

CPC2016-110  
Attachment 2  
Letter 1

April 21, 2016

Worship Mayor Nenshi and Members of Calgary City Council  
City of Calgary  
700 Macleod Trail S.E.  
Calgary, Alberta T2G 2M3

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

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2016 APR 21 AM 8:59  
THE CITY OF CALGARY  
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**Re: Secondary Suite - Land Use Bylaw Amendments 23P2016 (CPC M-2016-004)****Background**

At the heart of the secondary suites debate lies a certain level of skepticism and mistrust by homeowners. When a Motion to rezone Wards 7, 8, 9 and 11 was brought forward in 2015, a group called NOT4RZ (Not For Rezoning) was formed to oppose this. We heard from many homeowners and received many emails, and some common themes emerged.

Most homeowners, including those in our group, were not opposed to secondary suites provided the homeowner lived in the home and provided that parking, maintenance and tenant behaviour were not an issue. In other words, what we heard is that homeowners did not want to be adversely affected by a suite next to them. Essentially, if the property owner had a small suite in his basement and controlled the situation, many people were not opposed in principle.

However, the reality was that most homeowners we heard from recounted stories of bad situations and little enforcement, so that they had no choice but to want to prevent suites in an area not zoned to allow them. Another common theme was that through their own experiences, homeowners were unconvinced By-law enforcement would actually "do something" about a bad suite situation.

(As an example of Calgary's poor by-law enforcement, some residents on my street recently reported an illegal suite in the house for sale next to them. The realtor advertised the home as having two separate units to rent out, and photos clearly showed two separate kitchens. A complaint was filed with 311, subsequently the owner removed a stove from the house, the bylaw official came by, and his report stated:

*"I inspected last week and found all lower cooking facilities had been removed. The owners did have friends staying downstairs but were going to share the main floor kitchen. As a result the complaint has been closed."*  
No stove, no suite, case closed.)

Until we see licensing or proper enforcement in place, we should not make things any easier for uncaring or unscrupulous landlords or investors.

Those opposed to secondary suites just want some assurances that "bad" suites will be dealt with effectively. They are not opposed to the idealic scenarios the City paints on its promotion of secondary suites: situations that provide "accommodations for elderly parents, disabled family members or children" or that "allow seniors to remain in their home and community while on a fixed income".

**They just want to know what they will be getting if the home next to them applies for a secondary suite.**

**Why then would the City actually try to increase the ambiguity around second suites?**

## Clarity

Within the last year, the City has changed the wording on all applications for rezoning that come before Council.

## WHY?

Compare these two sections of the administration report that is part of each application. The underlined sentence in the second version has been added.

This is a randomly-chosen secondary suite application from May 15, 2015, the day of the Wards 7, 8, 9, and 11 Council meeting.

### **LAND USE DISTRICTS**

*The proposed R-C1s district allows for the development of a secondary suite in addition to a Single Detached Dwelling on a single parcel. The R-C1s district allows for one additional secondary suite that may take one of the following two forms:*

*// Secondary Suite as a permitted use; or*

*// Backyard Suite as a discretionary use.*

*The proposed R-C1s district is appropriate and complimentary to the established land use pattern of the area and allows for a more efficient use of the land. In addition, the development of a secondary suite on this site can meet intent of Land Use Bylaw 1P2007.*

This is a randomly-chosen secondary suite application from April 11, 2016, the day 21 out of 26 suite applications were approved.

### **LAND USE DISTRICTS**

*The proposed Residential – Contextual One Dwelling (R-C1s) District allows for the development of a secondary suite on a parcel containing a single detached dwelling. The suite may take one of the following two types:*

*// Secondary suite as a permitted use (located within the main residential building and secondary to the main residential use)*

*// Backyard suite as a discretionary use (located in a detached building located behind the front facade of the main residential building and secondary to the main residential use)*

**Approval of this land use application does not constitute approval of a specific secondary suite type, but rather it allows for a secondary suite to be considered via the development or building permit process.**

**The City doesn't care what kind of suite you build. You can apply for one kind and then build another.**

Most homeowners do not know about this. They assume that a secondary suite is located in a basement, and if they have heard of laneway or garage suites, they assume they would find out if the neighbor applies to build one. Not necessarily. An applicant can apply for a basement suite and later already has the rezoning in place for a (discretionary) backyard or garage suite.

