

Pilon, Janet

Subject: Important Message from Councillor Danko on Rental Housing Licensing By-law Pilot

From: Andrew Stassen

Sent: August 10, 2021 3:20 PM

To: Kelsey, Lisa <Lisa.Kelsey@hamilton.ca>; clerk@hamilton.ca

Subject: Fw: Important Message from Councillor Danko on Rental Housing Licensing By-law Pilot

Hello

Below is my reply to Councillor Danko regarding the Rental Housing Licensing By-law pilot project. I look forward to hearing from you regarding how this will be handled

Andrew

From: Andrew Stassen

Sent: August 8, 2021 8:54 AM

To: John-Paul Danko <ward8@hamilton.ca>

Subject: Re: Important Message from Councillor Danko on Rental Housing Licensing By-law Pilot

Hello Councillor Danko

This is a very interesting proposition that you are pushing forward. On the surface, for a novice on these issues, this may seem like a good idea. I have many questions about how this will actually work and what the efficacy will be. I am a home owner and I look forward to hearing from you and your responses to these issues.

1. Does Hamilton have an adequate supply of housing at reasonable prices for people? If not, why would you legislate this plan? Wouldn't it drive up costs to the renters and push out more people?
2. It states that this program has a cost recovery element that wouldn't cost taxpayers? I know many programs where this is what was originally stated to get the tax payer support, only to have members go back to the City in a year or two looking for tax payers support because the program was not as lucrative as originally thought. This also calls into question the purpose of this by-law. The people who are enforcing this by-law would have an incentive to "make money" to ensure that the program is being paid for. Otherwise they could lose their jobs
3. This by-law states "Licenses would only be granted if the rental units fully comply with the Ontario building code, fire code, electrical code, parking requirements, room size and layout and all other regulations." How would this work since many of these regulations change over time? How would you handle landlords who had units that were up to code and have run for years, but have since fallen into "illegal" status since the Ontario Building Code or others have changed over time? Would they be required to retrofit? Could this stance by the city force out good landlords and leave the City with more of a rental pinch?
4. Why would you look to push this through when "The staff recommendation is to delay further discussion on this by-law until 2023."?
5. Why wouldn't the City come up with "carrot" by-laws versus "stick" by-laws? It is much easier to have landlords apply to, for example, save \$XXX on their property taxes if they comply versus having to enforce a by-law, provide evidence, pay fees, collect fees, go to court, etc... which is very onerous on

all involved. Also, enforcement would be easy. Landlord applies. Employee checks and grants "carrot". Then, at any time in the future if they are non-compliant and do not inform the city, they would be automatically required to pay back all "savings" as per the program, plus the fee? This is a ramble and there would be many nuances to this idea, but very few municipalities think this way. It is always pay, pay, pay....and then the tax payer pays. Why? Because it is "easy".

I look forward to a response to these issues. Feel free to contact me or phone me and we can discuss. I would be looking to hear back from you on these issues and why I should continue to vote for you in the future? What can we do to support small businesses in Hamilton? How can we stop "picking on the little guy" and help all those involved? How do you see our way through the next few years as Hamilton moves forward and continues to grow past this last 18 months? Much to discuss and many hard conversations to be had.

Andrew Stassen

From: John-Paul Danko <ward8@hamilton.ca>
Sent: August 7, 2021 8:59 AM
To: Andrew Stassen
Subject: Important Message from Councillor Danko on Rental Housing Licensing By-law Pilot

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Councillor John-Paul Danko

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Councillor Maureen Wilson

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[Hamilton, Ontario August 6th, 2021]

On Tuesday August 10th, 2021 the Planning Committee of Hamilton City Council will discuss a rental housing licensing by-law pilot for Wards 1, 8 and part of Ward 14.

The conversion of family homes to illegal, overcrowded rentals is an existing and growing issue in these areas of Hamilton.

