



"Christine Loh"
<cloh@civic-exchange.
org>

To: <cshiu@legco.gov.hk>
cc:
Subject: Re: Town Planning (Amendment) Bill 2003

2004/01/28 12:19 PM
Please respond to
"Christine Loh"

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your patience. We are now ready to respond.

We remain extremely concerned that the Town Planning Board will not have the degree of independence and expertise to carry out all the important functions and powers that it has unless its current structure is changed so that the Board is no longer chaired by an official member and the Board is served by an independent Secretariat, which is given sufficient funding to commission its own planning and legal studies/advice. This is really the fundamental point in considering reform. The Board should also not be restrained by the existing and senseless disability (imposed by the Government) to consider roads. All other adjustments are minor and are no more than tinkering with a system that has become outdated.

Thus, we need to emphasize that the following comments are made conditional to the Board having an independent chairperson and Secretariat as well as not being restrained in playing a proper town planning role, such as in the case of roads. With this, the proposed two-stage representation strikes a better balance to provide adequate public consultation.

We have already written in the past urging Members to ensure that the public's ability to institute judicial review against the Board's decision will not be compromised in any way whatsoever. We urge Members to continue to be vigilant so that the public interest can be properly protected.

Yours sincerely,
CHRISTINE LOH
Civic Exchange
----- Original Message -----

From: Christine Loh
To: cshiu@legco.gov.hk
Sent: Thursday, January 22, 2004 7:38 PM
Subject: Town Planning (Amendment) Bill 2003

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for your letter of 8 January asking Civic Exchange to comment on the Bureau's proposal. I regret the delay but it is only now that I have the time to read the document. Although you asked for comments by the 15 January, I hope you will not mind that I make my comments after Chinese New Year. Thank you for bringing the new information to my attention.

Christine Loh
CEO, Civic Exchange