## **M-2016-004 and Size of Suite**

The proposed increase in allowable maximum size to 100 sqm (up from 70 for basements and 75 for backyard / laneway / garage) is of concern to me for two reasons.

1. It increases the potential size of suites and the number of tenants that can reside within a suite.
2. A rezoning approval does not specify what type of secondary suite will be built.

## Size of Suite

The original intent as it was mentioned in the SPC on Planning and Urban Development meeting that I attended at City Hall was that it seemed almost counter-intuitive to not allow a secondary suite in a basement that was over 750 sq. ft. because it was actually too large. Why should a homeowner have to block off part of a basement or not be eligible if they have 900 or 1000 sq. feet of available space? In an existing basement, it seems reasonable to allow for somewhat more than 70 sqm on those grounds. Many jurisdictions allow for a maximum of 90 sqm, but all do have a maximum size. A suite should be truly "secondary" to the main home.

It is one thing to allow for an existing basement to be converted into a suite, and another for an investor to build a new house with a maximum-sized suite created for the purpose of renting out two separate living spaces. At what point does this essentially become more like a duplex?

While I would have preferred 90 sqm to 100 sqm, what I strongly disagree with it is that the 100 sqm can also be a separate building entirely, like a backyard, laneway or garage suite, **and that your application for rezoning does not have to specify which one.**

## Type of suite needs to be specified on the original application for rezoning

If the allowable suite area is raised to 100 sqm, this creates some new potential concerns.

1. An investor can apply for the easiest, most-likely approved suite. He can apply to build a basement suite for his elderly relative or other family member. Neighbors are unlikely to object (at least not in mass), the CA would likely be okay with it, and Council approves over 80% of them anyway.
2. Once he has the rezoning, he can change his mind or intent, or he can sell the house, and because the zoning is already in place, he could submit a DP to build a backyard suite or a garage suite. Neighbors have lost their chance to object. Yes, it would be discretionary, but that means virtually nothing. Neighbors could maybe fight the window placement of your garage suite, but they likely wouldn't be able to prevent it from being built. A discretionary DP could also be appealed at the SDAB, but again, it involves a lot of time and energy to fight against the DP.

The same neighbors who agreed to a basement suite could find themselves fighting against a garage suite they would have opposed if that had been the original application. There is a huge difference between a basement suite that is invisible to neighbors and a two-storey garage suite or a backyard suite that involves cutting down trees and building another house in the backyard.

The purpose of a DP or a rezoning application is for neighbors to have a chance to provide their input BEFORE anything happens. But, how can they do that if they don't know what is proposed? Essentially, the applicant is indicating he'd like to build something, but he just hasn't confirmed what yet. It might be a few rooms in his basement, or it might be an entirely new 2-storey building in his backyard.

3. When the limit was 75 sqm for a separate structure, the building would still have been a relatively small structure, likely only one bedroom, likely intended for a single occupant. For an investor, it would be an expensive build for such a limited number of tenants.
4. If the limit is now 100 sqm, this becomes a lot more viable economically because essentially you are creating another house. An ad from this week's CREB real estate newspaper showed many homes in my area that are just over 1070 sq. ft. (about 100 sqm). So essentially, an applicant can now build another full house in the backyard of an existing one (still subject to 45% lot coverage, building code, etc.).

5. The 100 sqm building opportunity will attract investors in ways that a 75 sqm did not. A quick search found this: <http://hayeshomes.ca/?p=421> (bold emphasis and underlining mine).

**Hayes Homes is a real estate company helping people take advantage of great investment opportunities.** We invest in single and multi-family homes in Calgary, Alberta. Our experienced team finds cash flowing properties in great neighbourhoods that we purchase, renovate if required, and rent to quality tenants.

