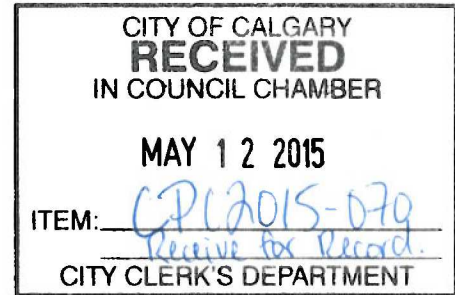


Good Afternoon, Your Worship and Councillors.

My name is Caroline Troy.

C - A - R - O - L - I - N - E

T - R - O - Y



Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. Please accept my apologies in advance if I should break protocol – this is my second visit to these hallowed chambers. The first was only yesterday.

I come before you today to speak in opposition to the vote on permitting a blanket change to allowing secondary suites in only four wards of the City.

I would like to make three distinct points in this presentation. These are:

1. The element of public trust between the City and homeowners, akin to a contract between private parties;
2. Secondly, the issue of enforcement of illegal secondary suites; and
3. Thirdly, acknowledgement of the parties who are affected in the event of a change of the legislation.

First, the breach of trust / contract. The decision to buy a house is likely the largest financial decision made by the majority of residents of the City. It is likely that they will only make this decision once. The factors that determine this decision are numerous: "Can we afford it? Is it close to schools? Is there a park nearby? Can I easily get to work? Who are my neighbours? What is the community like? Is the community going to change?" Many of these factors are outside of the homeowners' control, but some, including the land use zoning are well within the control of the homeowner regarding whether and where to buy a house.

When you buy a house, you decide what kind of community, and what land use you are comfortable with. And you rely on the City of Calgary by-laws. Imagine buying a house to learn that your next-door-neighbour decides to run a massage parlour, operate a casino, or open an all-night drive-through restaurant with 24

hour car wash. A situation such as this would be a nightmare; and it could be a reality, except that the City has land use by-laws that prohibit your next-door-neighbour from making such a change. You buy a house and rely upon the City's by-laws to provide a semblance of stability.

The decision to change the City's by-laws is a similar situation. I have bought my home and now the City wants to change the land use by-law to permit my next-door-neighbour to exploit what was previously prohibited.

The decision to buy a house is likely the largest financial decision made by the majority of residents of the City. It is likely that they will only make that decision once. When you buy a house, you rely upon the City. Because you believe that the City of Calgary generally makes good by-laws. And because you rely upon the notion that the City will not just whimsically change its by-laws regarding land use. In the private sector, the action of the City would be similar to breach of contract. As a property owner, I didn't change my end of the contract - but you are threatening to do so.

Secondly I would like to address the issue of enforcement. Mr. Wooley, the Councillor for Ward 8 recently wrote an article recently published in the Wildwood Warbler, our community newsletter that the need for secondary suites was due to the prevalence of illegal secondary suites. This logic is flawed. Changing the by-law on land use to permit the illegal suites is akin to permitting looting when large crowds gather. The thinking appears to be like this: it's illegal to loot stores when large crowds gather, but it's too hard to enforce. So we'll change the law to permit looting. Seems to me that the problem is not with secondary suites, or looting, but with the enforcement.

This issue also calls to mind the failure of the long gun registry. Criminals have never registered their guns. But law abiding citizens did. And the same is true for responsible homeowners. Those property owners who build safe secondary suites that conform to building codes, will also seek the permission from City Council to do so. By changing the bylaw, an inadvertent result is likely to occur

whereby, more illegal and unsafe suites are developed, not fewer. This change in legislation will not have the desired effect to increase the number of safe secondary suites.

And so, perhaps it is better to change the way the illegal activity is enforced. Perhaps, the City of Calgary should increase the value of the fines homeowners with illegal secondary suites should pay.

Lastly, I would like to address the issue on whom the proposed legislation will affect. Homeowners, taxpayers and voters will be affected of the proposed change on the legislation. The proposed change to the land use bylaw will not necessarily affect those whom are purported to benefit.

Yesterday, I heard a student address this Council and plead for a change in the legality of secondary suites and in particular, her secondary suite. Now, I was a student once; as I am sure that many of you were as well. Students need places to live. This is very true.

But it is also true that students are transitory. They don't live here. They don't vote here and they don't pay taxes here. Changing the land use bylaw will not necessarily make more suites available. And it won't make existing suites safer. But it will reduce the value of the homes in the affected wards.

In closing, I would like to say that we have a fabulous City. We live in one of the best cities in Alberta and in Canada. Our City is great because of the leadership exhibited by you, Your Worship and you, Members of City Council. Please continue to lead this City ***Onward***.

Please Vote No to a change in the land use bylaw for secondary suites.

Thank you.