

March 21, 2017

Victoria City Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Attention: Legislative Services

**Re: Elimination of the requirement to rezone to build a Garden Suite in
Victoria**

I write to support the elimination of the requirement to make a rezoning application in order to build a Garden Suite in Victoria.

Enclosed please find a letter to Mayor and Council in this regard. Please provide the enclosed letter to the Mayor and Council in time for the March 23, 2017 meetings.

My husband, Mr. Brian O'Reilly, wishes to address Mayor and Council concerning this matter. Please add him to the list of speakers before Mayor and Council at the March 23, 2017 meetings.

Sincerely,

Bonnie O'Reilly

Mrs. Bonnie O'Reilly

March 21, 2017

Victoria City Hall
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Attention: Mayor and Council

**Re: Elimination of the requirement to rezone to build a Garden Suite in
Victoria**

I write to support the elimination of the requirement to make a rezoning application in order to build a Garden Suite in Victoria.

I live with my husband in a home I have owned in James Bay for 26 years. It is a small (740 sq ft) post war cottage at 263 Niagara Street. Our children are grown with families of their own. We now have grandchildren and great grandchildren. We do not have the room to accommodate family visits. This causes significant difficulty as none of our family live on the Island. During the holidays they must stay in hotels when they visit. We want them to be able to stay with us.

In order for our family to do this, we plan on tearing down a dilapidated garage and replacing it with a Garden Suite that will comply with all Building Code Regulations and the existing Garden Suite Policy.

To this end, we attended at City Hall in early October to meet with the Planning Department to find out what we had to do.

After several meetings, with various staff, wherein we were advised of the steps in the rezoning process, costs (approximately \$4,500.00) and estimated time to complete (8 months to a year), we learned, in early November, that Mayor and Council were considering the possibility of eliminating the need to seek rezoning in order to build a Garden Suite in Victoria.

Consequently, we decided to await Council's decision before proceeding with our rezoning application as the potential savings in effort, time and money were significant to us.

Page 2
March 21, 2017
Mayor and City Council

It has now been almost five months since we first learned that the elimination of the rezoning requirement was being considered and yet we do not appear to be any closer to beginning our project.

Prime building season is upon us, our children, grandchildren and great grandchildren are waiting to see if they will have a place to rest their weary little heads when they come to visit, not to mention, we are not getting any younger.

Therefore, we urge Council to approve the elimination of the rezoning requirement as it relates to the building of a Garden Suite in Victoria.

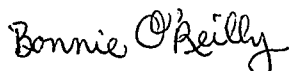
This would be in keeping with the city's stated policy of increasing density; it would eliminate a serious obstacle to the building of Garden Suites, it would not adversely affect the makeup of Victoria's neighbourhoods, as the city's well thought out Garden Suite Policy and strict Building Code are more than up to the task of ensuring any proposed Garden Suite complies with the applicable regulations.

Furthermore, this would also be helpful in preserving smaller family homes that otherwise might be torn down to make way for larger buildings. The cute post war homes add to the character of James Bay amid the mix of apartment buildings and newer houses.

Lastly, the encouragement of Garden Suites would assist many homeowners in maintaining existing homes in the face of rising costs, while providing greatly needed potential rental accommodation.

Please eliminate the rezoning requirement for Garden Suites in Victoria, it is the right thing to do.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bonnie O'Reilly".

Mrs. Bonnie O'Reilly
Homeowner, tax payer and voter

Pamela Martin

From: William Lake [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, November 24, 2016 4:07 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Re: Mayor and Council email re garden suites

Dear Bridget,

It seems to me that the council's agenda for housing does not consider existing property owners. Their approach for dealing with the homeless was/is at the expense/safety/security of existing residents. Council's the desire for development to fund their agenda trumps any consideration for existing owners and residents. What about the existing community plans? Council has decided what they want, not what the existing communities want, and have just changed (fait accompli) the bylaws. This is not the way to represent all the residents of Victoria.

It is apparent that given their agenda: "the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability and is fulfilling a Council objective to improve affordability for homeowners and renters" Council's is willing to meet their goal at the expense of the individual home owners.

In the past I had a concern with the development of a particular property that directly affected our property. So I went to City Hall and discussed it with the appropriate staff person and was told that the development met the existing bylaws so that was that, period. Once the bylaws were met that was it there was not any "Consideration for privacy and impact to neighbours are important and careful consideration has been given in these documents to restrict size, height, siting, window orientation, protection of mature landscaping and reduction of shade cast on neighbouring properties". Now you are saying "trust us", well I am very concerned because individual homeowners will have no recourse. That is why we have property zoning. Now Council is unilaterally changing the zoning, it is not right.

William

From: [Victoria Mayor and Council](#)
Sent: Thursday, November 24, 2016 1:58 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Mayor and Council email re garden suites

Dear William,

Thank you for your email regarding allowing garden suite without a rezoning. Your email has been shared with Mayor and Council.

At a recent meeting of Council, Council directed staff to prepare amendments to the Zoning Regulation Bylaw to allow garden suites in single family residential zones consistent with the [Garden Suite Policy](#) and [to amend the Land Use Procedures Bylaw](#) based on the latest [report to Council](#) to delegate development permit approval authority for garden suites to staff. Consultation and a public hearing on this action will occur prior to any amendments being fully approved. A date for the public hearing has not been set and is expected for the new year.

This action was a recommendation by the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability and is fulfilling a Council objective to improve affordability for homeowners and renters throughout what has become highly unaffordable for many residents.

Should the bylaws be approved, homeowners who apply for garden suites will have to demonstrate adherence to strict guidelines in policy and zoning regarding the design and location of the garden suite. Consideration for privacy and impact to neighbours are important and careful consideration has been given in these documents to restrict size, height, siting, window orientation, protection of mature landscaping and reduction of shade cast on neighbouring properties. The [Garden Suite Policy](#) covers these points comprehensively.

After implementation, Council has directed staff to report back to Council 18 months after implementation as to the effectiveness of the new policy approach.

If you are interested in staying up-to-date on City of Victoria news, events, and opportunities for public input, visit the [City of Victoria's website](#), subscribe to the City's [bi-weekly email updates](#), or download the City's [ConnectVictoria App](#).

Sincerely,

Bridget Frewer
Correspondence Coordinator
Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6



-----Original Message-----

From: webforms@victoria.ca [mailto:webforms@victoria.ca]
Sent: Thursday, November 24, 2016 10:40 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca>
Subject: Mayor and Council email

From: William Lake

Email : [REDACTED]

Reference :

Daytime Phone : [REDACTED]

I am opposed to the plan to allow garden suites without rezoning applications. In essence council is proposing to rezone every property. While this meets council's agenda it fails to consider homeowners. If garden suites were to become a land use entitlement, and not require a rezoning, there would be no opportunity for formal, public input. The decision on whether, or not, to issue the permit would be delegated to staff with no role for Council and, as a result, no formal opportunity, via a public hearing, for neighbours to indicate their support, or lack of support for a project.

Also please restrain your spending.

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[REDACTED]

Pamela Martin

From: Vince Cullen [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 2:05 PM
To: Community Planning email inquiries; Lindsay Milburn
Subject: Garden Suites

Mayor and Council,

My wife and I have owned a home @ 2541 Graham St since 1994.

