

From: Phil Williamson
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2020 7:32 AM
To: Parker, Charles <CParker@London.ca>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Comments - Additional Residential Units

Good morning Chuck,

I am writing to submit my comments for consideration regarding changes pertaining to the proposed Additional Residential Unit policies. If this is not the correct email to submit these comments – please forward to the appropriate person.

I am writing to support the implementation of the Additional Residential Unit policies and offer a few comments on the proposed changes as well. Firstly – I believe that the creation of Secondary Dwelling Units and soon Additional Dwelling units is a key component to solving the housing shortage London is currently facing. Units within existing structures can be created more quickly, less expensively, and with less impact on the environment and infrastructure. It also promotes intensification within the core areas of the City, rather than the urban sprawl of new development. These policies encourage investment to create units where it was not feasible in the past, and in underutilized existing spaces such as basements. It also encourages homeowners to create safe, legal suites, rather than often unsafe, illegal suites often seen prior to the implementation of these policies. I am only a small scale investor, and have personally created six new, high quality units within the City in the past year and half. I suspect that the City has seen hundreds of new units created under the Secondary Dwelling Unit policies, which I believe is a tremendous benefit to the City.

While I understand that the City must balance a variety of planning priorities; allowing these types of projects to move forward with as little ‘red tape’ as possible is incredibly important to the City as a whole. Currently, an imbalance between supply and demand is driving up rental unit pricing within the City and the solution is to create a greater supply of units. Fewer restrictions will help to encourage further investment into these types of units.

While most of the current restrictions surrounding Secondary Dwelling Units are logical and reasonable, I would like to raise a few concerns surrounding the existing policies.

Maximum Gross Floor Area. The current Secondary Dwelling Unit policy restricts the size of the SDU to 40% of the GFA of both units combined. This policy, in my opinion, creates a completely unnecessary obstacle in the creation of suites and is irrational in reality. In four of the units that I have created we have been forced to create oversized unusable utility rooms, in order to reduce the size of the secondary unit. The result is a smaller, less desirable unit for the end tenant – and it creates an unnecessary barrier for those considering adding a units, as the investment becomes less appealing or sometimes unfeasible. The intent of this policy was stated as: “to ensure that the additional residential units do not exceed the size of the primary dwelling unit to control scale and maintain the primary and secondary nature of the two units.” However, in practice, this does nothing more than as stated above – create smaller, less desirable units and unusable ‘dead space.’ The Ministry had stated that the only size restriction that municipalities should consider is a maximum of 50% which I feel is far more appropriate and logical. I hope that you will consider this in the implementation of the new policy changes.

Number of Bedrooms – while the current policy allowing a maximum of 5 bedrooms within the main and secondary unit is not unreasonable, I am concerned that this will be far too restrictive if three units per

lot are allowed. My suggestion would be to allow at least 1 to 2 additional bedrooms if there are three units on the lot.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Phil Williamson

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