

# HARBORD VILLAGE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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February 16, 2016

Jessica Walters  
Senior Policy and Research Officer  
Municipal Licensing and Standards  
City Hall, 100 Queen St. W, West Tower, 16th Floor  
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Dear Ms. Walters,

The Harbord Village Residents' Association (HVRA) opposes the adoption of the proposed revision to the Noise by-law "591-4. We view the proposal to allow continuous 85db noise during the day, as especially ominous, given that hearing losses begin at 80db. The potential of the proposed changes to undermine the quality of life in neighbourhoods throughout the city is reason enough to reject them.

Three years ago, HVRA members invested considerable time investigating the shortcomings of the current noise bylaw. We met with Tracy Cook, the then brand-new head of MLS, along with other staff from that department and officials of the Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario. We also interviewed fire and police officials, as to what assistance they might provide in mitigating the disruptive effects of noisy student rooming houses and rowdy bars – our main preoccupations at the time.

What we concluded was that the existing bylaw was fine. What was utterly missing was enforcement. So we were especially dismayed that beefed-up enforcement is not a central thrust of the proposed changes. We think it is time for the City to develop a cost-neutral enforcement system, similar to what Ottawa has established. There, a crew of bylaw officers work evenings, especially on the weekends and hand out tickets to all noise offenders. The offenders pay a few hundred dollars to cover the ticket, and that revenue in turns covers the wages of the bylaw officers. As one HVRA board member pointed out:

*".... if the City can ticket and tow a car blocking our shared lane way within 40 minutes of my call on a Sunday morning, then they should be able to respond likewise to a noise complaint, and do so in a similarly cost-neutral way.."*

Beyond rejecting the proposed changes to the current bylaw, we believe that MLS staff should be asked to go back to the drawing board, and develop an enforcement regime with teeth. On

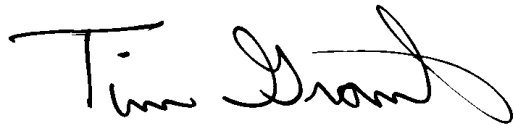
that note, the only measure in the latest proposal that we would support is the following suggestion found in Attachment 6, Page 24:

*“Direct The City Solicitor to: Apply to the attorney general to establish set fine for offences related to loudspeakers and other amplified sound. This would enable bylaw officers who investigate noise complaints at licensed establishments to issue a tickets under Part I of the Provincial Offences Act.”*

A delicate balance is needed to address noise control in the City, but watering down an already ill-equipped bylaw is moving in the wrong direction. With no improvement in enforcement infrastructure, Municipal Licensing & Standards is missing an opportunity to make real improvements.

Thanks in advance for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tim Grant". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

Tim Grant, [chair@harbordvillage.com](mailto:chair@harbordvillage.com)