We have been blessed with a fantastic group of tenants, which is not to say we haven't had a couple challenges.

In the last few years the turnover has been infrequent and when we have had to interview there seems to be semi-desperation on the part of the younger tenants. Most of the folks have grown up in greater Victoria and seem genuinely disappointed that they cannot find ANY rental accommodations , at almost any price, anywhere near the core. We have a son that has been living in Vancouver for the last years and he is moving back to Victoria shortly with dire rental options.

Home ownership is a whole other story!

We agree with the idea of getting rid of the rezoning step and allowing planning to give the development permits. Projects with variances should be possibly rezoned.....I'm not sure how to move those along. This would make the Garden Suite process easier, streamlines and far less onerous for owners that do not have the development experience.

Thank You,
Vince Cullen and Lori Morgan

[REDACTED]

Pamela Martin

Subject: FW: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites

From: Todd Litman [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, November 19, 2016 9:22 AM
To: Noraye Fjeldstad <NFjeldstad@victoria.ca>; [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Cc: Lindsay Milburn <lmilburn@victoria.ca>
Subject: RE: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites

Dear Noraye and Friends,

Thanks for sharing this information. Yes, I support the proposed changes: they will facilitate secondary suit development. The proposed bylaw does not mention any off-street parking requirement – I hope that this is true since such a requirement is unnecessary (many of those houses will be occupied by students and seniors who own no cars) and would significant increase their development costs.

However, I think it is important to recognize that this policy change can make only a modest contribution to the City's affordable housing needs. Small infill buildings have high construction costs so a typical 50 square-meter garden suite will probably cost \$100,000+ to build, which would require a \$600+ mortgage payment, plus operating expenses and homeowner profit will result in these renting for \$1,000-2,000 per month: not terribly affordable. If enough are built their rents may decline as they age, but the results are likely to be hundreds rather than thousands of additional affordable units, two orders of magnitude less than what we need. My main concern about these and similar proposals is that they give an impression that we are doing a lot to increase housing affordability when, in fact, they only do a little.

For some great research on strategies that can create lots more affordable infill housing I suggest reviewing the City of Portland's **Residential Infill Project** (<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/67728>) which will change zoning codes to favor development of multiple smaller units (typically duplexes and triplexes) in existing residential neighborhoods. Here are details: <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/article/533961> and "Re-legalizing Midblock Duplexes, Corner Triplexes, and Multiple Accessory Units" <http://www.sightline.org/2016/11/15/the-portland-plan-down-with-mcmansions-up-with-abundant-housing-options>. I'm not sure if all of these changes are needed in Victoria – it is already common to expand and subdivide houses in residential neighborhoods, so perhaps we are already more permissive than in the U.S. I suggest a review to see whether their proposes apply here.

The Sightline Institute has a great series of columns, "Legalizing Inexpensive Housing" (<http://www.sightline.org/series/legalizing-inexpensive-housing>) that has many good ideas. Here are some other recent and insightful columns and publications concerning these issues:

Cherise Burda and Mike Collins-Williams (2015), *Make Way For Mid-Rise: How To Build More Homes In Walkable, Transit-Connected Neighbourhoods*, GTA Housing Action Lab (www.naturalstep.ca/gta-housing-action-lab), Pembina Institute (www.pembina.org) and Ontario Home Builders Association; at www.pembina.org/reports/make-way-for-mid-rise.pdf.

Alex Cecchini (2015), *Barriers to Small Scale Infill Development*, Streets MN (<http://streets.mn>); at <http://bit.ly/1CsyjCR>.

Alan Durning (2013), *Apartment Blockers: Parking Rules Raise Your Rent*, Sightline Institute (www.sightline.org); at <http://daily.sightline.org/2013/08/22/apartment-blockers>.

Sanford Ikeda and Emily Washington (2015), *How Land-Use Regulation Undermines Affordable Housing*, Mercatus Center at George Mason University (<http://mercatus.org>); at <http://mercatus.org/sites/default/files/Ikeda-Land-Use-Regulation.pdf>.

Dan Keshet (2015), *9 Things People Always Say at Zoning Hearings, Illustrated By Cats*, Austin On Your Feet (<https://austinyourfeet.wordpress.com>); at <http://bit.ly/1PVM6Jn>.

Tim Loomans (2015), *Five Ways to Add Density Without Building Highrises*, Blooming Rock (www.bloomingrock.com); at <http://bit.ly/1E8Ft1k>.

Sara Maxana (2016), *YIMBY Keynote Speech*, Yes In My Backyard Conference; at www.youtube.com/watch?v=TmHNqdPdxn0.

Missing Middle (www.missingmiddlehousing.com) describes affordable, medium-density housing types, such as fourplexes and small apartment buildings, suitable for infill development.

I think that there is good news regarding Victoria's housing trends. I see many hundreds of new infill units under construction in the Downtown area. That new supply should drive down housing prices during the next two years. However, most of these are high-rise, which are expensive to construct and operate, so these units will never be truly affordable, and not everybody is suited to downtown high-rise living. Our challenge is to encourage a similar amount of mid-rise (3-6 story) development in residential areas, which tends to be most affordable (see "Increased Use of Wood, Reduced Parking May Reduce Multifamily Construction Costs," <http://urbanland.uli.org/economy-markets-trends/increased-use-wood-reduced-parking-may-reduce-multifamily-construction-costs>).

One final note. Off-street parking requirements are a major barrier to affordable infill development; they typically cost \$20,000+ and reduce potential development density, and are unnecessary and unfair because many lower-income households are car-free. Not only that, since each driveway displaces one on-street parking space, such requirements often provide no net increase in total parking supply, and they reduce the total number of public parking spaces available in a neighborhood. (A good example is wide and underused garage adjacent to the Hampton Court Apartment building on Cook Street, across from the Beacon Park playground. It can park up to seven cars, generally only contains four, and displaces about six on-street parking spaces. It is also goddamn ugly. Everybody would be better off if this were replaced by more housing, but doing so is illegal under current zoning).

I suggest changing City requirements so off-street parking is only required if doing so adds at least one additional parking space – that is, existing on-street spaces are counted as a parking serving a house, and the loss of that space is considered when evaluating parking supply.

There are much more efficient and equitable ways to address parking problems in residential neighborhoods than mandating abundant off-street parking. In fact, current off-street parking requirements are a perfect example of inefficient and unfair public policy. They create a legal requirement to house cars, forcing residents to spend thousands of dollars in hidden annual subsidies per vehicle, but we have no comparable legal requirement to house people. Reducing off-street parking requirements and more efficiently managing parking could free up land and money to house many more people in our community. It is time to fundamentally rethink urban parking policies.

Thanks again for all your great work on this issue!

