

Deputation - TPSB townhall
July 2020

My name is Kira Kastner and I'm a lifelong resident of Toronto. I have two thoughts that I wanted to share with you.

Firstly, that as a participatory policy development practitioner who has worked with all three levels of government in Canada, I am dismayed that you think that this is an effective public policy development process. This process is flawed, to say the least.

Who do you think is calling in over these 4 days? Who has access, from a holistic perspective, to this process? Who has the technological access and literacy; who has the formal and informal education required to participate; who has the policy and political literacy; who can take the time out of their week? and so on.

Similarly but moreover, who has access to decision making power in the TPS? You? You all get to listen politely to outrage and anger and then privately deliberate over things that affect millions of people? That is not effective policy development process. How is that meaningful and responsive? Fair, equitable and evidence-based? Sustainable or ethical process?

Moreover, and my second point, how is that anti-racist? How is this process tackling systemic racism that we are so outraged over?

Did you in fact have a discussion about whether this process itself would perpetuate or dismantle the systemic racism in the TPS? Which of you championed that discussion?

You ARE the system. As individuals. As a body. Every one of your collective decisions is the system.

I strongly urge you to heed what my fellow deputants and other residents are saying to you, but know that your lack of personal commitment to anti racism (which is so integral to meeting those demands) is evident.

If you were truly and personally committed to anti-racism it would be endemic to every decision you make about policy, about policy processes and about spending mine and other people's money on this violent embarrassment of a so called public safety project.

Every decision you make from morning to night must reflect an anti-racist outlook.

That you would endorse and enable this process - that is exclusive; that normalizes the idea that people should have to convince you that systemic issues exist and then provide you with ideas for improving - is endemic of your individual and collective failure to approach your positions of stupefying power from an anti-racist perspective.

Prove to us that you are leading from an anti-racist mindset or resign.

Thank you.