#### **How a Sophisticated Investor can Take Advantage of This?**

If you own a secondary suite that is illegal, now is the time to legalize it especially if it has existed prior to 2007.

**The process to legalize a secondary suite has never been this easy.** The city only has this program slotted for 18 months. We do not know if they will keep it around after that.

**If you are looking at purchasing a property and installing a secondary suite, the permit process has never been this fast.** This means you can start renovating immediately and cut down on vacancy costs. Tenants will be looking for safe suites and potentially reporting suites that are not legal. It will now be very easy to tell if a suite is legal or not.

Having a safe and/or legal suite will reduce your exposure to liability and potential fines. If your suite does not meet zoning requirements, you can still make sure your suite meets the fire code. **You also have the opportunity to rezone the property to a permitted use for a secondary suite. Rezoning applications are now free and 87% of the requests are successful.**

6. If companies or realtors are promoting this, investors will take advantage of it. If an investor can now buy a house to rent and even build a second house on the same property, they will do so. The existing maximum 70 sqm would have allowed only a home of about 700 sq. feet. It is expensive to build a separate house if it can only be about 700 sq.ft., but if you make it 1070 sq.ft., it all of a sudden provides the investor with much greater incentive to go ahead. That is the size of most of the bungalow homes in my area.

This was never the intent, but investors will take advantage of this.

## **Solutions:**

1. **The 100 sqm maximum should be allowed only if below grade. No increases in size for laneway, garage or backyard suites.**

This was the original intent – to allow an applicant to develop his basement into a suite, even if it is larger than 70 sqm. The intent was never to allow for extra-large second homes above ground.

Keep the existing 70 or 75 sqm maximums for any structures above grade. This is already larger than what Edmonton allows.

Edmonton allows a maximum size of 60 sqm for above ground garage suites and 50 sqm for Garden or Garage at Grade.

[http://www.edmonton.ca/city\\_government/documents/PDF/Nov2009SecondarySuitesSummaryTable.pdf](http://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PDF/Nov2009SecondarySuitesSummaryTable.pdf)

<b>Garage Suite (above Grade)</b>	Minimum: 30 m <sup>2</sup> Maximum: 60 m <sup>2</sup> May be increased by up to 7.5 m <sup>2</sup> only where additional amount is used for a Platform Structure associated with the Garage Suite
<b>Suite Size Garden Suite Garage Suite (at Grade)</b>	Minimum: 30 m <sup>2</sup> : 50 m <sup>2</sup> , excluding Garage portion of the building if a 1 <sup>st</sup> Storey (at Grade) Garage Suite. May be increased by up to 7.5 m <sup>2</sup> only where additional amount is used for a Platform Structure associated with the Garage or Garden Suite.

2. **There needs to be a specific designation on a suite application.** The change of land use for a secondary suite must specify what type of suite it will be: basement, laneway, garage or backyard.

**An R-C1s designation should not give the applicant free choice as to what he wants to build: he must build only the type he applied for originally.** Neighbors must have the opportunity to know and comment on what will be built next to time BEFORE the land use redesignation (and not only after that at a discretionary DP stage). The type you apply for is the only type you should be allowed to build. Neighbors must know what the likely outcome is so they can comment on that specific situation.

It should be like a DP or a BP in that regard: they specify exactly what you can build. I can't apply for a BP for a fireplace and decide to build a retaining wall instead. I can't tell the neighbors my DP is for a garage when I really intend to build a skateboard ramp out the front. You can't change your mind or intent without a totally new application.

Please consider these amendments to the existing proposal.

Sincerely,

Melanie Swailes  
Calgary, Alberta

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Wildwood Community Association  
4411 Spruce Drive S.W.  
Calgary AB T3C 3B1

2016 APR 21 AM 7:38

THE CITY OF CALGARY  
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April 20, 2016

Worship Mayor Nenshi and Members of Calgary City Council  
City of Calgary  
700 Macleod Trail S.E.  
Calgary, Alberta T2G 2M3

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

**Re: Secondary/Backyard Suite - Land Use Bylaw Amendments 23P2016 (CPC M-2016-004)**

The Wildwood Community Association Board of Directors has considered the proposed Land Use Bylaw Amendments that will enable more and larger Secondary and Backyard suites in our Community. Consistent with the Association's representation of its member's views on suite Bylaw Amendments in 2015, we want to clearly state our **opposition** to these proposed Bylaw Amendments.