Sincerely,
Todd Litman

Victoria Transport Policy Institute (www.vtpi.org)
Office: 250-360-1560 | Mobile: [REDACTED]
1250 Rudlin Street, Victoria, BC, V8V 3R7, CANADA
Efficiency - Equity - Clarity

Pamela Martin

From: Bridget Frewer
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2017 9:33 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: FW: Rezoning for Garden Suites
Attachments: v2c_670 Wilson Garden Suite - Sheet - A0-0 - Cover Sheet.pdf; v2c_670 Wilson Garden Suite - Sheet - C01-1 - Site Plan.pdf

From: Samuel Godfrey [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, January 06, 2017 10:56 AM
To: Lisa Helps (Mayor) <mayor@victoria.ca>; Marianne Alto (Councillor) <MAlto@victoria.ca>; Chris Coleman (Councillor) <ccoleman@victoria.ca>; Ben Isitt (Councillor) <BIsitt@victoria.ca>; Jeremy Loveday (Councillor) <jloveday@victoria.ca>; Margaret Lucas (Councillor) <mlucas@victoria.ca>; Pam Madoff (Councillor) <pmadoff@victoria.ca>; Charlayne Thornton-Joe (Councillor) <cth Thornton-joe@victoria.ca>; Geoff Young (Councillor) <gyoung@victoria.ca>
Subject: Rezoning for Garden Suites

Dear Mayor and Council,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank you for your work and encourage you in one specific area that I have direct and recent experience in.

For the 18 months or so my wife and I have been working towards building a Garden Suite at our property at 670 Wilson St.

We have encountered numerous delays and obstacles.

To be fair, many of these have arisen from our lack of experience with the rezoning process. We are not Developers and have never done a rezoning before. This is the first and only home we own. We are on a tight budget. We both work full time and we have two young kids. I imagine many home-owners considering Garden Suites are in a similar position. I encourage you to develop a process that helps home-owners who want to build a Garden Suite - this is not how I would characterise the current process.

Most of the challenges we have faced come from the complexity in the rezoning process. (The City Planners and Staff we have worked with have been very professional and polite). It is clear to us that the rezoning process and requirements were put together with an eye to much larger/more complex projects than a tiny house.

There are so many steps and stages and costs and rules and requirements that we continually struggle to find the time and money to keep moving our application forward. It has taken far longer and cost far more than we imagined it would. This is a result of our inexperience, but I think it is more than that. In our opinion, the process could be streamlined and the costs could be reduced given the footprint of Garden Suites (37m2 maximum) and the societal value of increasing housing stock.

Here are two examples of the challenges we are facing:

1. We got conflicting information from staff/Victoria City website about connecting to the storm drain system vs. managing the rainwater on site. We understood the City was encouraging us to do the latter and moved in that direction, hiring an engineer to develop a rock pit and incorporating that into our formal plans. But once

those plans were complete other staff pushed back on that idea indicating we needed to connect to the city's system. It took quite a while for us to figure out the whole thing and it led to a lot of delays.

2. As we advanced through the rezoning process we were told by our assigned Planner that he would likely not recommend our plans if we did not agree to give up about half of our front yard to a Statutory Right of Way to increase the road-way. As we live across from a light industrial zone which is already very noisy and we would be turning our back yard into a Garden Suite, the thought of losing so much of front yard and bringing the road very close to our front door was a show-stopper for us.

I could go on but my point in writing is only to encourage you to proceed with the idea of not requiring rezoning for Garden Suites.

We have worked very hard to come up with a plan that meets all the very strict requirements of the Garden Suite Policy and are not requesting any variances. Removing the rezoning requirements would help us enormously in managing the cost, time and complexity of building our garden suite.

I've attached the Site Plan and Cover Sheet for your reference. The entire plan is registered with the City. We are very close to being ready to move forward to the Committee of the Whole stage in the rezoning process. I will be submitting what I think will be the final revisions required by staff next week. However, we are now on hold in the hope that it won't be necessary to complete the entire rezoning process. I hope this will be the case and that this decision will be made soon. This will empower us to get started sooner and make our project costs more do-able.

Warm regards,

Samuel Godfrey and Pamela Hutchison
670 Wilson.





December 7, 2016

Dear Mayor and Council,

RE: Amendments to Garden Suites Regulations

The Land Use Committee and the Board of Directors of North Park Neighbourhood Association have reviewed the proposed changes to the regulations permitting Garden Suites.

The rezoning process is a significant barrier to approvals of Garden Suites in Victoria, both in terms of timing and in terms of the number of approvals. The NPNA believes the oversight provided by Council's review is not warranted, and provides too many opportunities for NIMBY reactions from the community to derail applications that meet the guidelines and intent of the policy.

The design guidelines are detailed and adequate to ensure that Garden Suites will be added to the neighbourhood in a sensitive manner with minimal impact on the privacy of neighbours. The NPNA supports limiting one secondary suite or one Garden Suite per lot.

While this is not recommended by staff, we wish to make clear that future subdivision or strata titling of Garden Suites is not supported by the NPNA.

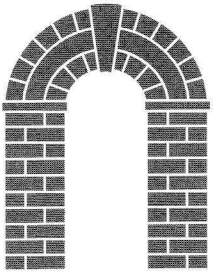
A new zone schedule and a delegated development permit process provide adequate regulatory control and will accelerate approval times for eligible properties. The NPNA supports the recommendations by staff to permit Garden Suites as of right, and to delegate development permit review to staff. A delegated DP is consistent with other BC communities regulating Garden Suites. ***We strongly encourage Council to support both the Zoning amendment and delegated DP recommendation as proposed by staff.***

We ask that staff continue to monitor the uptake and appropriateness of Secondary Suites and Garden Suites within Victoria neighbourhoods, and provide reporting to Council and recommend refinements to the process as necessary.

Yours truly,

Pam Hartling
Co-Chairs, Land Use Committee

Chris Fleming



North Jubilee Neighbourhood Association

North Jubilee Neighbourhood
Association
1766 Haultain Street
Victoria, BC V8R 2L2

January 25, 2017

Mayor Lisa Helps and City Councillors
1 Centennial Square
Victoria, BC V8W 1P6

Re: Proposed Changes to Garden Suite Applications

Dear Mayor Helps and Victoria City Councillors,

The North Jubilee Land Use Committee met November 29th to discuss the City of Victoria's proposal to terminate requirements to go before CALUC for garden suite approvals. While there was general agreement that a garden suite addition may be a positive alternative to demolition and rebuild for which there is no requirement to go before CALUC, there were a number of items associated with garden suite builds that the committee found could only be investigated and ameliorated through community public engagement. The forwarding of these comments was put "on hold" due to the Information Session on Current Housing Strategy initiatives and Off-Street Parking that was held on January 16, 2017.

1. Loss of green space and mature trees is a serious issue whether we lose it by demolition/rebuild of bigger homes or whether we lose it by building garden suites or adding secondary suites. Requiring even less public engagement could have serious negative consequences in this regard. How do neighbourhoods control loss of green space? When we lose mature gardens, we also reduce bird and animal habitat. Neighbour's privacy is diminished and paved surfaces replace green space. The North Jubilee neighbourhood has minimum park space.
2. As was pointed out in an email addressed to Noraye Fjeldstad on November 15th, 2016, re "Proposed Changes to Garden Suites" and circulated to land use committees, a lot owner may find their lot surrounded on three sides by garden suite additions. This amount of density would be unfair to the homeowner and his/her rights of enjoyment and use of personal property while also leading to a decline in property value.
3. Garden suites can have a serious impact on neighbours and thus they should have a voice. A community meeting offers them the opportunity to voice their concerns in a group setting rather than on a one-to-one basis where they might not feel comfortable.
4. Using community meetings, neighbours are able to voice their objections, concerns, suggestions, etc. to a proposal. Applicants may then offer to consider changes to achieve a higher degree of 'neighbourliness' both at the meeting and on an individual basis. City Staff are not able to provide this type of platform for mediation. They are only able to enforce legislation which may or may not address an issue specific to each garden suite site.

