

6.1(ss)

**Robicheau, Vanessa**

---

**Subject:** RE: rental licensing

Dear Spec Editors:

I note the article and ads of landlords and real estate people claiming dire consequences if the licensing of rental units comes into being. They can afford the ads. Landlords recoup the expenses of buying and converting family zoned homes into illegal rentals in a few short years. Some conversions have taken place at night and on weekends when city hall is closed. Several landlords have untruthfully said that they are going to live in the houses they bought and renovated. There have been real estate ads and 'Open Houses' promoting the conversions.

It is noted that there are conscientious landlords who properly maintain their legal rental houses and conscientious real estate people who will not promote the illegal conversion of single family dwellings.

While the proposed licensing of rentals is for the whole city, we in the west end, have been aware for years, of the plight of student tenants.

Each September there is a mountain of garbage in the area, as incoming students clear rental houses of garbage and debris left by previous tenants. Many landlords do not adequately clean their rentals for new tenants. The city has a special garbage pick-up at this time to handle the increased load. Several student tenants clean and paint their rooms before moving in. Students over many years have reported to us, that they have encountered rodent and vermin infestation, mould, malfunctioning stoves, refrigerators, plumbing, heating and poorly maintained buildings. This fall, contractors replaced a nearby leaking sunroom roof of a rental house. They found mould, raccoon feces, a pool of stagnant water and rotting lumber under the shingles. A student's bedroom is directly under this unhealthy roof. This house has had three different landlords in the past three years. Many students live in sub-standard unhealthy housing units; some without adequate fire and carbon monoxide detectors. Garages, attics and basements have been converted. Adequate exits, in the event of a fire, is one of the concerns. Over-crowding is another issue. Nearby houses have 10, 18 and 22 bedrooms. Lack of lawn-cutting, snow-shovelling and waste management problems are regularly reported to the Bylaw Department. Landscaping consists of overgrown bushes and weeds. There are landlords who live out of the country and are difficult to reach concerning problems affecting their tenants.

A few years ago in the west end, there was a terrible tragedy of a mother, her young children and a Mohawk student, who lost their lives in a rental house fire. If licensing of rentals saves lives and ensures safe healthy housing for thousands of tenants, it will be worth it.

B. Bechtel