

LPAT details revealed

By Mark Pavilons

A new mandate for Ontario's planning appeal body is still finding its legs, but in the end, the Local Planning Appeal Tribunal will be more streamlined and efficient.

King councillors heard from solicitor Tom Halinski, who reviewed the changes from Bill 139 and the creation of the LPAT. This appeal body represents top-down planning with fewer challenges.

The LPAT came into effect April 3 and revamps the former Ontario Municipal Board, which dates back to the early 1900s.

Halinski noted three main things have changed – appeal rights, appeal tests and the appeal process itself. The changes come into play after a local council makes its decision on planning matters.

New appeal tests sets out more defined areas for appeal and actually eliminates previously allowed reasons for appeal, including ministerial approvals. The new, two-part process allows the municipalities to reconsider their decision, if the LPAT decides an appeal has merit. Timelines have also been shorted to expedite the process.

The LPAT screens appeals for validity within 10 days of acknowledging receipt.

Halinski said the new body also tightens the rules for party status as hearings.

The LPAT may identify one or more options where the municipality may remedy the issue.