5. Lack of adequate parking is always one of the major discussions at a CALUC meeting. The reality of the number of automobiles at each household and the number of parking spots envisioned for a proposal never seem to match up. It seems impossible for neighbourhoods and the automobile to be compatible with each other.

These Garden Suite changes will expedite the development permit process and perhaps increase the number of applications, but what does the neighbourhood gain?

Currently, the community does not have any input into the demolition of current houses with neighbourly front porches and gardens that are often replaced by larger single-family homes including a secondary suite, concrete driveways and minimum areas for planting. Developers often do not consider the scale, privacy or shading of these new homes on immediate neighbours and whether they fit in with the current mix of housing which leaves neighbours impacted in ways that are unreasonable.

Neighbours do not have a voice re demolitions or new housing. Therefore, the NJNA Land Use Committee does not support rezoning for Garden Suites where the applicant would not be required to consult with their neighbours and would lose another voice.

Sincerely,



Sheena Bellingham, Co-Chair
NJNA Land Use Association



Jean Johnson, Co-Chair
NJNA Land Use Association

Pamela Martin

Subject: FW: Input on garden suites in Victoria

From: Markus Kellerhals [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, November 28, 2016 1:40 PM
To: Community Planning email inquiries <CommunityPlanning@victoria.ca>
Subject: Input on garden suites in Victoria

To whom it may concern:

I have read the proposals around Garden suites that were attached to the October 27, 2016 CotW meeting agenda and would like to provide the following comments:

- I strongly support allowing garden suites in residential single family zones as outlined in the report. The uncertainty and expense of a rezoning application is currently a significant deterrent to the construction of garden suites.
- I also support delegating development permit approval to staff as this should help expedite timely approval.
- I support the additional flexibility to build a larger and taller unit on plus sites however I believe that the mandatory 0.6 m setback should be made slightly larger for units that are built to the 5.5 metre height. This will minimize shading concerns on adjacent properties.
- The City should develop a policy for allowing garden suites in conjunction with a secondary suite in certain conditions. This could be a "plus-plus" category that include a larger lot, an additional off-street parking spot, maximum secondary suite size etc.

Thank you for consideration of my input.

Markus Kellerhals [REDACTED]
1322 Clover Avenue
Victoria, BC

November 23rd, 2016

RE: November 24th Committee of the Whole - Expansion of secondary suite and garden suite opportunities

Dear Mayor Helps and City of Victoria Council,

I have followed with interest the recent initiatives of the City of Victoria Council to enact the Victoria Housing Strategy. I am Registered Professional Planner with six year's of experience working for municipalities, I am an active Board member of a local affordable housing non-profit housing provider and have worked for the past four years for private developers, affordable housing providers and individual homeowners navigating municipal approval processes. I am from a family of four, was a renter, then a homeowner, and now a renter and house hunter. I have significant personal and professional experience with these issues.

The unfortunate reality is housing in the City of Victoria is slowly, or quickly, becoming unattainable to many Victoria residents and families. I commend the City of Victoria for pursuing initiatives that will help to re-use existing housing stock to address these housing issues. Arguably the City is the local government in the region doing the most. If you follow the staff's recommendations with regard to secondary suites and garden suites you are taking some good first baby steps, but you could, and should, be doing much more. Below are some ideas you should be giving serious consideration to.

Challenging reality

Not only are rental vacancy rates very low, but monthly rents and purchase prices are high. This is true because demand is high and supply is low. Victoria continues to be a desirable place to live, work and retire – climate, parks and ocean, good schools and increasingly vibrant urban scene are strong attractors. And while the City of Victoria has some policies that foster densification, the City's policies continue to make it difficult to build adequate supply.

Developing new housing is extremely costly. Land prices and construction costs are both high. Nonetheless buyers are buying and renters are renting. This means new half duplexes are selling for more than \$1,000,000 in some parts of the City. Likewise for small lot homes. Given these prices and average incomes in the City, it is for this reason that many, if not most, duplexes and small lot homes have illegal suites.

Cost for renting is also very high. It is now difficult to find one-bedroom apartments in the City of Victoria for less than \$1000. If you can, these will be in basement suites or aging rental stock. If you rent in a new building expect your rent for a 600 sq ft one-bedroom unit to be at least \$1200, but likely closer to \$1500.

My conclusion is three-fold:

- For homeownership to be attainable to existing Victoria residents, a mortgage helper – e.g. a suite or *two* – is a necessity for most.
- To keep rents attainable (but probably not *affordable*), the more suites that can be integrated into existing building stock the better. In addition, rental stock should be encouraged everywhere to keep a robust supply and moderate rental prices.
- Per unit square footage must do down and the per unit to land ratio must go up. City policies need to catch up to the reality of the high per square foot cost of land and buildings. People and families are willing to live in less space, because they have to. Let's make it easier to make that choice.

Ten more things the City should do:

1. **Front yard parking.** The staff report says this might be coming, but Council should implement this as soon as possible. Please do not bundle it into a larger review of Schedule C. It is an impediment to secondary suite conversions. Most Victoria residents already use their front yard for parking anyway. Front yard parking is more water-wise (less paved lot area) and preserves side and rear yards for play, socialising, gardening and food production.
2. **Secondary suites and garden suites on one lot.** Two rental incomes will make a wider range of housing more attainable to existing residences and increase rental supply. This is an easy way to leverage existing land (for housing) and street resources (for parking).
3. **Refine the house conversion regulations - reduce parking requirements, allow additions, expand range of buildings where this is allowed and allow more units per square foot of floor area.** This will encourage the repurposing of existing housing stock rather than tear-downs. Potentially these more intensive house conversions should be only for rental stock or at least partially for rental.
4. **Establish a conversion building inspector.** In addition to the communication materials recommended by staff, the City should create a position where a building inspector can be available to help a homeowner understand what will be necessary to add a secondary suite, convert their garage or do a house conversion. It is usually the specifics of the situation and what the City will actually require in a particular situation that is the challenge – do I need to upgrade the foundation? do I need to lift the house? upgrade the heating system? is my drainage system adequate? will I have to redo electrical? do I have to rebuild walls? Knowing where to start and what the City answers are likely to be after spending a few thousand dollars or more on house designers and engineers is what people struggle with.
5. **Secondary suite / house conversion revitalization tax credit.** Implement a ten to fifteen year-tax holiday for builds within existing house stock based on a certain percentage of the cost of the improvements or based on certain costly elements (such as house lifts, drainage system upgrades). These are potentially improvements that wouldn't come onto the tax roll anyway.
6. **Grants for costly secondary suite or house conversion regulations.** For owner occupiers only, this would be an affordable way for the City to invest in both the new rental supply and attainable housing.
7. **Eliminate or revise significantly the clean hands policy.** For owners of illegal units, there is not a stronger disincentive to come and talk to and deal with City Hall than having to sign guarantees about removing non-permitted improvements or uses.
8. **Suites in duplexes and small lots.** This is happening anyway because of market conditions. Taking it out of shadows will also allow this to occur in new builds. This will make these unit types more attainable to house purchasers and increase rental supply.
9. **Allow duplexes as a right in more zones and on smaller lots.** First step should be duplexing where existing homes are being retained. This eliminates the risk and cost of rezoning while increasing the attainable housing supply. The current lot size for duplexes – almost 6000 square feet – which allows 4100 square foot buildings (when you count the basement) leads to large and expensive duplexes.
10. **Allow secondary flex suites in townhouses.** New townhouses are equally unattainable to many. Secondary suites in townhouses can increase the attainability, increase rental supply, and when properly designed, allow for growing or aging families to remain in their existing housing.

