



LAUREL BROTEN, MPP

Etobicoke - Lakeshore

December 4, 2012

Attention: Mimico Residents Association

RE: Ontario Municipal Board (OMB)

I am writing to you in response to your recent inquiries with regard to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB).

As you may be aware, the OMB is an independent, quasi-judicial tribunal that operates at arm's length from the government. As an MPP, I am restricted from commenting or engaging on any specific Board decisions.

Since disputes can arise when decisions are made on matters regarding land-use planning, the OMB exists to resolve them in a less costly and timelier manner than through the courts. However, I recognize that, in balancing competing interests, Board decisions can sometimes be contentious and unpopular with some participants and/or interested members of the public.

In 2007, our government made reforms affecting the OMB that, among other changes, made the planning-appeal process more accessible to the public and placed greater emphasis on local decision-making. The government also took action to help the public participate effectively in the OMB process by establishing a Citizen Liaison Office at the Board to answer questions from the public and to help improve understanding of OMB policies and practices.

The 2007 reforms provided municipalities with authority to establish their own local appeal bodies for appeals of decisions on applications for minor variances and consents to sever land. To date, no municipality has established a local appeal body.

As you are aware, the City of Toronto has recently decided to examine the possibility of establishing such a body. I encourage Toronto or any municipality that wants the authority to decide on appeals of decisions about land-use planning – such as minor variances and consents – to establish such bodies for appeals so that local decisions can be determined locally.

You may wish to contact the City of Toronto directly for more information about its plans in this regard.

Sincerely,

Laurel Broten, MPP
Etobicoke-Lakeshore

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