

## **Evaluation Criteria for Development Variance Permits October 1, 2013**

Development variance permits are typically considered where specific site characteristics or other unique circumstances do not permit strict compliance with an existing regulation.

A requested variance must be reasonable, must maintain the intent of the regulation, and should minimize any potential negative impacts on neighbours or the streetscape.

The following are examples of criteria that are used to determine whether a requested variance minimizes any potential negative impacts on neighbours or the streetscape:

The variance request:

- Complements a particular streetscape or neighbourhood
- Works with the topography on a site, reducing the need for major site preparation or earthwork
- Maintains or enhances desirable site feature, such as natural vegetation, trees and rock outcrops
- Results in superior siting with respect to light access resulting in decreased building energy requirements
- Results in superior siting with respect to privacy
- Enhances views from neighbouring buildings and sites.

Potential negative impacts on neighbours or the streetscape include a variance request that:

- Is inconsistent with neighbourhood character;
- Increases the appearance of building bulk from the street or surrounding neighbourhood;
- Requires extensive site preparation
- Substantially affects the use and enjoyment of adjacent lands (e.g. reduces light access, privacy, views)
- Requires a frontage variance to permit greater gross floor area, with the exception of a parcel fronting a cul de sac
- Requires a height variance to facilitate gross floor area exclusion
- Results in unacceptable impacts on services (e.g. roads, utilities, snow clearing operations).