I trust you will give these ideas some serious consideration. I encourage you to tackle the housing challenges we are all facing together with diligence, creativity, perseverance and leadership. These are not easy decisions.

Cordially,

Ian Scott, MCIP, RPP, LEED ND AP
205 St. Andrews St.

Pamela Martin

From: webforms@victoria.ca
Sent: Saturday, February 18, 2017 9:44 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Mayor and Council email

From: Katrina Johnston

Email : [REDACTED]

Reference :

Daytime Phone : [REDACTED]

Hi,

We understand that council will be discussing the possible changes to zoning requirements for garden suites. We (my husband and I) want to express our support for such a decision. We have a corner lot in Fernwood that has 2 side yards. It is 3 blocks from the RJH. One of the side yards is 55x40 ft (2200sq/ft) and we would like to put a 500sq/ft garden suite on that side yard, but the zoning process is expensive and arduous. If a decision to expedite the process for garden suites is approved in March we would be prepared build a garden suite in time for this September's rental crunch.

We hope our email of support can be shared with council to help support the decision in March.

Sincerely,

Katrina Johnston

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[REDACTED]

Pamela Martin

From: webforms@victoria.ca
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2017 9:13 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Mayor and Council email

Categories: Awaiting Staff Response

From: Jim Lauder
Email: [REDACTED]
Reference :
Daytime Phone : [REDACTED]
Dear Mayor and Council Members

I submitted a petition signed by 17 of my local Fairfield neighbours urging you to keep the existing bylaws in place for Garden Suite development. I writing to add to my email yesterday, and say that you voted 7-2 not to allow the application for 1845 Gonzales to go through. Thank you for that decision! The only reason that decision was flawed was that my surrounding neighbours said it as an affront to their privacy! Now should the applicant resubmit, if this current bylaw is changed, are you going to betray the wishes of us all?

Here is what I presented to council to advocate for my surrounding neighbours:
Presentation to Oppose 1845 Gonzales St. Bylaw Amendment

First off, I would like to thank council for the opportunity to speak and briefly add to the comprehensive letter that I submitted for your review that outlines my opposition to the proposed development.

Moving to Fairfield about a year and a half ago I have encountered wonderful reception from a variety of city staff who have treated me with respect, understanding, and professionalism. They have been good listeners and acted so well on my behalf.

My current view and privacy from my back deck are threatened by this proposed development, but not nearly to the degree that Mr. and Mrs Knight face. They live right beside 1845 Gonzales. In fact, this morning I visited their home, and they allowed me to see their back yard. I was shocked and saddened by what might happen to them. Ted said, "I have lived here for 62 years, and loved looking at my backyard trees, and trees in the distance as well." He added, "now they've changed where the building is going to be located." I could see how upset he was. I saw first hand that the effect of a building smack in front of his lovely deck. It would totally ruin his privacy and the view that he and Lavina have enjoyed for 62 years.

I asked Ted if he could come tonight and speak to you in person about his letter of opposition, but he said, "I am 92 years old, I would like to, but I can't make it because its so hard for me to walk." At that moment, I knew I had to come to this meeting because I was so affected by what I saw.

I had to come tonight and ask you to have compassion, understanding and appreciation for the devastating impact it will have on Ted and Lavina Knight and also on other neighbours that include next door neighbours Denis and Clare.

I would like you to take a moment and imagine how you would feel if that happened to you, or to your elderly parents. Your neighbour decides to put a building that is nearly in your backyard! How would you feel? What would you do?

In closing, I understand the need for affordable rental housing, but in this case, no. In my opinion, the configuration of the lots in this area of the neighbourhood, are not conducive to a garden suite development. If you refer to your map, you can see what I mean.

Also, Ted and Lavina don't deserve this, they deserve to live in their beautiful home and enjoy their lovely views for the remainder of their lives.
Don't you think they deserve at least that?

I thank you for listening, and I respectfully invite you to act with compassion and caring in this case, and for the sake of our neighbourhood, with its beautiful green space and character.

Jim Lauder

In closing thank you for your listening and hard work in helping keep our community environmentally sound and vital,

Jim Lauder

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[REDACTED]

Pamela Martin

From: webforms@victoria.ca
Sent: Thursday, January 19, 2017 5:04 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Mayor and Council email

Categories: Awaiting Staff Response

From: Jim Lauder

Email : [REDACTED]

Reference :

Daytime Phone : [REDACTED]

I am writing to you to submit a petition I conducted primarily in Fairfield. I live at 1730 Richardson St, and I asked many neighbours to sign my petition that is entitled "Petition to Keep the Existing Zoning Policy for Garden Suites.

Nineteen people signed the petition, and overwhelmingly they stated that their input in the matter must be allowed.

Furthermore, everyone poled agreed that the current policy around garden suites does not consider the issue of parking on already crowded streets, given more renters in the area.

Of critical importance is the impact on our Fairfield environment that is already threatened by current development projects. Considering the recent implementation of a tax on impervious surfaces, building a building in a person's backyard increases the burden on our storm water system! As well, signees of my petition agree that more garden suite development is the solution for affordable housing! In fact, a person who builds a brand new, private home for renters will charge the maximum amount of rent for such a dwelling!

Petition to Keep the Existing Zoning Policy for Garden Suites

Dear Neighbour,

The City of Victoria is now considering the proposal to allow single family home owners the outright entitlement to build a garden suite in their backyard without consultation with adjoining neighbours. Currently, neighbours have every opportunity to voice their support or rejection of this type of development, but now, it is up to City Planning Staff to make the decision. Please help preserve the Fairfield character and environment by ensuring that the current zoning policy remains in place that allows for neighbours' input.

We the undersigned request the Victoria City Council retain the current zoning policy and requirements for developing Garden Suites.

/Users/jimlauder/Desktop/FullSizeRender.jpg

/Users/jimlauder/Desktop/FullSizeRender 2.jpg

In closing, thank you for your wise consideration of this critical issue that impacts thousands of people in our community!

Sincerely,

Jim Lauder on behalf of 19 very concerned citizens.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly

prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify The City of Victoria immediately by email at publicservice@victoria.ca. Thank you.



Pamela Martin

Subject: FW: Proposed changes to Garden Suite Regulations

-----Original Message-----

From: Jean Anne Wightman [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, March 06, 2017 8:25 AM
To: Community Planning email inquiries <CommunityPlanning@victoria.ca>
Subject: Proposed changes to Garden Suite Regulations

Please register this e-mail as comment on the matter of changes proposed to how Garden Suite applications are dealt with, and e-mail me directly with avenues I have to provide further input, please.

I understand that garden suites are currently handled as a re-zoning application, and I want this practice to continue for the following reasons.

