



RENTERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

September 18, 2024

A meeting of the Renters Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, September 18, 2024, at 5:40 pm in the Cascadia Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall, and via electronic means.

PRESENT: Colleen Wickstrom, Chair
Kawa Ada
Heather Barclay
Nicolas Poppell, Co-Chair
Scott Robinson
James Tod

ABSENT: Eva Ciesielska (Leave of Absence)
Margareta Dovgal (Leave of Absence)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor Brian Montague, Council Liaison
Trustee Jennifer Reddy, Vancouver School Board Liaison
Graham Anderson, Planner, Staff Liaison

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Alyse Stewart, Meeting Coordinator

WELCOME

The Chair acknowledged we are on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Peoples. We thank them for having cared for this land and look forward to working with them in partnership as we continue to build this great city together.

Leave of Absence Requests

MOVED by James Tod
SECONDED by Heather Barclay

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve leaves of absence for Eva Ciesielska and Margareta Dovgal for this meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Colleen Wickstrom
SECONDED by Scott Robinson

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve the Minutes from the meeting of Wednesday, July 31, 2024, as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. Healthy City Strategy Refresh

Staff from Arts, Culture and Community Services provided a presentation and responded to questions and comments.

2. Motions

MOVED by Nicolas Poppell
SECONDED by Heather Barclay

WHEREAS:

1. The City of Vancouver is committed to protecting tenants from displacement and ensuring affordable housing options are available, especially in the face of rising redevelopment pressures and rent increases.
2. Redevelopment often leads to tenant displacement, which creates significant financial and emotional hardship. Displaced tenants may struggle to find affordable interim housing, face rent increases, or endure the stress of relocating multiple times before returning to their homes. These hardships disproportionately affect low-income residents, seniors, and families with children.
3. Currently, the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy under the Broadway Plan area provides stronger tenant protections, including temporary rent top-up options during displacement and discounted Right of First Refusal rents, which are not available in other areas of the City.
4. A Temporary Rent Top-Up refers to a financial assistance mechanism provided to displaced tenants, either as periodic payments or as a lump sum, to cover the difference between their previous rent and their interim housing rent during redevelopment. This helps to mitigate financial strain and provides stability for tenants while awaiting their return to redeveloped housing.
5. The Right of First Refusal grants displaced tenants the first opportunity to return to a newly redevelopment unit at a discounted rent, either 20% below the city-wide average market rent for the same unit type, or at the tenant's current rent at the time of the rezoning or development application, whichever is less.
6. The lack of a Density Offset formula in Vancouver has hindered the development of affordable replacement units. A Density Offset Formula is a calculation used to determine the additional density required to offset the costs of providing affordable replacement units in redevelopment projects. The City of Burnaby, among others,

has successfully implemented this mechanism to ensure that affordable units can be provided without harming the financial viability of the projects, resulting in the successful development of affordable housing.

7. As the City of Vancouver continues to grow, and redevelopment pressure is expanding across the City, there is a need to extend these enhanced protections and to create consistent, city-wide standards that protect tenants across all neighbourhoods.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED

- A. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to review and amend the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy to extend the additional protections provided under the Broadway Plan to all areas of the city, specifically:
 - i. Implementing a Temporary Rent Top-Up option for all displaced tenants to mitigate rent increases during interim housing periods. This option should allow tenants the flexibility to choose between periodic payments or a one-time lump sum at the tenant's discretion.
 - ii. Offering Right of First Refusal to all displaced tenants at a 20% discount off city-wide average market rents by unit type, or at their current rent at time of application, with the discount guaranteed to be at the time of the rezoning application or the development permit application, whichever is less.
 - iii. Ensuring that new units can be secured either by the tenant themselves or with assistance from the applicant, with the responsibility for payment of the temporary rent top-up resting on the applicant.
 - iv. Allowing the satisfaction of the Right of First Refusal at discounted rents in another rental building within or outside the initial redevelopment area to enable a single move by the impacted tenant if they so choose.
- B. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to develop a Density Offset formula, similar to the model used in the City of Burnaby, which will calculate how much additional density is required to cover the costs of affordable replacement units, ensuring a balanced approach between new development and tenant protection.
- C. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to provide a report on the implementation of these changes, including expected timelines and any potential impacts on current and future development projects.

amended

MOVED by James Tod
SECONDED by Nicolas Poppell

THAT the following be added before clause C:

“The Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council consider aligning the eligibility of tenant benefits under the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy and Broadway Plan and other enhanced tenant protections with the date of an accepted rezoning or development permit application.”

