

Subject: Re: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Date: Fri, 17 Jan 2003 18:26:27 -0800

From: Maureen Bragg <m.bragg@shaw.ca>

To: john hunter <hunterjohn@telus.net>, "FONVCA" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

CC: "Allan Orr" <allandorr@shaw.ca>, "Angela Trudeau" <a.trudeau@canada.com>, "Bill Tracey DNV" <bill_tracey@telus.net>, "Brian Platts DNV" <brian_platts@telus.net>, "Cathy Adams DNV" <cathyadams@canada.com>, "Corrie Kost DNV" <kost@triumf.ca>, "Eric Anderson hotmail" <eric_g_andersen@hotmail.com>, "Peter Thompson DNV" <bedeconsulting@shaw.ca>

You are right John. I used to warn my clients with regards to renters, telling them to be prepared to have to repair just about everything in the home once the tenants left. One family renting a brand new house within a year had broken every appliance, used the shower daily without a shower curtain [the floor was rotten] and did not clean once. Burnt counter tops and plugged plumbing was to be expected . Damage deposits were never enough to cover the damage. However in some cases they were a deterrent and people took more care.

It is strange because when I was renting in my young years along with all our friends we kept our places in perfect condition. We would paint and decorate. My daughters are the same, all their friends keep very nice apartments.

However when ever I had to inspect a house with tenants in it as a realtor my heart used to sink and for good cause in most cases. Maureen

----- Original Message -----

From: "john hunter" <hunterjohn@telus.net>

To: "'Maureen Bragg'" <m.bragg@shaw.ca>; "'FONVCA'" <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Cc: "'Allan Orr'" <allandorr@shaw.ca>; "'Angela Trudeau'" <a.trudeau@canada.com>; "'Bill Tracey DNV'" <bill_tracey@telus.net>; "'Brian Platts DNV'" <brian_platts@telus.net>; "'Cathy Adams DNV'" <cathyadams@canada.com>; "'Corrie Kost DNV'" <kost@triumf.ca>; "'Eric Anderson hotmail'" <eric_g_andersen@hotmail.com>; "'Peter Thompson DNV'" <bedeconsulting@shaw.ca>

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2003 10:14 PM

Subject: RE: AFFORDABLE HOUSING

> Unfortunately Maureen it is not just the tax incentives. My wife and I
> own a rental property in Toronto that we rent to our son. If he ever
> moves out, we'll sell it. We would NEVER rent it to strangers.

>

> Well meaning anti business people (usually NDP), thinking they were
> helping renters, have made landlord/tenant legislation so abusive of
> landlords that we would never own a rental property unless rented to a
> relative. It can take 6 months to get people out even if they refuse
> to pay rent and in the meantime they trash your place. Even if you find
> them, you'll be very unlikely to get your money back.

>

> Now there is even talk of making the landlord responsible for tenant's
> grow ops. Yet absent tenant consent, I can't enter the property.

>

> That is a second reason nobody will build low/moderate income rental
> stuff.

>

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: Maureen Bragg [<mailto:m.bragg@shaw.ca>]

> Sent: January 16, 2003 6:11 PM

> To: john hunter; 'FONVCA'; 'Co Mayor Don Bell'; 'Councillor Maureen
> McKeon Holmes'; 'Councillor Richard Walton'; 'Councillor Alan Nixon DNV';
> 'Councilor Ernie Crist DNV'; 'Councilor Janice Harris DNV'; 'Councilor
> Lisa Muri DNV'