I attended a meeting of my neighbourhood planning group several weeks ago where a garden suite plan was presented. It was situated right up against the lot line of the adjacent property with minimal set back.

If such a development were proposed beside my property, it would have unacceptable impacts on my lot. I would want stringent monitoring of these applications to continue to avoid these problems.

It is equivalent to having a 20 plus foot fence go up right beside me, blocking light to my extensive garden, including vegetables, which I maintain for the enjoyment of myself and my neighbours.

It would seriously impair the growing capacity of my garden.

It would be a visual eyesore.

Garden suites should be small scale, such that they are not in any way second dwellings capable of housing families, such that privacy would be lost in adjacent properties.

Their construction should impact open space and enjoyment only on the lot on which they are situated, minimizing impacts on adjacent lots.

Lot line vegetation and vegetation on adjacent property must be protected.

Thanks you very much.

Jean Anne Wightman
2713 Avebury Avenue
Victoria BC
V8R 3W5
[REDACTED]

Pamela Martin

From: Bridget Frewer
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2017 9:42 AM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: FW: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites Policy

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 31, 2017 2:24 PM
To: Lindsay Milburn <lmilburn@victoria.ca>; Community Planning email inquiries <CommunityPlanning@victoria.ca>
Cc: [REDACTED] Councillors <Councillors@victoria.ca>
Subject: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites Policy

Thank you for the January 16th information session and opportunity to ask questions about the proposed Garden Suites Policy. A number of important concerns were raised and suggestions made at that meeting and the Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee believes they should be added before the policy is approved.

In previous consultation with some residents of Hillside Quadra, the following issues were mentioned. Please note that this is not a comprehensive list of all the concerns.

When the city's planning department formulated (and Council passed) the Garden Suite Policy in 2011, the policy intentionally included a required re-zoning component. This was to ensure that all applicants follow a proper process that respected the values of the neighbourhood and, particularly the adjacent property owner's privacy, property values, etc. At the time, garden suites (known as laneway homes in Vancouver) were growing in popularity across the Canada and USA, many of which also required a re-zoning process though Vancouver did not (initially in Vancouver, there were many complaints against laneways from neighbours who were not informed until building was underway – this has seemingly subsided now, five plus years later). Vancouver's laneway homes policy did not include a re-zoning requirement (or official neighbour input process) because the bulk of the sites are along laneways. The natural buffer that the lane provided was seen as safeguard for adjacent neighbours (at least immediately behind the property). The main difference in our city is that Victoria does not have many laneways on which to build, so the re-zoning process was originally thought of as a device to protect neighbour privacy and interests.

Adjacent property owners need to be recognized as the ones that a garden suite will impact the most. It is essential that they are allowed to have at least a partial voice in the permitting, orientation, access, placement, etc. of the building. Re-zoning is a tool to ensure that adjacent properties have an opportunity to engage and are consulted.

For example, if a builder/developer wanted to flip a house and add value by building a garden suit, neighbours could be shortchanged. If a builder just wanted to move quickly and had no connection to the neighbourhood or no relationship with the adjacent property owners it would be up to city staff to interpret or deduce what neighbour concerns might be. It is hoped that neighbours would consult each other and be open about plans, but without a rezoning process it is only a courtesy, not a requirement.

Some residents recommended that all sites remain under the current policy which requires re-zoning. Re-zoning creates a legal forum for neighbourhoods (and particularly adjacent neighbours) to be engaged and take an active part in forming the look and feel of their neighbourhood.

Sincerely,

Janis La Cuvée
Hillside-Quadra Neighbourhood Action Committee Executive Volunteer

Subject: FW: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites

Cc: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites

- in a neighbourhood which sees a significant reduction in its green space and tree canopy

Janet Simpson

Pamela Martin

From: Jane Ramin [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, November 26, 2016 5:55 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Garden suites

I was unable to attend a recent CALUC meeting held to discuss possible revision to the current garden suite policy. I have 2 main concerns with current policy.

1) I would like to see it extended to include properties with secondary suites, duplexes and triplexes, as long as other requirements can be met. ReParking. I currently live in what the city has grandfathered as a "triplex". I have one vehicle which parks on the street in comparison to my neighbours on either side who park 2-3 vehicles on the street.
2) the allowable square footage 400-600 should be increased to make them more viable as infill rental accommodation. I looked at a number of laneway houses proposed in Vancouver and most seem to be between 650 and 900 square feet. Again other restrictions e.g. set backs, lot coverage, should be in place.

Jane Ramin
1023 Oliphant

Sent from my iPad

From: Heather Hachigian <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, February 12, 2017 5:54 PM
To: Lisa Helps (Mayor)
Cc: Jonathan Tinney; Lindsay Milburn
Subject: Re: Significant Concerns with Housing Affordability in Victoria

Dear Mayor Helps,

Thank you for your thoughtful email. I also appreciate the informative reply from your staff.

I am pleased to learn about the initiatives that the City of Victoria has committed to thus far and I hope that the City's efforts are an inspiration for other municipalities in the region. Affordable housing for middle-income families is essential to maintain vibrant, healthy and diverse neighbourhoods and communities.

I look forward to seeing the zoning bylaw amendments to allow for garden suites come forward this spring and to seeing other innovative approaches come forward from the City to address housing affordability in the region.

I look forward to engaging with the City and Councillors on this issue in the future.

Kind Regards,
Heather

On Tue, Feb 7, 2017 at 9:40 AM, Lindsay Milburn <lmilburn@victoria.ca> wrote:

Hi Heather,

As the Mayor indicated, the *Victoria Housing Strategy 2016-2025* contains a wide range of actions that originated as recommendations from the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability. Each action is designed to work in concert with the others to improve housing affordability in Victoria. We are actively implementing the strategy according to schedule, though there is some time involved to go from targeted action to implementation, as most initiatives must go through several phases including Council debate/discussion/approval, stakeholder and public consultation, bylaw readings, and public hearing.

Here is where we're at with the current initiatives since the strategy was approved last June:

- Removal of minimum unit sizes: brought to public hearing January 26 but referred back to staff for revisions; will return in modified form shortly
- Allowing garden suites in zoning and delegating approval of development permits to staff: Bylaw readings scheduled for March. Public hearing date to be announced imminently
- An increase and expansion of the Victoria Housing Reserve Fund: brought to Council Nov. 24; currently in active consultation with developers and non-profit housing providers

- Relaxing zoning restrictions and creating a communications campaign to encourage more legal secondary suites: Bylaw readings and public hearing to be scheduled shortly
- Hold a workshop to discuss affordable home ownership options in Victoria: held January 18; will be reported out on this month

Related work that is not part of the strategy has included formal input into the National Housing Strategy, regulating short term vacation rentals, and Council consideration of different taxation options for Victoria with an aim to improve housing affordability. Some of the strategy work scheduled for this year meanwhile includes a rental retention and revitalization study and review of the property maintenance bylaw with an aim to encourage the retention and regeneration of safe and affordable existing rental stock.

You can follow the status of current initiatives by visiting www.victoria.ca/housing, which is updated regularly. You may also consider attending the public hearings when scheduled for each action. If you're interested, I can also add you to a list of individuals who have requested updates on the garden suite initiative, including direct notification of the public hearing date.

If you have any further questions on any of the above or future items in the Housing Strategy please do not hesitate to contact me directly – my number is [250-361-0351](tel:250-361-0351).