If adopted, the proposed by-law would require rental business owners (landlords) to licence their rental units. Licenses would only be granted if the rental units fully comply with the Ontario building code, fire code, electrical code, parking requirements, room size and layout and all other regulations.

In order to be licensed, landlords would be required to submit their properties to interior and exterior inspections by the City (currently, the City cannot enforce violations unless inspectors are invited into a unit).

The scope of the by-law would include “buildings identified under the zoning verification as having a recognized use of single-family dwelling, two-family dwelling, three-family dwelling, semi-detached dwelling and multiple dwellings containing four dwelling units. All secondary dwelling units existing or created in the pilot project area that are for rental purposes will also be included.”

The staff recommendation is to delay further discussion on this by-law until 2023. A copy of the staff report is available here:

<https://pub-hamilton.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=279443>

Ward 1 Councillor Maureen Wilson and Ward 8 Councillor John-Paul Danko are jointly committed to immediately implement this by-law with a full cost recovery fee so that all expenses are paid by landlords and not City taxpayers.

How you can get involved and have your say:

On August 10th, 2021, Councillor Wilson and Councillor Danko will request that Planning Committee approve the alternative direction presented in the staff report to implement the draft by-law “Rental Housing Units” (Schedule 31) by the Planning Committee meeting on September 21st, 2021 and that the program fees be set on a full cost recovery basis with no net levy cost to Hamilton taxpayers.

It is critical for committee to hear from local residents like you as well as tenants to understand how single-family home rentals have impacted them and how rental licensing would help.

Please ask your neighbours in the community to consider getting involved by either submitting a letter to Committee, or if possible delegating to Committee.

Resident's letters should be in their own words (ie. not a form letter or petition) and express their experience living in a neighbourhood with a high number of single family homes converted to rental housing. Letters should clearly state that they support the implementation of the bylaw right away (if that is the letter writer's opinion).

Specific observations on the inadequacy of existing by-law enforcement to address problems, any concerns about the number of people living in one house, direct observations of safety concerns for tenants (in terms of room sizes, fire escapes etc.), or any evidence of unethical behaviour by property owners that may take advantage of disadvantaged groups (students, newcomers, low income individuals, etc.). The focus should be on the property owners.

Multiple family members may submit individual letters in their own name (instead of a husband and wife submitting on letter together). Please keep letters brief to a paragraph or two.

If possible, it would be even better for residents to personally speak to Committee through a video or telephone delegation. Delegations are virtual and the City can assist any resident wishing to delegate with the technical connection.

Residents may submit their letters or delegation requests by email to the City

Clerk: clerk@hamilton.ca copied directly to the Planning Committee Legislative Assistant Lisa Kelsey Lisa.Kelsey@hamilton.ca

Residents should state that they would like their correspondence included, or they wish to

delegate for the August 10th Planning Committee Agenda for Item 10.2 “License Rental Housing (PED21097/LS21022) (Wards 1, 8 and parts of Ward 14)”.

As always, if you have any questions please feel free to contact the Ward 8 office via ward8@hamilton.ca.

Quotes:

“These properties have been carved up to maximize revenues for their investor owners. They are businesses and need to be treated as such. The city licenses and inspects restaurants and hair salons reasons of health and safety. Why not these rental properties? A cost recovery licensing model ensures that owner/operators, and not taxpayers, are funding a program which will go a long way in creating healthy and safe places for tenants to live. It also offers neighbourhoods a standard on how these businesses are to be operated.

Councillor Maureen Wilson, Ward 1

“There are neighbourhoods in Ward 8 where nearly every home has been purchased by absentee landlords and real estate investors. These former family homes are then converted to illegal rental units with eight, ten or more adult tenants with little regard to the impact on the neighbourhood. This by-law provides the City the leverage necessary to hold investor property owners accountable for the rental units they own and make sure that tenants are living in a space that is safe, legal and meeting all regulations.”

Councillor John-Paul Danko, Ward 8
