

1. Speak to surrounding property owners to see if they have concerns, what their issues are and to encourage them to submit comments or attend the hearing. We used to do this, but have been remiss. In many cases, these property owners are unaware of the process and how to make comments. Coordinate or include their concerns in your arguments. They are the most affected.

1. Involve the community as much as possible. Advise them what applications are coming up. Our Community Association tracks consent and variance applications by checking the Agenda every few weeks. We have few resources to advise the community at large - we have no community newspaper or Councillor updates. We often hear community complaints after the builds.

1. Try to submit comments on every application - even if they are positive ones. (If no one submits comments they are approved without discussion. CVCA was inactive for several years and all applications were accepted without question, as no one provided comments. These are now used as precedents for comparisons of lot sizes. Also, you must make comments to appeal a decision)

1. Check site location to ensure postings are up for 10 days. (We recently had an application delayed as the signs had been removed.)

1. Contact the CofA the Monday morning before the hearing to request copies of the City Planner's report, tree information report and any other submitted information and register to speak.

1. Review all documents to ensure they are correct & adequate.

1. Prepare a response to the CofA after reviewing all these documents.

Along with arguments on the 4 tests (and zoning by-law requirements) include other information or questions:

- Sometimes it is the Planner's comments that are inaccurate and should be questioned. (We had an application rejected when the planner noted the proposal was comparable to all other lot sizes on the block. We provided evidence this was not true.

-We always argue that our infrastructure cannot support this intensification and that there are drainage/flooding issues caused by infills. Beside our lack of storm sewers we also lack parkland, sidewalks and other infrastructure. (For the records)

-We reference that the new OP has not been approved yet and related zoning by-laws are not in place. We have an audio clipping with the City that supports this.

-A photo if useful (We had an application denied when we submitted a photo showing the three mature pine trees that were to be removed).

-Ask questions on issues we are unsure of as the COFA often asks for these to be clarified or adds them to a list of their items requiring clarification from the City. (Whether footprint calculation includes garages and porches, whether trees can be saved if the footprint is made smaller, new rooftop patio provisions)

- Note whether the developer contacted the community association.

-We often note info from other cities (Toronto posts all CofA maps, info, comments and decisions. Toronto requires floor plans for infill applications). CofA members have noted these comments for discussion and improvements.

-Offer suggestions for improvement of plans. (why not? Especially if there was no community consultation)

-We had asked for additional condition - and discovered that conditions are only included with consent application (not variances).

1. Prepare and forward your comments to CofA as soon as possible so the committee has time to read them before the hearing.
2. Ensure someone is present to read your comments onto the record. That way you are sure they are considered. (By having 2 community association members at the hearing you can often get 10 minutes.)
3. Be polite and non-confrontational. Speak only when asked.
4. After approval and construction, note any issues to the City such as alteration to site height, plans not followed, protected trees being affected, ditches and culverts not constructed, driveways too wide, replacement tree planting)