Kind regards,

Lindsay Milburn

Senior Planner – Housing Policy

Sustainable Planning and Community Development Department
City of Victoria
1 Centennial Square, Victoria BC V8W 1P6

T [250-361-0351](tel:250-361-0351) F [250-361-0557](tel:250-361-0557)



From: Lisa Helps (Mayor)
Sent: Monday, February 6, 2017 1:20 PM
To: Heather Hachigian [REDACTED]
Cc: Jonathan Tinney <JTinney@victoria.ca>
Subject: Re: Significant Concerns with Housing Affordability in Victoria

Heather thanks so much for writing. I look forward to welcoming you to Victoria. If you have time once you're settled in, please feel free to come and say hello at one of our Community Drop Ins; the schedule for the year is here: www.victoria.ca/dropin

I share your concern about affordable home ownership. For the first two years of this term we have been focussed on rental housing and have made some great strides getting plans and funding in place in that regard. I attach these plans for your interest.

But there is, as you say, an overlap between rental housing and affordable home ownership. The garden suites and secondary suites recommendations to which you refer came from the Mayor's Task Force on Housing Affordability, which we ran just after the last election. Staff are working on consultation and proposed bylaw changes now and should have them back to Council within the next few months. My sincere hope is that when these recommendations from staff come back to Council that we will have the courage to implement. Garden suites are a great way to increase rental housing AND make home ownership a more realistic outcome. There are about 13,000 single family dwellings in Victoria. If we allow garden suites as a right in zoning that could be a lot of as of right new rental housing and mortgage helpers!

I have copied our Director of Planning on this email. Jonathan, please see below. Can you ask Lindsay (Heather, Lindsay is our housing planner working to implement the Victoria Housing Strategy) to let Heather know as housing agenda items will be coming to Council, or suggest what other way Heather could be kept in touch with the progress of these initiatives.

Heather thanks again for reaching out. I look forward to meeting you and to addressing this very pressing concern.

Take care,

Lisa

--

Lisa Helps, Victoria Mayor

www.lisahelpsvictoria.ca

@lisa helps

"When in doubt do the kindest thing possible." - Unknown

On Feb 3, 2017, at 10:29 AM, Heather Hachigian [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear Madam Mayor Helps,

I am writing to express concern about the affordability of housing in Victoria and to request information on how I can participate in initiatives to improve the situation.

My husband and I are moving from Vancouver to Victoria next month. After being significantly outbid beyond purchase price on three offers, and after receiving several rejections from potential rental suites that were full within hours of posting on Craigslist, we have resigned to the fact that we will likely have to look to Langford and beyond to find accommodation.

We make good incomes, and what concerns us is that if we cannot afford to find a reasonable place to live, then families less fortunate than ourselves must really be suffering!

Indeed, after viewing several homes in the Victoria area that advertise 'secondary suites' as 'great mortgage helpers' for prospective buyers, I am shocked and saddened by the state of these suites. There are people living in windowless, moldy, and unsafe basements paying upwards of \$900 a month for 500 sq ft of filth. The worst that I saw was a man with a bed in the kitchen area, as his bedroom was blocked off because mold was growing up the side of the wall, and he pays \$700 /month to live there. The bathroom floor was raised due to water damage, so he cannot even stand in the shower because the ceiling is too low.

It made me sick to my stomach to think that for my husband and I to make it work in Victoria, we would have to participate in renting out such a horrible living space to those less fortunate than ourselves, since we would not be able to both buy and make upgrades to a home at the same time.

We were excited to hear that Victoria's City Council has considered waiving the re-zoning requirement for garden suites last fall. However, after emailing staff to inquire more about this option, we were very disappointed with the lack of information and absence of timelines for these changes to come into effect. The garden suite option would create new housing stock in a city that desperately needs it, providing young families with a mortgage helper that does not require them to exploit those less fortunate than themselves by taking advantage of the almost 0% vacancy rate and renting a disgusting basement suite to make ends meet.

I recognize the complexity of this situation but complexity is not an excuse for inaction. I would very much appreciate if your office could please send me information about housing affordability initiatives in Victoria, and advise of the next Council meeting that will discuss potential solutions to the housing affordability crisis. Thank you for your time.

Yours Sincerely,

Heather Hachigian

Tel



Pamela Martin

From: George Churcher [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, November 19, 2016 2:02 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Proposed Amended Process for Consideration and Rezoning of Garden Suites

The Fairfield Gonzales Community Association Land Use Committee has advised that feedback is being requested regarding City of Victoria Council's consideration of delegation of the process of approval of garden suites in existing residential areas to City of Victoria Planning Department staff.

The objective seems to be to avoid the requirement of running a public rezoning hearing before City Council.

I believe that delegation of this set of authorities to staff is not appropriate.

I support retention of the existing process which requires a public rezoning hearing before City Council.

I believe that each existing adjacent landowner in City of Victoria has the right to be heard at a properly constituted rezoning hearing with prior notice to all adjacent and affected neighbours when an application is made requesting rezoning to allow construction of a garden suite.

A proposed garden suite on an adjacent property may be detrimental to the interests of an existing property owner – loss of privacy, loss of views and sightlines, loss of open space and access to fresh air, increased noise, air quality deterioration as a result of plumbing and kitchen exhaust ventilation, increased visitor and service vehicles seeking on street parking, etc.

All Victoria property owners should have the ability to address their concerns to City of Victoria Council.

Approval of garden suites is not a process which should be sloughed off to City of Victoria Planning Department staff.

George Churcher
999 Burdett Ave. Victoria

[REDACTED]



FERNWOOD COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

1923 Fernwood Road, Victoria, B.C., V8T 2Y6

250 384-7441 office@thefca.ca

Mayor and Council:

RE: Amendments to Garden Suites Regulations

The Fernwood Land Use Committee (Fernwood LUC), with the approval of the Board of Directors of the Fernwood Community Association, is pleased to submit the following comments concerning the proposed changes to the regulations permitting Garden Suites.

In order to obtain a more complete picture concerning garden suites, we suggest both the neighbours and owners of existing garden suites be interviewed on the issues before any changes to the regulations are enacted. The Fernwood LUC would be pleased to assist the City with this type of review.

The Fernwood LUC questions whether the current rezoning process is a significant barrier to home owners deciding to build a Garden Suite. We agree that it might be one of the factors in the decision, but understand it's the cost of design and construction that presents the greatest barrier when you consider the amount of time it will take a homeowner to recoup their costs from the rent they can charge.

Despite the reservations expressed above, we generally favour improving the process and making it more efficient. However, removing the rezoning process will not allow for a public hearing or opportunity for neighbouring properties to comment; the Fernwood LUC believes this is too big a change. If the City decides to move ahead with only using development permits then a requirement for a CALUC process and input needs to be required even if no variances are being sought. This will provide an opportunity for a normal process of scrutiny and feedback by neighbouring properties. Unlike a secondary suite, where tenants are living within the house's original footprint, a garden suite has people living in the rear-yard. In both cases the number of people living on the lot may be equal; however, a neighbour's experience could be very different depending upon how they use their rear yard, lot configuration, trees, etc.

