

**Minutes of the
Secondary Suite Review Committee
Wednesday, March 11, 2009
Oak Bay Municipal Hall Council Chambers**

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm

Attended by: Nils Jensen (Chair), Pam Copley, Tony Sharp, David Blades, Colin Crisp, Roy Thomassen (staff- non-voting)

Lise-Lotte Loomer (secretary- non-voting)

Regrets: Mayor Christopher M. Causton (ex-officio member), John Herbert

1 Minutes from February 18 meeting were circulated but not approved.

2. Public Presentations

Presenter: John Neal

Mr. Neal expressed his concerns about increased noise and parking issues should there be a new policy on secondary suites. He is not in favour of secondary suites. He expressed his concern about the process not including public input.

Chair Jensen outlined the following steps taken so far.

1. Mayor struck committee to examine secondary suites
2. Members of the public can participate each regular meeting of the committee
3. Two public meetings (one in the South Oak Bay area and one in the North) are being planned for the public to come forward to express their views.
4. A survey is being designed and will be sent to all rate payers.
5. Another public meeting will take place in September to communicate the results from the survey.

Any changes to the policy on Secondary Suites will require a change to the Official Community Plan.

The provincial Local Government Act requires a formal public process before any changes could be made.

Chair Jensen emphasized that the process followed so far and those activities that are being planned represent the very essence of democracy in his view, and that the committee is just at the beginning of its work.

At this time there is not anticipated to be referendum on the issue of secondary suites.

The website (www.oakbaybc.org) will have a page for Secondary Suites with the schedule of meetings, open forums and a list of committee members posted. Also, there will be posters advertising the Community Consultations around the community specifically outside the Municipal Hall on Oak Bay Avenue.

Presenter: John Lang

Asked for the Committee to introduce themselves. The committee did so.

Presenter: Arnold Stewart

Mr. Stewart asked what gave rise to the committee.

Chair Jensen answered that it was a combination of the reality that there already exist secondary suites, many other municipalities have already addressed the issue or are also studying it. There is a need to have the discussion as a community. Mention was also made of the recommendation of the Climate Change Task Force.

Presenter: Jim Lamorte

As a former urban planner, Mr. Lamorte expressed that there are benefits to owners, renters, transit, increased tax base. He wanted the discussion to look long term to develop a long term vision.

Presenter: Nicola Lamorte

Mrs. Lamorte expressed the view that she is in favour of secondary suites within certain constraints.

3. Timing of Future Meetings

March 25 - Regular meeting, Council Chamber 5:30pm (regrets David Blades and John Herbert)

April 1- To be confirmed. 7pm -9pm at Emmanuel Baptist Church for the Community Consultation in North Oak Bay (regrets David Blades and Chair Jensen)

April 7 regular meeting 5:30 pm. Location to be confirmed

April 14th or 16th Community Consultation in South Oak Bay location to be confirmed

4. Approval of Communication Plan

4.1 Structure of the public meetings, including confirming the facilitator

Chair Jensen said that Lise-Lotte Loomer had offered to be the facilitator for these two meetings. Ms. Loomer has experience in this area, is neutral (not an Oak Bay resident) and has an understanding of the issues being discussed. Consensus reached to have Ms. Loomer act as facilitator of the public meetings.

Mr. Thomassen was asked to find a staff person who might be the recorder at the Community Consultations.

The committee discussed ideas for the structure of the Community Consultations. Ms. Loomer will draft the agenda and circulate to committee members for feedback by e-mail.

Mr. Thomassen showed the committee the large posters which he had borrowed from Central Saanich. They outline the definition of a secondary suites, by-laws and building code.

He will make additional copies to have available for posting at the community consultations.

4.2 Backgrounder for the Community Consultations

This one page double-sided backgrounder will be available:

1. to hand out at the Community Consultations
2. on the web page
3. to mail with the survey sent with the tax notice.

One side will briefly explain what is currently allowed in Oak Bay; the other side will describe the process undertaken in this review.

Mr. Thomassen will provide content on current by-laws and codes. Ms. Loomer will draft and circulate to committee by e-mail.

4.3 Advertising for the meetings

Ms. Loomer will organize an ad to run in the Oak Bay News the Wednesday and Friday before the Community Consultation, depending on cost.

Ms. Loomer will also write a media release in advance of the Community Consultations. The ad and news release will be posted on the web page.

Ms. Loomer will send Mr. Thomassen her new secondary suites specific gmail address that will be used instead of a blog to gather opinions. When an e-mail is sent into the Oak Bay website, a copy will automatically be forwarded to this address.

4.4 Review of Draft Survey that Roy Thomassen has started work on

David Blades and Roy Thomassen will work on the questionnaire. There was discussion about dividing the survey into zones, collating by postal codes, how to obtain the best return rates, renters/owners.

It was decided to print a unique identifier on each questionnaire sent. Each one will have sequential numbers; however, they will not be tracked as to where they are being sent to protect anonymity

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm

Next meeting: Wednesday March 25, 2009 at 5:30 pm, same location