> Cc: 'Allan Orr'; 'Angela Trudeau'; 'Bill Tracey DNV'; 'Brian Platts

> DNV'; 'Cathy Adams DNV'; 'Corrie Kost DNV'; 'Eric Anderson hotmail';
> 'Peter Thompson DNV'
> Subject: Re: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
>
> You are quite right Bill about people of good income hiding their assets
> and
> living in subsidized units . I came across it when I was in Real Estate.
> Co-Op housing could work but second time around they are difficult to
> sell.
> It seems even people who have no other way of getting into a place of
> their
> own seem to balk at the idea of not being able to make a profit if they
> sell.
>
> I do know that when people talk about affordable housing they mean cheap
> as
> in under 100,000 but once in have no qualms about selling high. It is a
> vicious circle.
> The Federal Government many years ago took away the incentive as in tax
> breaks for Doctors, Lawyers etc to invest in rental housing. As a result
> there is no incentive to build good rental housing which we need. They
> used
> to be called MURBS and Doctors loved them. I have been retired since 1995
> so
> I do not know if any incentive to create affordable housing is out
> there".
> Perhaps Councillor Alan Nixon can help us on this. Maureen
> ----- Original Message -----
> From: "john hunter" <hunterjohn@telus.net>
> To: "'FONVCA'" <fonvca@fonvca.org>; "'Co Mayor Don Bell'"
> <don_bell@dnv.org>; "'Councillor Maureen McKeon Holmes'"
> <mckeonholmes@telus.net>; "'Councillor Richard Walton'"
> <rwalton@dnv.org>;
> "'Councillor Alan Nixon DNV'" <anixon@dnv.org>; "'Councilor Ernie Crist
> DNV'"
> <ernie_crist@dnv.org>; "'Councilor Janice Harris DNV'"
> <janice_harris@dnv.org>; "'Councilor Lisa Muri DNV'" <lisa_muri@dnv.org>
> Cc: "'Allan Orr'" <allandorr@shaw.ca>; "'Angela Trudeau'"
> <a.trudeau@canada.com>; "'Bill Tracey DNV'" <bill_tracey@telus.net>;
> "'Brian
> Platts DNV'" <brian_platts@telus.net>; "'Cathy Adams DNV'"
> <cathyadams@canada.com>; "'Corrie Kost DNV'" <kost@triumf.ca>; "'Eric
> Anderson hotmail'" <eric_g_andersen@hotmail.com>; "'Maureen Bragg'"
> <m.bragg@shaw.ca>; "'Peter Thompson DNV'" <bedeconsulting@shaw.ca>
> Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2003 5:16 PM
> Subject: AFFORDABLE HOUSING
>
>
> Bill Tracey kindly gave his permission for me to forward his assessment
> of
> the advisability of DNV doing "affordable housing" (C. Crist notice of
> motion attached below).
>
>
>
> Very impressive analysis Bill and for what it's worth I agree.
>
>
>
> John
>
> -----Original Message-----
>
>
> From: Bill Tracey [mailto:bill_tracey@telus.net]

> Sent: January 16, 2003 3:39 PM
> To: john hunter
> Cc: 'Peter Thompson'
> Subject: Re: FW: Notice of Motion - Report Councillors Crist
>
> John,
>
> First, I think this is a provincial or federal issue, not municipal.
>
> "Affordable" housing = "subsidized" housing. There are two ways of
> subsidizing:
>
> * subsidize the occupant
> * subsidize the developer/owner
>
>
> Either way, the benefit is transitory.
>
> If you subsidize the occupant, does the subsidy move with the occupant
> to
> wherever they go? If so, it amounts to income assistance, and we
> already
> have that in many forms and it is not adequate to provide housing,
> obviously. In any case, income assistance is not a municipal
> responsibility.
>
> If you subsidize the developer/owner, another problem arises. If the
> developer/owner is an individual or a normal business it is practically
> impossible to prevent them from re-selling the subsidized property at
> some
> later date for at "market" price -- and gaining a subsidized profit. If
> the
> developer/owner is a "non-profit" organization and the property is never
> sold, then the occupants must be renters. Therefore, subsidized housing
> must
> be rental housing. Or it must be some form of strata title, with
> controlled
> resale pricing, as in a housing co-op as mentioned by Ernie. There
> still
> are management/maintenance fees and expenses, and eventually those
> overtake
> any initial savings from subsidizing the capital cost of the property, I
> believe. Therefore, the rental/maintenance cost of the property
> eventually
> has to rise to market levels or close to it. And then we're back to
> income
> assistance, as before.
>
> As for housing co-ops with rental based on income, there are far too
> many
> instances reported of relatively wealthy people being able to hide
> income
> and live very comfortably in housing that was meant for poorer people.
>
> The only form of subsidy I can support for below-market housing would be
> tax
> relief for non-profit housing societies or co-ops. And that should be
> done
> on an annual basis, only after full financial disclosure by the
> applicants
> with time for public scrutiny prior to the decision to provide tax
> relief.
> For housing co-ops, the public disclosure should include a complete list
> of