In most cases, we support a limit of one secondary suite, or one Garden Suite per lot, but there are circumstances where exceptions might be appropriate. An example of this might be a lot with a non-conforming duplex on it where the house is vulnerable to demolition, or the lot is not big enough to accommodate a duplex.

A new zone schedule and a delegated development permit process that has to go through a CALUC process should provide adequate regulatory control. A timely appeal process should be developed for applicants who think they have been treated unfairly.

We encourage the City to consider requiring the owner to occupy either the original house on the property, or the garden suite, and allowing for a second parking spot in the front of the building line.

To actively encourage the development of garden suites, the City may want to develop a web-based tutorial describing the process, and also offer two public sessions a year where staff can provide information and answer questions. This could include information about developing secondary suites.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the City's regulations for the development of Garden Suites.

Tony Sprackett
President
Fernwood Community Association
president@thefca.ca

David Maxwell
Chair
Fernwood Community Association Land Use
Committee
landuse@thefca.ca

Geoff Farrell
1700 Chambers Street
Victoria BC V8T 3K1
[REDACTED]

Dec 8, 2016

Dear Mayor and Council,

For the last few months I have been driving to work against the Colwood crawl, going the opposite direction to a highway chock a block with vehicles moving at parking lot speeds from Highlands to Tillicum. When I arrive, workers across the street are blasting and moving rock all day to transform a rock cliff into a suburban neighborhood.

What if some of those people in cars were able to live closer to Victoria where they work? What if there was a way to find more affordable land to build on in the City of Victoria?

Densification is the only answer to sprawl. More supply is the only way to deal with the affordability and availability of rental units. But Victoria has many attractive single-family neighborhoods where the residents have said in their official community plans that they want to retain their existing character. The only solution in these cases is to allow the development of either secondary suites or garden suites. While there are lots of situations where secondary suites are great, garden suites offer the resident "their own house."

I am the proponent of a garden suite that I will be building in Victoria. I have taken the project through the rezone process and am at the point of having passed the COTW meeting and have just the Community meeting and third reading by City Council before I get my rezone. From my perspective now, while the City staff have been universally helpful, the rezone process has added at least 8 months and \$3000 to the project.

I think the complexity of the rezone process is generally intimidating to homeowners and acts as a deterrent to potential suite builders, leading them away from choosing a Garden Suite as an option, even if it might be the best solution for their property. Garden suites provide a nice alternative to a basement suite in a single-family house. If we do want to encourage their construction we should drop the requirement for a rezone.

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 Pedestrian
 Planning

Victoria Mayor and City Council
 Victoria City Hall
 Victoria, BC
 2 February 2017
 RE: Garden Suite Policy Changes

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to express my support for *Option 1* of the proposed garden suite policy changes, as described in Jonathan Tinney's 27 October 2016 memo. This would allow garden suites in all single-family residential zones, which minimizes administrative burden to homeowners and the City, as all applicants with lots that meet the specified criteria will automatically be permitted to build such a suite.

Garden suites are a good way to increase lower-priced housing supply in urban neighborhoods. Only a modest number are likely to be built, a few dozen a year, in a city that needs thousands of new affordable units, so I urge you to support this change in addition to other reforms to allow more housing types in areas where only single-family homes are currently permitted. These are called *Missing Middle* housing types, illustrated below. Victoria's neighborhoods currently contain many beloved examples of these types, built before zoning codes became more restrictive in the 1960s. I think it is time to allow more and larger multiplexes and livework lofts in residential neighborhoods, and reduce their parking requirements, so car-free households are no longer forced to pay for parking spaces they do not need or want.

Missing Middle Housing Types (<http://missingmiddlehousing.com>)



My professional research includes affordable housing policy, and I was a member of the Mayor's Housing Affordability Task Force.

Best wishes,

Todd Litman

Pamela Martin

From: webforms@victoria.ca
Sent: Thursday, November 24, 2016 5:26 PM
To: Victoria Mayor and Council
Subject: Secondary suites

From: Gail Caryn

Email : [REDACTED]

Reference :

Daytime Phone : [REDACTED]

Why not reconsider the rule on having a secondary suite and a garden suite? In our case we have ample parking on site and, with a corner lot, plenty of street parking and neighbourhood support. We've got permits to put in a basement suite. But we also have a fabulous little secondary building in our backyard that would make a great garden suite. We would love to be able to have both.

Can you not set out some criteria by which certain properties would be eligible for having both?

Thanks

Gail Caryn.

IMPORTANT NOTICE: This message is intended only for the use of the individual or entity to which it is addressed, and may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If the reader of this message is not the intended recipient, or the employee or agent responsible for delivering the message to the intended recipient, you are hereby notified that any dissemination, distribution or copying of this communication is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please notify The City of Victoria immediately by email at publicservice@victoria.ca. Thank you.

[REDACTED]

Subject: FW: Proposed Changes to Garden Suites

To: Noraye Fjeldstad <NFjeldstad@victoria.ca>; [REDACTED]

David Hutniak
CEO
LandlordBC

Pamela Martin

Subject:

FW: Development Services - City of Victoria Feedback Form

From: webforms@victoria.ca [<mailto:webforms@victoria.ca>]

Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2016 6:37 PM

To: Development Services email inquiries <DevelopmentServices@victoria.ca>

Subject: Development Services - City of Victoria Feedback Form

You have received an email from Craig Fulton via the City of Victoria website feedback form

Name: Craig Fulton

Topic: Development Services

Phone:

Address: 2605 Roseberry

Message: I understand the City of Victoria is looking for community feedback with regard to the garden suite policy. I am a resident of the Oaklands neighborhood and I am in full support of garden suites in my neighbourhood without rezoning requirement. I would like the garden policy to go further to allow basement suites and garden suites on the same property. The only restriction I would like to suggest is that only one of the two suites be rented short-term to protect long-term rental and at the same allow the property owners flexibility.

Regards,

Craig Fulton

Date: Wednesday, November 30, 2016 6:36:43 PM

Pamela Martin

Subject: FW: proposed changes to Garden Suites

From: Brenda McBain [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, January 30, 2017 7:57 PM
To: Community Planning email inquiries <CommunityPlanning@victoria.ca>
Cc: ED Newhook [REDACTED]
Subject: proposed changes to Garden Suites

I am writing in my capacity as President of TAPS (Together Against Poverty Society). We were pleased to have been asked to participate on the Mayor's Housing Affordability Task Force.

As you know, TAPS provides legal advocacy services to residents of Greater Victoria who live in poverty. Many of our clients are tenants in the City of Victoria. As you can well imagine, housing affordability is a huge issue for our clients.

While increases to the minimum wage and income assistance rates, and a federal and provincial commitment to a long term subsidized housing program would be most beneficial to our clients, we know that the City of Victoria cannot address these larger issues. We, at TAPS, are most appreciative of the City's efforts to provide more affordable housing.

Initiatives such this, to streamline the process to build garden suites by reducing costly, and for many homeowners, intimidating rezonings should increase the number of such rental units. TAPS fully supports the recommended Option 1 - to allow garden suites outright in all single family residential zones. We also fully support the recommendation to delegate authority for development permits, to staff.

Although this initiative will likely have little direct benefit to our clients, measures that increase the overall supply of rental housing must be supported and encouraged.

Thank you to the planning staff for your efforts to date. We look forward to the public hearing.

Brenda McBain
President, Together Against Poverty Society