

City of Guelph
1 Carden Street
Guelph, ON N1H 3A1

7 July 2020

Dear Mayor Guthrie and City Councillors

I wish to provide a few comments with respect to the staff report entitled "Additional Residential Unit Review: Planning Act Update to the Official Plan and Zoning Bylaw Discussion Paper, July 2020"

I understand that this is a matter that will come before Council at the meeting of Council on July 13.

The recommendations in this report, should they be adopted, could present significant impacts on residential neighbourhoods. Those neighbourhoods in proximity to the University which are currently negatively impacted by "student rentals" and absentee owners could be further impacted with the addition of rear yard Additional Residential Dwelling Units. I note that the report concludes that "Streamlined and simple to understand rules will assist with the creation of affordable housing units, ensure the health and safety of our residents, and protect the character of our residential neighbourhoods". We hope that Council will be guided by a strong desire to protect the character of our residential neighbourhoods.

I would suggest that Council consider the following:

- For Additional Residential Dwelling Units require a greater setback from property lines than the 0.6 m. referenced in the report. This would help with privacy concerns for adjacent properties.
- For Additional Residential Dwelling Units in rear yards allow only single story structures. On the majority of lots within the City a 2-story structure in a rear yard close to property lines will create privacy issues and possibly shadowing issues for adjacent properties by blocking sunlight.
- Where off street parking is available require a parking space for each Additional Residential Dwelling Unit located within the primary dwelling unit as well as any separate unit in the rear yard.
- Limit the size of the separate rear yard Additional Residential Dwelling Unit to one bedroom.
- On Page 30 of the report there is a reference to amending the two bedroom limit to a three bedroom limit. Apparently this acknowledges that with lack of enforcement what happens today where a "special purpose" room is converted to a bedroom and a 2 bedroom unit becomes a 3 bedroom unit, albeit not legally. If that is what happens then Council should eliminate the "special purpose room" so that in future a 3 room arrangement does not then get converted to a 4 bedroom unit.

The McElderry neighbourhood is one of several that has endured issues related to student rentals and absentee owners. Recommendations in this report, if adopted, could exacerbate an already challenging situation for the McElderry community. The report acknowledges the challenges of enforcement and enforcement resources have been a point of discussion in the past as we addressed student rentals with the City. So we ask that in concert with this review City Council examine the enforcement capability and engage the necessary resources to make that viable. We also want to have confidence that the basic infrastructure of services (e.g. water, sanitation, parking and electricity supply) already existing in a neighbourhood are capable of meeting the additional demands that increased residents would bring.

Thank you for considering my comments

J. MacKenzie