The fact is, these Amendments enable a:

- doubling of population density,
- significant increase in building intensity,
- significant increase in the proportion of rental properties, and
- significant increase in roadway congestion and laneway traffic,

Residents are telling us that these outcomes are not in the best interests of our community.

**As Community representatives, it is disconcerting that after all of the volunteer time and effort to gather and express the views of residents in last year's debate, the City returns with proposals that are even more detrimental. Then to have limited consultation and misinformation to residents suggesting these Amendments will not affect R-C1 properties, is even more offensive.**

**Wildwood is not a community in decline.**

**Wildwood is a safe, demographically stable and sustainable community.**

**Wildwood is a vibrant place for families to grow in a low density environment.**

**Wildwood is the type of community that is contemplated in Municipal Development Plan section 2.2.1 where adjacent higher intensity areas are created to "make redevelopment more predictable for existing communities by lessening the impact on stable, low-density areas."**

**Reducing the minimum parcel width requirement to 7.5 metres:**

From current rules, this change will add two residences and at least four cars to every 50ft R-C2 property.

**Increasing the maximum floor area of a secondary/backyard suite to 100 square metres:**

From the current sizes of 70 and 75 square metres respectively, this will enable the addition of a second dwelling (1,075 sq ft.) that is larger than many of the existing dwellings. Whether the added suite is a duplex scenario, a huge garden suite with a basement or a huge over the garage

suite, the scale of these second dwellings will no longer be secondary to the main residence. This scale of development is purely a development opportunity that is significantly out of context, will not be cost effective enough to produce any accommodations that would be “affordable” and will likely create an environment for more illegal suites if the property is already zoned to allow for a secondary suite.

It is understood that R-C1 properties would still be required to secure re-designation to R-C1s; however, the 85% approval rate provides little comfort to neighbours. We also understand that backyard suites will remain discretionary. The re-designation application requirements currently do not include identification of the type of suite to be applied for in the subsequent Development Permit application. From a planning perspective these processes are somewhat exclusive but in a practical sense, neighbours are asked to comment on a re-designation with an undefined purpose. Both the land use re-designation and Development Permit processes are viewed as favouring the desires of the Applicant and place too much onus on neighbours to defend their right to enjoyment of their own property.

**We respectfully request that Council:**

- Defer approval of these Amendments to accommodate more Public engagement.

**Our suggestions for debate in that engagement would include:**

- Reject the change in maximum size for Backyard suites.
- Allow the maximum size of a below-grade suite to equal the main floor of the house.
- Reject the reduction of the minimum lot width for suites to 7.5 meters.
- Require R-C1s Land Use Re-designation Applications to identifying the type of suite.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Robyn Birdsell  
President  
Wildwood Community Association

**Smith, Theresa L.**

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**From:** Jim Ellis [jellis27@nucleus.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 20, 2016 7:30 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** Bylaw 23P2016 (M-2016-004, The City of Calgary)

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

**I am writing to you today to object to several changes to our Land Use Bylaw being proposed through M-2016-004.**

**Reducing the minimum lot width to 7.5 m for secondary suites** would allow for 6 parking stalls across the back of the lot and 4 dwelling units (instead of 2) on R-C2 lots. **Increasing the maximum suite size in all zoning to 100 square meters** means that the secondary suite could be over 1000 sq ft-- certainly not a modest living space, especially if you can add a basement and not include it in the total square footage.

With every single R-C1 property now easily re-designated to R-C1s, you could have side by side "duplexes" because they could each be over 1000 sq ft, not counting the basement, or massive garage suites (larger than a triple garage), or a second bungalow added to an R-C1 lot.

