



Regular Council meeting for Public Hearings
Monday, November 15, 2021

Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Chak Au
Councillor Carol Day (by teleconference)
Councillor Andy Hobbs
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Bill McNulty (by teleconference)
Councillor Linda McPhail (by teleconference)
Councillor Harold Steves (by teleconference)
Councillor Michael Wolfe (by teleconference)

Matthew O'Halloran, Acting Corporate Officer

Call to Order: Mayor Brodie opened the proceedings at 7:00 p.m.

- 1. RICHMOND ZONING BYLAW 8500, AMENDMENT BYLAW 10294
(Location: 13340 Smallwood Place; Applicant: Regional Animal Protections Society (RAPS))

Applicant's Comments:

The applicant was available to respond to queries.

Written Submissions:

None.

Submissions from the floor:

None.

PH21/10-1

It was moved and seconded

That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 10294 be given second and third readings.

CARRIED



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2. **RICHMOND ZONING BYLAW 8500, AMENDMENT BYLAWS 10297 AND 10260 (LOW END MARKET RENTAL HOUSING PROGRAM AMENDMENTS)**

(Location: City-wide; Applicant: City of Richmond)

Applicant's Comments:

The applicant was available to respond to queries.

Written Submissions:

- (a) Justin Reid, Richmond Resident (Schedule 1)
- (b) De Whalen, Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition (Schedule 2)

Submissions from the floor:

De Whalen, representing the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition, referred to her submission (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 2), spoke on the proposed Low End Market Rental (LEMR) Housing Program Amendments, and expressed concern with regard to (i) the need of affordable housing in Richmond, (ii) the LEMR tenancy process, and (iii) the target number of LEMR units in the City.

Teresa Head, Richmond resident, spoke on her experience living in a BC Housing unit and encouraged the City to support affordable housing in Richmond.

PH21/10-2

It was moved and seconded

That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 10297 and 10260 be given second and third readings.

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued with regard to (i) the number of Richmond residents on the BC Housing waiting list, (ii) advocating senior levels of government for affordable housing support, and (iii) the number of future and instream LEMR projects in Richmond.

In reply to queries from Council, staff noted that (i) the Kiwanis and Storeys housing developments were in addition to the over 900 LEMR units secured, (ii) staff will be reporting on a referral on the number LEMR units in the second quarter of 2022, and (iii) staff can provide a memorandum on a statistic summary of LEMR units in the City and incoming applications.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. Wolfe opposed.



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PH21/10-3

It was moved and seconded

*That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 10297 and 10260
be adopted.*

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

PH21/10-4

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (7:40 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the
Minutes of the Regular meeting for Public
Hearings of the City of Richmond held on
Monday, November 15, 2021.

Mayor (Malcolm D. Brodie)

Acting Corporate Officer
(Matthew O'Halloran)

From: MayorandCouncillors
Sent: November 15, 2021 1:25 PM
To: Somerville, Kim M; Hopkins, John; Spencer, Cody; Nikolic, Diana
Cc: Reis, Joshua; Smith, Suzanne; Craig, Wayne; Jesson, Claudia; MayorandCouncillors
Subject: FW: Affordable rental housing crisis in Richmond

Good Afternoon,

Please see below correspondence received for Item 2 of this evening's Public Hearing. The correspondence will not be distributed On Table, but it will be noted during the meeting.

Thank you,

Matt O'Halloran | Manager, Legislative Services
City of Richmond | 6911 No.3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1
Phone: 604-276-4098 | Fax: 604-278-5139
Email: mohalloran@richmond.ca

From: Justin Reid <reidjust@gmail.com>
Sent: November 4, 2021 3:15 PM
To: MayorandCouncillors <MayorandCouncillors@richmond.ca>
Subject: Affordable rental housing crisis in Richmond

City of Richmond Security Warning: This email was sent from an external source outside the City. Please do not click or open attachments unless you recognize the source of this email and the content is safe.

Dear Richmond counsel,

As I am a renter and have been living in the Richmond community for over four years, let me tell you, it has been a nightmare to find affordable housing!

As my family has grown recently, and we are now three people, we are desperate to upgrade our current one bedroom apartment (530 square feet) to a two bedroom apartment. We have been on the lookout for about a year (since we found out I am pregnant), but have been unsuccessful in our pursuit.

We are on most of the co-ops waiting lists (as per their data up to 5 year wait). We have emailed most of the new developments going up in Richmond to inquire about low market rental units (which they are required to have) and only gotten notice that they do not have any.

