

LAND USE COUNCIL

“advocating social, economic and environmental balance in government legislation affecting land”

September 17, 2009

The Honorable Jim Watson, MPP, Minister
Municipal Affairs and Housing
777 Bay Street, 17th Floor
Toronto, Ontario, M5G 2E5

by Registered Mail

Minister:

Thanks for your comments of September 3rd regarding our search for clarification of provincial legislation that impacts private property.

Land Use Council (LUC) queries, present and future, are filed with Premier McGuinty's office for appropriate agency response and are prepared against a background of increasingly frequent government claims that accountability and transparency are priority guidelines in all its policies. Unless advised to the contrary, LUC presumes those fundamental standards of good government have, in fact, been re-instated, an assumption on which our appeals for information and comment from your Ministry are based.

In that context, your suggestion that our requests for statutory clarification might warrant professional legal or planning advice is surprising. Unless and until adversarial confrontation or class action litigation is imminent, LUC has no appetite and sees no necessity for third party legal or consultant intervention. Instead, we're simply attempting to establish a modicum of civil dialogue with the Ontario government to produce, among other positive outcomes, wider public engagement in provincial land use issues.

We believe most Queen's Park bureaucracies, including MMAH, employ numerous lawyers and land use planners whose compensation is fully underwritten by Ontario taxpayers. If LUC requests for information and comment uncover a need for professional interpretation, may we suggest, with respect, that same is surely available in your Ministry from experts to whose livelihood our collective memberships are already contributing. At the same time mounting public concern about alleged mismanagement and unprincipled executive behavior in some Ontario government tribunals raises new questions about unelected boards and paid consultants appointed by Queen's Park to implement and administer statutory control of private property.

We thank you again for past courtesies and trust your office will find time, opportunity and inclination to continue principled dialogue with the LUC consortium. If not, please advise.

Yours truly

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c.c. Premier Dalton McGuinty

The Land Use Council is a public service consortium sponsored by the combined memberships of:
Food Chain / Halton Region Federation of Agriculture / Ontario Landowners Association
Ontario Property and Environmental Rights Alliance / Peel District Federation of Agriculture

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