



April 4th 2021

RE: April 6th Planning Committee, Secondary Dwelling Units in the Urban and Rural Areas - Zoning By-law

To Hamilton City Councillors and Mayor,

ACORN Hamilton is submitting this written delegation in regards to the staff report “Secondary Dwelling Units in the Urban and Rural Areas - Zoning By-law and associated implementation amendments to the Parkland Dedication By-law and Tariff of Fees By-law for Minor Variance Applications” being presented at the April 6th Planning Committee meeting.

Hamilton is in a housing crisis. ACORN urges the City of Hamilton to use all of its municipal powers and tools to increase and protect affordable housing stock.

In solidarity with Environment Hamilton and other groups in the city, ACORN supports policy to increase housing options in the city within the existing urban boundary, such as laneway housing, garden and basement suites.

ACORN Hamilton emphasizes that without additional incentives or polices new secondary dwellings will not be affordable for low and moderate income tenants. Units first occupied or built after November 15 2018 have no rent control and would be starting at market rent.

Other municipalities in Ontario have implemented programs to support homeowners in creating affordable secondary suites. For example in the Niagara Region through the “Niagara Renovates Program”.

“Niagara Renovates Program” offers subsidies in return for renting the unit to tenants in a low to moderate income bracket and ensuring rents are not above market averages. Households are allowed one application and funding is provided as a fully forgivable loan.

ACORN would urge Hamilton to explore more affordable targets such as rents that are 30% of a tenant's income. Low and moderate income tenants are facing increasing pressure from gentrification and developers seeking to turnover units (renoviction, demoviction). The waitlist for social housing stands at over 5,000 households. Ontario Disability Support Program provides \$1,169 monthly. Average market rent for a one bedroom in Hamilton is \$1,395.

Allowing secondary dwelling units would create more rental housing in Hamilton and with the right municipal programs can be part of the solution in ending the affordable housing crisis.

Thank you,

Hamilton ACORN

Veronica Gonzalez
Mountain Chapter Chair

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