



June 15, 2020

RE: Item 9.3 – City of Hamilton Planning Committee – June 16, 2020

Dear members of the Planning Committee,

I am writing to you on behalf of Environment Hamilton regarding Item 9.3 on the June 16th Planning Committee agenda. First, I want to say that Environment Hamilton is pleased to see the City of Hamilton taking additional steps to provide the public with better opportunities to engage, virtually, in municipal committee meetings. We very much appreciate the efforts to accommodate public input!

However, we are concerned that the recommendation before committee, in the staff report provided in Item 9.3 proposes to limit oral delegations during statutory public meetings under the *Planning Act* to 5 minutes, with any additional comments to be provided in writing. Providing oral comments at statutory public meetings is an essential right for individuals and organizations wanting to weigh in on important planning decisions within the municipality. Under non-COVID conditions, people have the right to speak for longer than 5 minutes at a statutory public meeting. Further, most delegates aim to be as brief as possible with their oral submissions and we expect that people will continue to be respectful of Committee's time by keeping their virtual submissions brief too. **We do not support the proposal to restrict an individual or organization's time to speak to the committee to five minutes.** We believe, it is reasonable, with the technology available, for the city to continue to accommodate the right to provide oral delegations to Planning Committee in a manner that allows people to be able to take the time they need to do so. We note that no similar time restrictions are proposed for individuals wishing to speak at a Committee of Adjustment meeting.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on this important report and urge committee members to preserve the public's right to participate effectively in virtual statutory public meetings under the *Planning Act*.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. M. Lukasik".

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