**These proposed changes would have a very detrimental impact on both the character of low density residential districts and our urban canopy, as developers look to maximize profit by doubling the current allowable dwelling units. These changes would also encourage the demolition of existing housing stock, have an environmental impact on our landfills, and discourage affordable secondary suites—new builds are increasingly expensive in Calgary, and not conducive to being rented at an affordable rate.**

Edmonton's maximum suite size is 70 sq m. If it is above grade in the house, the suite cannot exceed 40% of the area of the main floor, to a maximum of 70 sq m. If it is below grade in Edmonton, the suite can equal the square footage of the main floor of the house. The 100 square metre suite size Calgary is proposing has a huge environmental footprint and does not support the idea of a modest suite which is secondary to a primary residence.

**I am extremely opposed to reducing the minimum lot width for secondary suites to 7.5 meters in any district (9 meters is acceptable). I am also strongly opposed to increasing the maximum suite size (above grade) to 100 square meters (75 square meters is reasonable) in any district.**

**In addition, I am tremendously concerned with the lack of Public engagement regarding these proposed changes.** Please take note of these objections as you consider these proposed changes in M-2016-004.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

James Ellis

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2016 APR 21 AM 7:39  
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**Smith, Theresa L.**

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**From:** Gayle Fields [gaylefields@shaw.ca]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 21, 2016 9:48 AM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** M-2016-004

Dear Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

**I am writing to you today to object to several changes to our Land Use Bylaw being proposed through M-2016-004.**

**Reducing the minimum lot width to 7.5 m for secondary suites** would allow for 6 parking stalls across the back of the lot and 4 dwelling units (instead of 2) on R-C2 lots. **Increasing the maximum suite size in all zoning to 100 square meters** means that the secondary suite could be over 1000 sq ft-- certainly not a modest living space, especially if you can add a basement and not include it in the total square footage.

With every single R-C1 property now easily re-designated to R-C1s, you could have side by side "duplexes" because they could each be over 1000 sq ft, not counting the basement, or massive garage suites (larger than a triple garage), or a second bungalow added to an R-C1 lot. Right now, we have quite a few bungalows in our community which are less than 1000 sq ft-- the secondary suite could be even bigger than the original house on our R-C1 lots.

**These proposed changes would have a very detrimental impact on both the character of our community and our urban canopy, as developers look to maximize profit by doubling the current allowable dwelling units. These changes would also encourage the demolition of existing housing stock, have an environmental impact on our landfills, and discourage affordable secondary suites**—new builds are increasingly expensive in Calgary, and not conducive to being rented at an affordable rate.

Edmonton raised their maximum suite size is 70 sq m. If it is above grade in the house, the suite cannot exceed 40% of the area, to a maximum of 70 sq m-- 100 sq m is way out of line for a secondary suite; 75 sq m is ample. If it is below grade in Edmonton, the suite can equal the square footage of the main floor of the house. Their garage suites are also a maximum of 60 sq m and only allowed to be 6.5 m in height. Their minimum width for backyard suites is 15 m and ALL secondary suites require a minimum of 3 on-site parking stalls.

**I am extremely opposed to reducing the minimum lot width for secondary suites to 7.5 meters in any district (9 meters is acceptable). I am also strongly opposed to increasing the maximum suite size (above grade) to 100 square meters (75 square meters is reasonable) in any district.**

**In addition, I am tremendously concerned with the lack of Public engagement regarding these proposed changes.** Please take note of these objections as you consider the proposed changes in M-2016-004.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Gayle Fields  
Homeowner

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2016 APR 21 AM 9:55  
THE CITY OF CALGARY  
CITY CLERKS

**Smith, Theresa L.**

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**From:** Doug Roberts [development@richmondknobhill.ca]  
**Sent:** Thursday, April 21, 2016 9:53 AM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Cc:** Pearce, Stephen M.; Dennis Cant; president@richmondknobhill.ca; Dana Hill; Joan Faulk; Nancy Miller; Shamir Charania; Anne Derby; Leanne Ellis; Keren Houlgate; Ali McMillan; Dan Godin  
**Subject:** Calgary Planning Commission Report CPC2016-110 -- M-2016-004 -- Proposed Changes to Secondary Suite Rules