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The amendment to the motion having carried unanimously, the motion as amended was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

FINAL MOTION AS AMENDED

WHEREAS:

1. The City of Vancouver is committed to protecting tenants from displacement and ensuring affordable housing options are available, especially in the face of rising redevelopment pressures and rent increases.
2. Redevelopment often leads to tenant displacement, which creates significant financial and emotional hardship. Displaced tenants may struggle to find affordable interim housing, face rent increases, or endure the stress of relocating multiple times before returning to their homes. These hardships disproportionately affect low-income residents, seniors, and families with children.
3. Currently, the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy under the Broadway Plan area provides stronger tenant protections, including temporary rent top-up options during displacement and discounted Right of First Refusal rents, which are not available in other areas of the City.
4. A Temporary Rent Top-Up refers to a financial assistance mechanism provided to displaced tenants, either as periodic payments or as a lump sum, to cover the difference between their previous rent and their interim housing rent during redevelopment. This helps to mitigate financial strain and provides stability for tenants while awaiting their return to redeveloped housing.
5. The Right of First Refusal grants displaced tenants the first opportunity to return to a newly redevelopment unit at a discounted rent, either 20% below the city-wide average market rent for the same unit type, or at the tenant's current rent at the time of the rezoning or development application, whichever is less.
6. The lack of a Density Offset formula in Vancouver has hindered the development of affordable replacement units. A Density Offset Formula is a calculation used to determine the additional density required to offset the costs of providing affordable replacement units in redevelopment projects. The City of Burnaby, among others, has successfully implemented this mechanism to ensure that affordable units can be provided without harming the financial viability of the projects, resulting in the successful development of affordable housing.
7. As the City of Vancouver continues to grow, and redevelopment pressure is expanding across the City, there is a need to extend these enhanced protections and to create consistent, city-wide standards that protect tenants across all neighbourhoods.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

- A. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to review and amend the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy to extend the additional protections provided under the Broadway Plan to all areas of the city, specifically:
- i. Implementing a Temporary Rent Top-Up option for all displaced tenants to mitigate rent increases during interim housing periods. This option should allow tenants the flexibility to choose between periodic payments or a one-time lump sum at the tenant's discretion.
 - ii. Offering Right of First Refusal to all displaced tenants at a 20% discount off city-wide average market rents by unit type, or at their current rent at time of application, with the discount guaranteed to be at the time of the rezoning application or the development permit application, whichever is less.
 - iii. Ensuring that new units can be secured either by the tenant themselves or with assistance from the applicant, with the responsibility for payment of the temporary rent top-up resting on the applicant.
 - iv. Allowing the satisfaction of the Right of First Refusal at discounted rents in another rental building within or outside the initial redevelopment area to enable a single move by the impacted tenant if they so choose.
- B. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to develop a Density Offset formula, similar to the model used in the City of Burnaby, which will calculate how much additional density is required to cover the costs of affordable replacement units, ensuring a balanced approach between new development and tenant protection.
- C. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council consider aligning the eligibility of tenant benefits under the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy and Broadway Plan and other enhanced tenant protections with the date of an accepted rezoning or development permit application.
- D. THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council direct staff to provide a report on the implementation of these changes, including expected timelines and any potential impacts on current and future development projects.

3. Liaison Updates

The Vancouver School Board Liaison responded to questions from the Committee.

The Staff Liaison provide an update on the following:

- Housing Vancouver strategy targets and key outcome measures for tracking and monitoring
- Social Housing initiative: <https://www.shapeyourcity.ca/social-housing>

The Council Liaison provided an overview of upcoming Council meetings and responded to questions regarding rental vacancy target rates.

4. Subcommittee Updates

Subcommittee leads provided updates and responded to questions.

5. New Business

The Committee discussed planning for the working session of October 16, 2024.

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Scott Robinson
SECONDED by Heather Barclay

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Meeting:

DATE: Wednesday, November 20, 2024
TIME: 5:30 pm
PLACE: Cascadia Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall
/ Webex Online

The Committee adjourned at 7:24 pm.

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