

26. PAC, SPAIP & urban planning bylaws. (September, 2023, Informer)



PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE – PAC

Every so often, residents ask the Urban Planning department about the constitution and role of the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC). Today I would like to address some of those questions.

PAC is a Committee, composed of a Councillor, 6 residents who will act as permanent members and 4 alternate members, who can be called upon, in case there is no quorum. Quorum is reached when at least 4 out of 7 members are present at the meeting

Members of PAC have to be residents of Montreal West and to be committed to attending the meetings. Knowledge and/or experience in Urban Planning and/or architecture are valuable assets.

PAC's main responsibilities are to review and analyze projects presented to them by the town's Urban Planning Department, and to submit their rec-

ommendations to Council. It is important to know that PAC's recommendation are based on the Town's by-laws. PAC reviews applications related to Minor exemptions, Comprehensive Development projects, projects subjected to the Site Planning and Architectural Integration Plan (SPAIP) as well as draft By-Laws to amend Urban Planning by-laws such as zoning by-laws, sub-division bylaws and minor exemptions, and building by-law. In reviewing an application, PAC can make 4 types of recommendations for Council to either approve or refuse the permit.

PAC can recommend: a) To approve the project as is, b) to ap-

prove the project with conditions, c) to defer the project or d) to reject it. The first two recommendations are self-explanatory. A deferral means that, either, there was not enough information for PAC to properly assess the project or that PAC did not recommend one or more elements of the project. In this case, the applicant has to re-submit the application with either further information or modifications to the project. A rejected project is one that does not comply with the Town's by-Laws.

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(February, 2024, Informer)



URBAN PLANNING REPORT 2023

For the first communiqué of the year, I like to follow the tradition of giving you all a summary of activities undertaken by the Urban Planning Department the previous year:

Last year, a total of 373 permits were issued, just slightly above the average of the last five years. The top categories for the permits were Renovation (95), Public Domain Intervention (81), Deck and Patios (34), Excavation and Fill (34), Driveways and Walkways (30), Fences (29). Other permits were issued for the balance Renovation of categories i.e., extensions, swimming pools, landscaping, etc.

The Planning Advisory Committee, PAC, met 19 times and reviewed a total of 150 files, just below the average of files presented to PAC in the last five years. This indicates that there were fewer files that required review by the Committee than in previous years.

The department closed about 600 permits in the system. Permit files are closed once the work is completed, inspected and found to be in compliance with the Town's bylaws.

There were 29 notices sent and eight tickets issued, with a few still to come for infractions committed in 2023. Most notices and tickets were given for work without permits, the

most serious issue we have to deal with at the Urban Planning Department. Too many property owners are still conducting work at their properties without permits.

This year, the department will be stricter in reinforcing the Town's Urban Planning Bylaws. If you are planning to have work done, I urge you to inform yourself if permits are required and make sure that the permits have been issued before embarking on any work. Do not take the risk of getting an infraction, having to modify or demolish your project, as this will be at your expense,

Finally, January to March, is the best time of the year (before the construction period starts), to consult the department concerning permits, do not hesitate to contact us via the Town's website.

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- **Inspections by Urban Planning department. (May, 2023, Informer)**



INSPECTIONS BY THE URBAN PLANNING DEPARTMENT

At any point in time, usually after the construction work is done, property owners can expect a visit from the Urban planning department.

Every year, the Montreal West Urban Planning department issues hundreds of permits to property owners for work to be done on their properties. The issuance of permits is specific to certain types of work, and property owners must comply with the conditions and restrictions outlined in the permits they have been granted.

The purpose of the visit from the Urban planning department is to ensure that the work was done in conformity to the specifications of the permits and that the Town's by-laws were respected. Please note that this **inspection is mandatory**.

The Urban Planning department will close the file in the system provided that the work complies to the permits that have been issued.

However, if it is determined that the work is not compliant with the issued permits, the property owner will be notified of an infraction and given a 10-day delay to contact the Urban Planning department and proceed with corrective measures.

Depending on the situation, the property owner might have to re-apply for permits to include the changes made, so that they can be analyzed and authorized before the required work is carried out. In other cases, the owner might have to restore the property to the original state or to redo the work according to the permits and plans submitted in the permit application.

If construction work is ongoing and is determined to be non-compliant with the permit, or if the property owner

does not possess a valid construction permit, the Urban Planning department will require the suspension of the work until the matter has been resolved.

If the property owner refuses to cooperate and the situation warrants it, the Town could take legal action in order to correct the situation.

Tip of the month: Prior to commencing any work on your property, regardless of whether a permit is required or not, it is advisable to consult the Urban Planning department. This step may potentially save you both time and money.

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