Mayor and City Councillors

Secondary and backyard suites are an interesting issue. Richmond/Knob Hill (RKH) is an inner-city residential community comprised primarily of R-C2 parcels, plus some R-C1 parcels and a smattering of multi-residential parcels. Under the current rules suites are allowed on wide-lot R-C2 parcels, but are not allowed on either R-C1 parcels or narrow-lot R-C2 parcels. Owners of single detached dwellings on wide-lot R-C2 parcels who would like to densify currently have a choice -- either:

Option 1 - add a suite; or

Option 2 - subdivide and redevelop the property as 2 single detached or semi-detached infills on 25ft parcels.

In the vast majority of cases in RKH such owners are choosing Option 2, and as more and more of our wide-lot R-C2 parcels are redeveloped in this manner, the inventory of parcels in RKH that qualify for legal suites is dwindling. If other inner-city communities are redeveloping in a similar manner, at some point Calgary's inner-city may be left with virtually no opportunities for legal suites on low-density residential parcels.

Possible solutions that would preserve opportunities for legal suites on low-density residential parcels in Calgary's inner-city include:

Solution 1 -- spot rezoning -- allow owners of R-C1, R1 and low-density DC parcels to apply for redesignation to R-C1s/R-1s,

and owners of narrow-lot R-C2 parcels to apply for redesignation to R-CG;

Solution 2 -- amend the Land Use Bylaw 1P2007 (LUB) to allow suites on R-C1, R-1 and low-density DC parcels; and/or

Solution 3 -- amend the LUB to allow suites on narrow-lot R-C2 parcels.

Solution 1 is the current situation. Large portions of Council's public hearing agendas are now occupied by land use redesignation applications to allow suites on parcels that currently do not qualify. The vast majority of these applications involve redesignations of R-C1 parcels to R-C1s, or of R-1 parcels to R-1s. We are aware of a few applications involving redesignations of DC parcels to R-C1s, but have not yet seen any applications to redesignate narrow-lot R-C2 parcels to R-CG.

Solution 2 would eliminate much of the current stream of suite-related land use redesignation applications and various efforts to implement this solution have been made over the past few years, but to date none of these efforts have been successful. Our sense is that much of the resistance to Solution 2 would disappear if a way could be found to address residents' "absentee landlord" concerns.

Solution 3 would not really have much impact on the current stream of suite-related land use redesignation applications, and squeezing a legal suite into a narrow-lot parcel can be quite challenging. Solution 3 would effectively open up already densifying R-C2 communities such as RKH to yet another layer of densification by allowing each original wide-lot bungalow to potentially be replaced with a total of 4 dwelling units (2 primary

residences and 2 suites), and each narrow-lot infill to effectively be converted into a duplex (1 primary residence and 1 suite).

If Council approves the captioned report's proposed amendments to the minimum parcel width requirement for suites it will be taking a significant step towards implementing Solution 3. Speaking on behalf of a primarily R-C2 community in which many of those R-C2 parcels have already been redeveloped into narrow-lot infills, and which is therefore already experiencing both the benefits and challenges of densification, the Richmond/Knob Hill Community Association does not consider it appropriate for the City to proceed with implementing Solution 3 unless and until:

- 1) Solution 2 is also implemented, such that R-C1, R-1 and residential DC communities are also opened up to suites; and
- 2) the City steps up with meaningful public realm and transportation improvements to help RKH and other R-C2 communities cope with the additional density.

Regarding residents' "absentee landlord" concerns, we note that City Administration has taken the position in previous reports to Council that "rules cannot be created which require a landowner to live on the property".

