Subject: REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA (January 16)

From: Jake Jacobson <*REDACTED*>
Sent: Thursday, January 12, 2023 7:26 PM
To: Mayor Admin <MayorAdmin@princegeorge.ca>; Mayor and Council <mayorandcouncil@princegeorge.ca>; Mayor Yu, Simon <Simon.Yu@princegeorge.ca>
Subject: RE: REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA (January 16)

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Good evening Mayor and Council:

My email is regarding Item D.5 on the January 16th Agenda: *Rezoning Amendment Application No. RZ100767 (Bylaw No. 9353, 2022)*

The Recommendation includes: *"Registration of Section 219 Covenant on the legal title of Lot B, District lot 4047, Cariboo District, Plan 20579, Except Plan 29887 that restricts symmetrical facades and secondary suites within two-unit housing."*

I must ask: "Why is the City's standard operating practice to restrict secondary suits in duplex housing?"

Mayor and Council may be unaware that in 2019 the B.C. government announced changes to the building code that expand options for secondary suites in multi-family buildings. The changes have been in-place since December 2019, and they give local governments the choice to allow secondary suites in side-by-side multi-family buildings such as duplexes, townhouses and row housing.

The City's 2021 Housing Needs Assessment has brought attention to the fact that Prince George will need more than 10,000 new units of housing over the next decade… and that rapidly increasing prices and rents, along with **limited rental units**, are putting strain on both renters and homeowners. This is leaving young people, single people, lone parent households, and lower income families at **high risk** of core housing need. The Assessment also noted that the City's Rental housing stock is aging, with more than three-quarters built before 1980 (which is 40 years or older).

Given the challenges that the City has identified associated with the high cost of rentals and low vacancy rates, it is both perplexing and counter-intuitive to read that the City is actively taking steps to prohibit suites in new developments. The City should be encouraging or even mandating that all new developments contain secondary suites.

The BC Building code is becoming increasingly complex (ie. Step code requirements) so 'renovating' to establish a suite later is going to be cost-prohibitive and will likely lead to unauthorized rental units with sub-par safety standards.

Single-family homes and duplex dwellings also tend to be the most expensive option compared to townhomes and condominiums – mandating that secondary suites must be built in all new developments will help address the chronic lack of rental stock. If Council is unwilling to take bold actions to address the housing and rental crisis, it should at least remove unnecessary impediments to secondary suites.

Mayor and Council should also consider that the new Premier has announced new measures aimed at increasing the supply of new homes and rental housing stock. This includes sweeping legislation to allow secondary suites across the province. These covenants could be seen as obstructing provincial efforts to provide rental housing. Taxpayer dollars should not be used to obstruct rental housing.

In the interests of preserving affordable housing and rental options, please:

1. Reconsider the Registration of Section 219 Covenant that prohibits secondary suites within two-unit housing. and,

2. Direct City Staff to stop the practice of recommending Section 219 Covenants that prohibit secondary suites in any housing typology.

Thank you,

- Jake Jacobson, Otway Rd.