

From: Samuel Trosow, 43 Mayfair Drive <strosow@uwo.ca>  
To: Members, London City Council  
Re: Secondary Dwelling Units (OZ-8053); 14<sup>th</sup> Report of the PEC #23

I'd like to thank the Members of the Planning and Environment Committee and staff for listening to my comments on the Secondary Dwelling Units by-law last Monday. Here is a summary of my main points for your consideration at the full Council meeting.

While Secondary Dwelling Units can be a useful component of an overall housing strategy, more consideration needs to be given to some of the details about the implementation and enforcement of the policy changes.

- 1) A more precise definition of "owner-occupied" is needed, one that expressly requires that the owner-occupancy be as a "principle place of residence." This would be consistent with the stated purposes of the measure, and a more precise definition will help avoid future disputes about who can invoke the new provisions. The purpose of the policy change is not to give every property owner the right to add a second unit (perhaps even on multiple properties), it is targeted to a particular group of home-owners, and the definition should reflect this point.
- 2) As the policy requires that the second unit *clearly* be accessory/secondary, the maximum area of 40% of the total gross floor area is too high. This maximum needs to be lowered to 25%, subject also to an overall size cap. The purpose of the new policy is to allow certain limited alterations/additions that do not change the essential character of the use. Council needs more information about how other cities are treating this requirement.
- 3) The report fails to address the issue of changed circumstances or changed status of the owner. More specificity is needed as to what will happen where, for example, the principal unit is no longer owner-occupied. Giving additional consideration to this issue will help avoid future disputes between owners, purchasers, tenants and the city. It will also increase certainty in the administration and enforcement of the program.
- 4) The scope and geographic coverage of the by-law needs additional attention. What is the initial enforcement capacity given current staffing levels? Should the entire city be covered, or would a more incremental approach be warranted? I do not think this change should be immediately applied to the Near Campus Neighborhood areas (which have been reduced in size). As the Committee was split on this issue (3-2), the full council should give this careful consideration.

I hope Council takes these points as constructive suggestions intended to improve the overall balance, implementation and enforcement of the new by-law.