However, it would be possible for the City to address the "absentee landlord" concern by imposing a requirement that a suite could only be occupied by:

- 1) the occupant of the primary residence -- ie. either the owner of the property, or a tenant who has leased the entire property from the owner (hereinafter referred to as the "Primary Occupant"), decides to use both the primary residence and the suite for their own purposes;
- 2) a tenant of the Primary Occupant -- ie. the Primary Occupant decides to live in the primary residence (or in the suite) and rent out the suite (or the primary residence) to a third party (hereinafter referred to as the "Secondary Occupant"); or
- 3) a family member or guest of either the Primary Occupant or the Secondary Occupant.

Such a requirement would accommodate all of the "desired scenarios" -- eg. young couples who need suite income to be able to afford to buy their first home, or middle-agers who would like to have a place close by for their adult children or aging parents to live, or seniors who need suite income to be able to afford to continue living in their existing home, etc. -- but would address the "absentee landlord" concern by ensuring that a person responsible for the entire property, the Primary Occupant, lives on-site and is therefore able to monitor first-hand both the state of the property and the conduct of the Secondary Occupant. We would also point out that the LUB already uses this same approach to deal with Live/Work Units, as the rules for Live/Work Units require that any business carried on in the business portion of the unit must be carried on by an occupant of the residence portion of that unit. In other words, the owner of a Live/Work Unit cannot lease the business portion of the unit to one tenant and the residence portion of the unit to another tenant.

Feel free to call or email us if you have any questions regarding the above.

Thank you.

Doug Roberts  
Chair, Development Committee  
Richmond/Knob Hill Community Association  
403-252-8924  
[development@richmondknobhill.ca](mailto:development@richmondknobhill.ca)

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Rutland

2016 APR 20 AM 7:46

Your Community, Your Association, Your Voice  
Mayor Nenshi and City Councillors:

THE CITY OF CALGARY  
CITY CLERK'S

**This is being presented on behalf of the Rutland Park Community Association and the residents it serves.**

Proposed LUB changes M-2016-004 could have a huge detrimental impact on our community. Two of these proposed changes were what we as a Community Association formally opposed during the last round of proposed secondary suite amendments in June 2015. (A petition with almost 300 signatures from our residents was also shared with Council opposing these changes at that time.) These two changes have the potential to almost triple the density of our current low density bungalows.

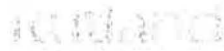
1. **Reducing the minimum parcel width requirement to 7.5 metres for secondary suites in any district, even when all of the required parking stalls are provided on site**—this will have a huge detrimental impact on our un-subdivided/un-redeveloped R-C2 properties, as 6 stalls can be accommodated on a 50 ft wide lot, opening up all of our R-C2 lots to 4 dwelling units instead of 2, if they were subdivided.

2. **Increasing the maximum floor area of a secondary suite, where it is currently regulated, from 70 square metres to 100 square metres and from 75 square metres to 100 square metres for backyard suites**—this will have a huge negative impact on our R-C1 properties as the City promotes re-designation to R-C1s, and permits second dwellings that are even larger than some of our original dwellings.

**Reducing the minimum lot width to 7.5 m for secondary suites would effectively double the current permitted units for our R-C2 lots if they were subdivided.** Most of our R-C2 lots have not been subdivided or redeveloped, and contain only 1 dwelling unit. By reducing the minimum lot width to 7.5 m, all current and future infills will be permitted to have secondary suites as well; new builds will likely opt for a garage suite to make things more lucrative for developers.

**Increasing the maximum suite size in all districts to 100 square meters above grade means that the secondary suite could be over 1000 sq ft—** certainly not a modest living space, especially if you can add a basement and do not need to include the basement in the total square footage.

With every single R-C1 property now easily re-designated to R-C1s, there is the potential to have "duplexes" because each unit could be over 1000 sq ft, not counting the basement (Rollin Stanley has publically stated that it makes no difference if the suites are beside each other or above/below each other), or massive garage suites (larger than a triple garage), or a second bungalow added to an R-C1 lot. Right now, we have a number of bungalows in our community



Your Community, Your Association, Your Voice

which are less than 1000 sq ft— the secondary suite could be even bigger than the original house on our R-C1 lots and still fit within the 45% lot coverage.

