

Richmond City Council

Public Hearing October 17, 2016

My name is Deirdre Whalen and I live at 13631 Blundell Road Richmond.

I would like to ask some questions about 12 of the rezoning applications, specifically all of those that are requesting properties to be subdivided from one lot into two, or sometimes three.

In asking these questions of the first application (~~the one on Williams Road~~), I hope that Council members would ask these same questions to the rest of the applications. I would also hope that in future rezoning applications that these same questions, and perhaps other questions, would be posed to applicants.

I am concerned that through the rezoning process, the City of Richmond may be inadvertently reducing the rental stock in the city. Through word of mouth I am aware of a number of individuals and families that have been told their rental house will be sold and demolished. They are saying they are being "demovicted." Most of these houses are located in well-established neighbourhoods-they are older homes. Because of this, tenants usually pay rent that is below-market. In other words, rent that is much less than the rent charged for a newly built unit.

The Residential Tenancy Act gives renters 60 days to find another rental home and it is becoming increasingly difficult for these renters to find anything in Richmond. This means they must uproot their families from the excellent services and amenities found in Richmond. They have to move their children out of our schools and sometimes they must leave their jobs in our city.

Planners will tell you that a healthy community depends on all sorts of residents, both renters and homeowners. I wonder if Richmond is becoming a resort community where only the wealthy and the retired can live. Perhaps we need to think about retaining workforce housing such as rental units in older neighbourhoods.

My questions for each rezoning application are:

1. Was this house rented out in the past year?
2. If so, how many families did it house? How many unrelated people did it house?
3. Will a rental unit be built on this site?
4. If so, will the rent be below-market?

Thank you