



RENTERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

May 24, 2017

A meeting of the Renters Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, May 24, 2017, at 5:36 pm, in Committee Room 1, Third Floor, Vancouver City Hall.

PRESENT: Karen Sawatzky, Acting Chair
Karen Ameyaw*
Natasha Edgar
Annie Martin
Daniel Oleksiuk
Noah Quastel
Maddison Spenrath
Meseret Taye
Andrea Winkler

ABSENT: Peter Harvie
Jaraad Marani
Samrah Mian (Leave of Absence)
Andrew Sakamoto (Leave of Absence)
Alvin Singh (Leave of Absence)

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Anderson, Housing Policy
Edna Cho, Housing Policy

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Denise Swanston, Committee Clerk

* Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

Leave of Absence Requests

MOVED by Maddison Spenrath
SECONDED by Daniel Oleksiuk

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve Leaves of Absence for Samrah Mian, Andrew Sakamoto, and Alvin Singh for today's meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Karen Ameyaw absent for vote)

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The Committee agreed to vary the order of the agenda to deal with Item No. 2 as the first item of business. For clarity, the minutes are recorded in chronological order.

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2. Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Andrea Winkler
SECONDED by Annie Martin

THAT the minutes of the Renters Advisory Committee meeting held March 30, 2017, be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Karen Ameyaw absent for vote)

1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair

MOVED by Karen Ameyaw
SECONDED by Daniel Oleksiuk

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee elect Karen Sawatzky as Chair to commence immediately and end November 4, 2018.

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee elect Karen Ameyaw as Vice-Chair to commence immediately and end November 4, 2018.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Approval of 2017 - 2018 Work Plan

The Committee discussed the proposed 2017 - 2018 Work Plan that was circulated via email. In discussion, it was clarified that the "State of Renters Report" action item would be a task completed in conjunction with City staff, and the Committee would act as a resource and assist with outreach to the renter community. Staff also noted they would seek input from the committee helpful in the next "Housing report card".

MOVED by Noah Quastel
SECONDED by Karen Ameyaw

THAT the 2017-2018 Work Plan of the Renters Advisory Committee be approved as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. Council Liaison Updates

None.

5. Staff Liaison Presentation

Graham Anderson, Housing Policy, and Edna Cho, Housing Policy, provided a presentation on the Vancouver Housing and Homelessness Strategy Reset.

The Committee provided feedback regarding engagement and event planning. Staff noted upcoming Housing events and that event notifications will be sent out to committees.

6. Update on short-term rentals

Kathryn Holm, Director of Licensing, and John Merkley, Project Manager, provided an update on the short-term rental (STR) framework and noted a report to Council on the matter will be going forward later this year.

Committee members provided feedback to staff, which included various comments and questions regarding enforcement, data collection and public education.

7. New Business

(a) Collective Housing

The Committee discussed a motion regarding Collective Housing.

Following discussion, it was,

MOVED by Noah Quastel

SECONDED by Karen Ameyaw

WHEREAS

1. Pursuant to the City of Vancouver's Zoning and Development By-law 3575 ("By-law 3575"), having more than five unrelated people living together in one dwelling is illegal in the City of Vancouver (the "City");
2. Vancouver has a vibrant network of more than 55 collective houses that commonly involve the occupancy of a rental dwelling by five unrelated people. Due to the current definition of family in By-law 3575, members of this community fear that they are at an increased risk of inspection and eviction;
3. Specifically, section 10.21.1 of By-law 3575 specifies that "no dwelling unit shall be used or occupied by more than one family, but it may also be used to keep a maximum of two boarders or lodgers, or five foster or eight daycare children."

Family is defined in the By-law as follows:

Family means either:

- a. one or more individuals all related to one another by blood, marriage, or adoption or*
 - b. a maximum of three unrelated individuals living together as a household.*
4. In contrast, the cities of Surrey and Victoria do not limit the number of people who can live in a single family dwelling. In the City of Surrey's Zoning By-law 12000, the definition of family "means 1 or more persons occupying a dwelling unit and living as a single non-profit housekeeping unit." In the City of Victoria's Zoning Regulation By-law, the definition of family means "one person or a group of persons who through marriage, blood relationship or other circumstances normally live together."
 5. Vancouver is in the midst of a housing crisis and innovative strategies such as collective housing is one strategy to maintain affordability; and
 6. Although the City has committed to re-examine By-law 3575 as part of its ongoing housing reset process, the current definition of family unduly impacts renters in the collective housing community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Renters Advisory Committee supports changes to the Zoning and Development By-law and other relevant By-laws to enable collective housing, and requests that the Committee be updated and consulted on this process.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. Members Community Update

The Committee discussed various housing related events taking place in in the community.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Andrea Winkler
SECONDED by Maddison Spennrath

THAT the meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Meeting:

DATE: July 19, 2017
TIME: 5:30 pm
PLACE: Committee Room 1
Third Floor, Vancouver City Hall

The Committee adjourned at 7:32

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