**Once a property becomes R-C1s, a backyard suite while still discretionary, suddenly becomes very attractive when it can be over 1000 sq ft.** In previous garage suite workshops around the City, speakers have also indicated that Calgarians are able to turn both dwellings into a condominium plan and sell them separately. (Edmonton does not permit this, by the way. Their garage suites are also a maximum of 60 sq m and only allowed to be 6.5 m in height. Their minimum width for backyard suites is 15 m and ALL secondary suites require a minimum of 3 on-site parking stalls. Secondary suites below grade can be as large as the main floor of the house, but only 40% of the main dwelling up to 70 sq m if above grade.)

Will the average owner turn around and create backyard suites? Not likely, because of the cost, but builders are quite happy to pick off older homes on R-C2 lots and put in 4 units, or buy up older R-C1 lots and build 2 units. Once the doors are open, you won't get them shut again.

**These proposed changes would have a very detrimental impact on both the character of our community and our urban canopy,** as developers look to maximize profit by doubling the current allowable dwelling units. This does not *reinforce the character, quality and stability of neighbourhoods or lessen the impact on stable, low-density areas as set out in Section 2.2.1 of the MDP.*

In an era where we are trying to reduce our environmental footprint, 100 square meters is no longer a modest secondary suite. These proposed changes encourage the demolition of existing housing stock and mature trees, resulting in a negative impact on our landfills as well. (They would also effectively double the density of existing lots, yet secondary suites are not included in density totals when the City is calculating density with regards to infrastructure and services, and probably not considered toward our MDP density goals either.) **In addition, they actually discourage affordable secondary suites, as existing homes are demolished to make way for upscale dwellings. New builds are increasingly expensive in Calgary, and not conducive to being rented at an affordable rate. These changes also have the potential to create more illegal suites—residents are less concerned about reporting illegal suites if the property is already zoned to allow for a secondary suite.**

**Reducing the minimum lot width for secondary suites to 7.5 meters opens up all of our R-C2 properties to the potential of 4 dwelling units if they are subdivided. Increasing the maximum suite size to 100 square meters makes our R-C1 properties more attractive to developers who can double the number of allowable dwelling units through a simple land use re-designation to R-C1s.** (The City is even currently waiving the fees for this re-designation.)

**While these changes are not about re-zoning/re-designation in any way, they have the potential to effectively DOUBLE the permitted density on all of the low density residential lots in the City.**

Your Community, Your Association, Your Voice

**We are extremely opposed to reducing the minimum lot width for secondary suites to 7.5 meters in any district (9 meters is acceptable). We are also strongly opposed to increasing the maximum suite size (above grade) to 100 square meters (75 square meters is reasonable) in any district.**

The Public needs to be engaged before these 2 changes are considered, and they need to be fully aware of the potential consequences of such seemingly innocuous amendments.

**Please reject these 2 proposed changes in M-2016-004.**

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Meera Nathwani-Crowe

RPCA President

Leanne Ellis

RPCA VP Development and Traffic

**Regarding Appendix II**—This has not been referenced back to 1P2007, but rather to the changes proposed in the appendix, the intent being to set the minimum lot width for secondary suites to 9.0 m for all districts, and the maximum secondary suite size above grade to 75.0 m for all districts and uses including Backyard Suites:

- a. In subsection 351(2) delete "70.0 and replace it with 75.0"
- b. Remove b altogether from the appendix, so leave it unchanged in the LUB (re-letter appendix after making all of these changes)
- g. Delete subsections 409(1)(b) and (c) and replace them with the following:
  - (b) 9.0 metres for a parcel containing a Backyard Suite or Secondary Suite
- j. Delete subsection 429 (a.1) and replace it with the following:
  - (a.1) 9.0 metres for a parcel containing a Backyard Suite or Secondary Suite
- q. Delete subsection 464 (1)(b) and (c) and replace them with the following:
  - (b) 9.0 metres for a parcel containing a Backyard Suite or Secondary Suite
- (t) Delete subsection 479(a.1) and replace it with the following:

(a.1) 9.0 metres for a parcel containing a Backard Suite or Secondary Suite