



Council Member Motion
For the Council Meeting of January 14, 2016

Date: January 8, 2016

From: Councillors Isitt, Loveday and Madoff

Subject: Advocacy for Affordability and Security of Rental Housing

Background:

Members of the public have expressed concern relating to displacement resulting from the refurbishment of rental housing in the City of Victoria. Specifically, questions have arisen in relation to properties in the City managed by Larlyn Property Management and owned by Starlight Investments, including properties in the James Bay neighbourhood that house a large number of senior citizens on fixed incomes.

While upgrades to rental housing are desirable and necessary to ensure the viability of this essential housing supply in the long term, strategies can be developed with property managers, owners and other levels of government to reduce potential negative impacts on tenants.

It is therefore recommended that the City reach out to the property management company, the owner and the provincial and federal governments to ensure that the refurbishment and retention of rental housing proceeds in a manner that seeks to minimize potential negative impacts on tenants and preserve housing affordability.

Recommendation:

THAT Council request that the Mayor:

- (1) Write to Larlyn Property Management and Starlight Investments, requesting a meeting at the earliest opportunity to seek clarity on the companies' plans with respect to the refurbishment and retention of rental housing in their portfolio in the City of Victoria, with a view toward ensuring that rental housing is refurbished in a manner that minimizes displacement and other negative impacts on tenants and preserves affordability to the greatest extent possible;
- (2) Write to the Premier of British Columbia, the Minister Responsible for Housing and the Director of the Residential Tenancy Branch, requesting that the Residential Tenancy Act and Residential Tenancy Regulations be reviewed and amendments considered to increase protections for tenants in circumstances of so-called "reno-victions," with the objective of preserving affordability in the province's rental housing supply and supporting the refurbishment of existing rental housing in a manner that reduces displacement and other negative impacts on tenants and preserves affordability to the greatest extent possible;
- (3) Write to the Prime Minister of Canada, the Minister Responsible for the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation and the Minister of National Revenue, requesting that the federal tax system and other fiscal mechanisms support the refurbishment and retention of affordable rental housing in the City of Victoria and nationally.

Respectfully submitted,



Councillor Isitt



Councillor Loveday



Councillor Madoff