> tenant names, as well.
>
> Even then, I think this goes beyond the mandate of a municipal council,
> because it is really income re-distribution -- the taxes of the majority
> are
> made higher so that a few persons can benefit. That should not be done
> without the explicit approval of the majority. Most of the non-profit
> societies that would consider this form of housing would be registered
> as
> charities, and would already be using "tax" dollars in the form of
> income-tax rebates for charitable donations.
>
> In any case, subsidized housing, if it is to be supported in the
> municipality, should not be built on newly-developed land. Such land
> incurs
> large infrastructure costs, and it is important to recoup as much as
> possible of those costs from the sale of the land. Moreover,
> newly-developed land usually is poorly served by transit, and presumably
> those who need housing subsidies cannot afford to operate a car.
> Rather,
> subsidized housing should be on re-developed land, near the centre (or
> downtown) of the municipality, where transit is already available and
> there
> is good access to shopping and other services, and to employment.
> Unfortunately, that often is where re-sale land costs are high.
> Therefore,
> the land cost must be made a relatively small part of the total cost,
> meaning that residential density must be high/medium or high-rise
> residences.
>
> I can see absolutely no justification for subsidized single-family
> residences in North Vancouver District, nor for duplexes or four-plexes
> for
> that matter. Land costs are just too high. Low-cost housing must mean
> high-density housing, with a reasonable allowance of green space in the
> form
> of common parks and playgrounds in the vicinity.
>
> And that's the last word!
>
> Bill
>
> -----Original Message-----
> From: Ernie Crist [mailto:ernie_crist@dnv.org]
> Sent: January 15, 2003 12:15 PM
> To: FONVCA (E-mail)
> Subject: FW: Notice of Motion - Report Councillors Crist
>
> > -----Original Message-----
> >
> > Notice of Motion - Report Councillor Crist
> >
> > Recommendation
> >
> > That staff be requested to provide a report for Council's
> consideration on proposals for the provision of non profit (affordable)
> housing as committed to by most candidates during the last Municipal
> election campaign in Nov 2002.
> >
> > Reason for Report:
> >
> > Non profit (affordable) Housing was one of the key issues advanced
> during some of the all-candidates meetings in the last municipal
> election in November 2002. Virtually all Candidates agreed to support,
> in principle, such initiatives if elected.

> >

> > The term "affordable" within in the context of the identified housing
> needs for low income people, including seniors, clearly means non profit
> housing since all housing, irrespective of its price, is affordable.
> The price range of housing in the District is anywhere from \$ 150,000
> on Native Land to \$ 2 million in the rest of the municipality and there
> is no shortage of such housing. Since the market cannot provide housing
> at prices below the \$ 150,000 barrier the term affordable means non
> profit.

> >

> > Virtually all multi-family housing projects including those built in
> Lynn Valley in recent years have been presented to Council under the
> guise of affordable housing. But what was meant and built is ordinary
> market housing of which there was and never has been a shortage. On the
> other hand all such housing is outside the range of those who need
> housing with rents based on income.

> >

> > Indeed a closer analysis reveals that the majority of housing units
> built in the Lynn Valley Core were sold not to local residents but to
> persons from other parts of the region thus exposing the housing for
> local needs theory for what it is - a developer's ploy to build housing
> without providing any benefit to the local community. On the contrary,
> such massive housing has resulted only in more traffic, more pollution
> and other undesirable by-products of increased density without
> providing any amenities.

> >

> > The District has, in the past, made land available for non profit
> housing but this has not been the case during the last few years. There
> are, of course, several reasons for this. One is undoubtedly the
> difficulty by non profit housing organizations to obtain money from
> senior levels of government to finance such ventures. Yet another are
> difficulties in identifying and obtaining suitable land from the
> District and yet another may be resistance by community organizations to
> allow such forms of housing in existing residential areas.

> >

> > In the past, Councillor Crist, through various initiatives and
> motions, proposed that 5% of all land sale proceeds be set aside for non
> profit housing and that such projects be part and parcel of integrated
> community and neighborhood developments. Councillor Crist also suggested
> that the District Heritage Fund be used for such purposes. This might
> include the financing of such projects provided that the money,
> including interest, is returned to Heritage Fund as the case may be.

> >

> > Experience has shown that non profit housing is acceptable by the
> community provided

> > a) it is part and parcel of an integrated community,

> > b) such projects are small in scale,

> > c) they are efficiently administered, as is the case in Seymour by the
> Seymour Lions for example,

> > d) they are based on community needs rather than outside community or
> developer driven, and/or

> > e) housing units are jointly owned resulting in pride of ownership as
> is the case with the Lynn Valley Co-op.

> >

> > Any and all such criteria in the provision of non profit housing have
> been achieved in the past without altering the "sustainable community
> and neighborhood driven development philosophy pursued by the Federation
> of North Vancouver Community Associations, FONVCA, which allows meeting
> OUR own changing neighborhood and community housing needs - it should be
> possible to do so again. >

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