in anyway with Town Council’s directive to staff in July 2001 to “*report on options on how to increase the involvement of the public in the planning process*”.

In addition, there are no examples in your report that other communities have adopted any statement of this kind in their OP. Our Official Plan is the principal policy statement regarding future development of the Town of Oakville. As such, it gives citizens and developers a framework within which we expect them to operate.

We believe that a statement of this nature in our OP is inappropriate and could be harmful to the interests of citizens in the future. If the Town wants to encourage pre-consultation, we believe that this should be incorporated into its practices, not the OP. In addition, we would expect our Town Council to provide specific directives to the Planning Department that their role in such “pre-consultations” is to be the guardians of the OP and to ensure that citizens are fully informed of how the development conforms/does not conform with the Town’s vision for future development. Our most recent experience with the Sharkeys property developer’s “pre-consultation” highlights the inappropriateness of this recommended OP change.

As a longstanding and active Residents' Association, we appreciate the opportunity to provide you with our comments and look forward to working with you to develop recommendations for the effective participation of the citizens of Oakville in our "home's" planning process.

Sincerely,

Jane Hawkrigg  
President  
Oakville Lakeside Residents' Association

c.c.  
Mayor and Members of Council