



RENTERS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES

May 28, 2025

A meeting of the Renters Advisory Committee was held on Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 5:34 pm, in the Joe Wai Room, Ground Floor, City Hall, and via electronic means.

PRESENT: Nicolas Poppell, Chair
Kawa Ada
Heather Barclay
Tatjana Gjesdal
Sam Ibrahim
James Tod
Colleen Wickstrom, Co-Chair

ABSENT: Margareta Dovgal (Leave of Absence)
Georgia Henshaw (Leave of Absence)
Scott Robinson (Leave of Absence)
Wen He (Leave of Absence)

ALSO PRESENT: 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 Kawa Ada

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve a leave of absence for Scott Robinson until July 31, 2025; and

FURTHER THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve leaves of absence for Margareta Dovgal, Georgia Henshaw, and Wen He, for this meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Minutes

MOVED by Sam Ibrahim
SECONDED by Colleen Wickstrom

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee approve the Minutes from the meeting of Wednesday, March 5, 2025, as circulated.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. Working Session Updates

The Chair provided an update on the working session held Wednesday, April 23, 2025.

2. Motions

None.

3. Liaison Updates

The Staff Liaison provided an update on the following:

- [Villages program](#) updates coming in June 2025
- Vancouver Social Housing initiatives
- [Broadway Plan updates](#)
- [Cambie Corridor plan](#)
- [West 7th and Arbutus](#) Supportive Housing

4. Subcommittee Updates

Subcommittee leads provided updates and responded to questions.

5. New Business

The Committee discussed upcoming motions coming to the Standing Committee on Policy and Strategic Priorities meeting of June 4, 2025, as well as showing support by speaking at the meeting on behalf of the Renters Advisory Committee.

MOVED by Nicolas Poppell
SECONDED by Sam Ibrahim

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee supports the Members' Motion entitled "Protecting Renters by Establishing a Tenant Advocacy Office" submitted by Councillor Maloney.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED by Colleen Wickstrom
SECONDED by James Tod

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee formally extend their gratitude to Eva Ciesielska for all of her years of service with the Renters Advisory Committee.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

MOVED by Colleen Wickstrom
SECONDED by Heather Barclay

THAT the Renters Advisory Committee confirms the recommendations in the motion entitled “Maintain and Strengthen the City of Vancouver Renters Advisory Committee,” circulated to Council on May 20, 2025, as follows:

Motion to Maintain and Strengthen the City of Vancouver Renters Advisory Committee:

WHEREAS

1. City of Vancouver civic agencies are volunteer bodies established and appointed by Council to communicate community perspectives to Council while advising on City priorities, projects, and initiatives, or to serve statutory functions as outlined in relevant by-laws or terms of reference;
2. Civic agencies are essential to the City’s public engagement efforts, and are often asked by the City to provide early and ongoing feedback on specific projects;
3. Civic agencies provide residents with the opportunity to develop civic knowledge and contribute to their communities, and are a crucial part of the City’s accountability to and engagement with residents;
4. Civic agencies have been shaping City priorities for nearly a century—beginning with the Vancouver City Planning Commission (1926–1952), expanding in the 1970s with advisory bodies like the Bicycle Advisory Committee and special advisory committees on disabilities and seniors, and continuing to evolve toward more inclusive and diverse public engagement;
5. As one of these Advisory Committees, the Renters' Advisory Committee (RAC) advises Council and staff on strategic priorities relating to renters, including initiatives aimed at protecting renters and rental housing, increasing renter participation in civic life, and ensuring equitable access to housing;
6. This Committee exists specifically to elevate the voices of renters who have historically been, and continue to be, marginalized in housing policy decisions, and to ensure that their unique needs and perspectives are thoughtfully incorporated into municipal decision-making;

7. Although more than 50% of households in Vancouver are made up of renters, they continue to face persistent challenges including housing insecurity, displacement, renoviction, and affordability barriers, which limit their ability to fully participate in civic life;
8. While streamlining advisory committees may support efficiency, it is essential to preserve the distinct focus of committees like the RAC. These groups play a vital role in amplifying community voices, strengthening civic participation, informing policy with lived experience, building trust and accountability, and—importantly—bridging the gap between citizens and decision-makers.;
9. There are effective ways to improve and enhance the functioning of advisory committees without compromising the benefits and valuable contributions they make, such as establishing clear mandate letters, improving meeting processes, and fostering collaboration across committees;
10. Including only a few renters within a larger, general advisory body would fail to represent the diversity of renter experiences and substantially limit the opportunity for dedicated policy input from those most affected by housing precarity and policy decisions;
11. This Committee provides technical, experience-based feedback on City policies that affect renters, including staff-initiated initiatives like the Tenant Relocation and Protection Policy, Standards of Maintenance Bylaw, and Rental Vacancy Target Rate;
12. Dedicated, distinct committees like the Renters Advisory Committee (RAC) are essential for providing focused feedback on rental affordability, tenant protections, evictions, rent control, and equitable access to housing—while also addressing intersectional housing issues such as the displacement of Indigenous renters, new immigrants, youth, low-income communities, and racialized residents;
13. Because housing access and stability are foundational to wellbeing and civic participation, renter-informed perspectives really should be incorporated across all aspects of municipal decision-making;
14. The October 9th Council motion on advisory committee structures (Minutes, page 13) suggests committees may be placing more emphasis on operations than policy, but for renters, operational issues such as inspection delays, unsafe units, or inaccessible landlord services often signal deeper policy failures;
15. Given past experiences of displacement, economic insecurity, and marginalization, many renters feel safer and more empowered sharing their perspectives within a dedicated space like RAC, rather than within generalized or majoritized bodies;

16. RAC meetings allow members time and space to bring forward ideas and concerns that may otherwise be overlooked, ensuring that renter-specific issues are elevated rather than buried within broader deliberations;
17. Over the years, RAC has built strong, collaborative relationships with Council liaisons and City staff, which have enabled meaningful engagement and improved tenant-related policy outcomes;
18. The Renters' Advisory Committee plays a critical role in bridging the gap between renters, City Council, and staff, ensuring that housing policies are informed by lived experience and communicated effectively to the community.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Renters Advisory Committee recommends that Council:

- i. Ensure the Renters Advisory Committee remains a distinct, dedicated body that is empowered to provide focused real-world insight on issues affecting renters and rental housing in Vancouver;
- ii. Ensure that any changes to advisory committee structures do not diminish the democratic participation and representation of equity-denied communities, including renters, in municipal decision-making;
- iii. Recognize that specialized advisory committees like RAC play a vital role in democratic participation beyond voting and serve as an essential mechanism for marginalized communities to engage with civic processes; and
- iv. Reaffirm an ongoing commitment to working with Civic Agencies towards shared goals, including appropriate investment of time and support by Council and staff liaisons.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by James Tod
SECONDED by Sam Ibrahim

THAT this meeting be adjourned.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Next Meeting:

DATE: Wednesday, June 25, 2025
TIME: 5:30 pm
PLACE: Cascadia Room, 3rd Floor, City Hall
/ Webex Online

The Committee adjourned at 6:24 pm.

* * * * *