

March 31, 2019

YQNA deputation for the Economic and Community Development Committee, April 3rd, 2019

I'm speaking on behalf of York Quay Neighbourhood Association (YQNA) on the Central Waterfront. As you know, we are the favourite recreational area for the GTA, attracting millions of visitors every year. Around the Bay we have a dozen permanent and temporary outdoor performance venues with over 100 concerts each summer. That's a lot of amplified sound in a densely populated area, so I'm going to concentrate on that in my comments to you.

First let me say that the local residents welcome the crowds to our beautiful neighbourhood, and we attend concerts ourselves. We also expect our homes to be private and quiet.

The proposed Noise Bylaw could put an end to the general prohibition of noise entering buildings from outside sources at any time. We could now get intrusive noise in our homes all day from 7 am to 11 pm, with less noise allowed during the night when people sleep. But this is a big city with plenty of night workers and people working at home, all needing a quiet home during the day. So we request that the general prohibition stays with quiet around the clock.

Sound and vibration from concerts should be measured and controlled at the concert venue. If staff is not available, it can be done cheaper and better by strategically placing noise sensors that provide digital data.

MLS cannot use complaints from the public as a gauge to identify noise problem areas. On the Waterfront, plenty of residents in condo buildings complained about unwanted noise in their homes, which in many cases are right across the street from an open concert venue. To process a complaint, MLS hands them a form to keep meticulous noise logs over several weeks. They must agree to appear in court with the "noise makers", and be liable for court costs if they lose. Guess how many people volunteered for that? Instead many sold their homes, and the rest no longer complain. So this current system is NOT working on the Waterfront. Still, there is no mention of changes or improvements in the Draft Noise Bylaw. We request that the onus for excessive noise rest on the noise makers, not on hapless residents.

Notices about loud events must be given in a much wider area than 100 metres from the venue. In highrise environments like ours, sound travels upward into the condo towers for several blocks. We propose that the local City Councillor is given notice at least two weeks in advance and that the information is listed on an MLS website.

Exemptions should be given one at a time, not as packages covering several months. All exemptions should be approved first by the City Councillor, who has the final word (not the Executive Director).

MLS claims that only their inspectors can measure noise and vibration with their sound meters. We would like to know where to purchase such a sound meter, since we have a number of high-tech experts in YQNA who could learn to use it.

I may not fully understand what a Leq sound measure means. If it means the average sound measured over 10 minutes, that doesn't work for music. It works for a generator or other consistent sound, but music fluctuates from high to low dBA levels, and only the high or thumping sounds travel inside buildings. So Leq does not work for measuring music. Instead, the new DBZ Decibel should be used. It covers the full spectrum of sound and does not allow for statistical manipulation.

Thank you for your interest in our great Waterfront.

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