We are on the BC housing registry (also a wait of a few years). We are in contact with Chimo Community Service (and they have also not been very helpful, as the reply email we got just stated that they cannot help with finding affordable housing, which is ironic, because on the City of Richmond website they say they can. Further, the affordable guideline page from the City of Richmond is outdated. Many emails and phone numbers are not connected with no response and some lead to developers that have no idea what we are talking about, if we ask them about affordable rental options.

This is especially frustrating, as the apartment next to us (two bedrooms) has been empty since we moved in almost three years ago. There are at least another five empty apartments you can spot in the nearby condo buildings that have been empty ever since we moved in. It is clear that these are investment properties and the owners never intend to rent them out or use them for themselves. But how can I be mad at them? They just do what works best for them and their investment strategy. If they are not forced to rent those places, why would they? I do, however, blame the policymakers (in this case you) for not being more bold with decision making and implementation of policies! If our elected politicians are afraid (or not interested) in making policies

that work for people living in the community, we will end up as an empty city, with only the rich living here! The Richmond council should consider what kind of people they would like to have living in their community. Do you want to help the middle class citizens to live a decent life, or do you want to make the rich even more rich?

I call on the Richmond council to be better at their job, to be bolder at their job and to be more innovative at their job! Change has to happen now! This does not mean celebrating an increase in LEMR units from 10% to 15% in new development condos.

Sincerely,

Justin Reid

Written and Oral Submission to City of Richmond Public Hearing November 15, 2021

My name is Deirdre Whalen, and I am a long-time resident of Richmond. I have been asked by the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition (RPRC) to speak on item # 2: 0260 (Low End Market Rental Housing Program).

RPRC members include individual Richmond residents as well as several local non-profit organizations representing hundreds of low-income clients and/or members. We are committed to reducing poverty levels in Richmond starting with adequate and affordable housing.

The Coalition does not have an opinion on whether 10% or 15% is the proper percentage for city centre LEMR units. It is a start but it does not get at the nub of the issue, which we believe is to provide truly affordable housing in Richmond based on documented need.

And here are our reasons why. Recently the RPRC established a Housing Committee. We are examining many issues, including reviewing City of Richmond documents such as the Affordable Housing Strategy where 'Low End Market Rentals' or LEMR units are defined.

Firstly, we discovered that the 2007 Affordable Housing Strategy stated '*affordable subsidized rental housing*' as its No. 1 priority and it had a target of 73 affordable subsidized rental housing units per year. Now LEMR has become the Strategy's first priority.

Secondly, we looked for a target number of LEMR units so we could understand exactly how many LEMR units have been provided since the establishment of the Affordable Housing Strategy in 2007.

The numbers we found troubled us, as we read the following documents:

- The Affordable Housing Strategy (2017-2027) states that 429 LEMR units are secured,
- The City's 2019 Market Rental Policy states there are 798 LEMR units (257 have occupancy), and
- The City's 2021 Affordable Housing Guide references 383 LEMR units.

These numbers represent the number of LEMR units provided in a 14 year period - not a lot, no matter which number is correct.

We also noted that anyone looking for a LEMR unit were advised to contact each property manager directly. These contacts include developers, housing societies, and even someone called 'Eric.'

The Coalition sees two issues with the foregoing:

1. If the City doesn't know how many LEMR units have been created, how can they know when their target has been achieved. Is there a target number?

2. This ‘hands-off’ approach is not transparent and opens the LEMR tenancy process to abuse. There is no oversight and as the City directive states, *‘the City of Richmond does not keep a waiting list for LEMR units.’* Perhaps they should.

The Housing Committee also found that there are **838 on the BC Housing waiting list** looking for subsidized housing in Richmond. The Coalition agrees this number is more realistic of the real need out there.

We hear lived experience stories every day from the people we serve – people who live in the market-driven rental supply. For example the Food Bank states that 52% of their clients are in market rentals. Only 5% are in subsidized housing.

Thirdly, we note that even when LEMR units are let, they are rented out at 10% below market (2017 rates). Seeing that in Richmond market rents are ridiculous, this ‘affordable’ housing is really only affordable for a select few.

Finally, we note that LEMR units can be moved offsite through a ‘special circumstance,’ so there is no guarantee these LEMR units will actually be built in city centre.

In conclusion, the RPRC encourages City Council to revisit the whole LEMR process and the Affordable Housing Strategy to ensure the ratio of market to non-market subsidized supply is what Richmond actually needs.

Thank You,

Deirdre Whalen

President, RPRC
c/o 100-5800 Cedarbridge Way,
Richmond, V6X2A7