



DATE OF MEETING: November 23, 2017
TO: North Pender Island Local Trust Committee
FROM: Justine Starke, Island Planner, Local Planning Services
SUBJECT: **LTC Top Priority Housing – Secondary Suites**

RECOMMENDATION

- 1. That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee directs staff to draft regulatory amendments that would permit secondary suites on North Pender Island.**

REPORT SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Local Trust Committee on the results of community consultation for the secondary suites project and seek direction to bring forward draft bylaws for consideration.

BACKGROUND

The North Pender Island Local Trust Committee (LTC) made housing a top priority in 2015 and on November 24, 2016 added Secondary Suites as a focus under its Top Priority work program. The Local Trust Committee has endorsed a [project charter](#) to manage the work program for this policy priority.

There are a number of information tools that were distributed at the October 21 workshop and posted on the website. These include [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and an information sheet on the [BC Building Code](#), which although is the jurisdiction of the Capital Regional District, is also helpful for the community to understand.

On June 28, 2017, the LTC passed the following resolutions:

It was MOVED and SECONDED, That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee directs staff to schedule a community information meeting as a special business meeting to consult the community on secondary suites.

It was MOVED and SECONDED, That the North Pender Island Local Trust Committee directs staff to schedule work with Capital Regional District on incentives for water conservation to supplement the secondary suites land use planning project.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The North Pender Island Local Trust Committee hosted a community information workshop to discuss secondary suites on October 21, 2017.

The meeting was well attended with approximately 28 members of the public present. The meeting format invited community members to get hopes and fears they have that

into small groups and discuss any result from the idea of permitting



secondary suites on North Pender Island.



The meeting was called back to order and the following results of discussions were recorded:

Hopes:

- That secondary suites will be allowed.
- That they will provide housing for workers who can't afford the high rent of houses.
- That studies will show that there is enough water.
- That the CRD will make occupancy suites achievable, for example by grandfathering some requirements.
- That the island become more efficient with water and consider innovative solutions.
- That outbuildings will also be considered as a housing option for secondary suites.
- That young people will be able to find housing that matches the income available on island.
- That major employers are required to provide housing for seasonal employees.
- That this is the start of a process that creates more affordable housing – like tiny houses, trailer parks, etc.
- That secondary suite income will make home ownership more attainable.
- That other levels of government will work with the process to offer incentives for the creation of legal suites.
- That this provides economic growth and security for the island.
- That pets and families will be accommodated.

Fears:

- That secondary suites will not be allowed.
- That it will take too long to approve them.
- There won't be enough water.
- That even once allowed, few suites will be created.
- The lack of data.
- That it can only be achieved through new builds.
- That existing suites will not get occupancy permits due to the cost.

- That this will be the only solution given toward the affordable housing issue and that it would not provide an option for families and people with pets.
- That they will not be zoned for and then they will not be monitored and sub-par housing will persist unregulated.
- That natural resources will be jeopardized.
- That prohibiting them as STVRs will not be enforced and they will become revenue sources without addressing the housing issue.
- That the housing issue will necessitate young families to leave.
- That the community will not reach consensus on the matter.
- That making current suites compliant will be too prohibitive.
- That we will not be able to find a solution for affordable housing that the island will support, possibly because of cost.
- That accommodating more people will change our island's culture and we will lose the island's feel.
- That tenants can be destructive to the property and that can be negative for the homeowner.
- That some people are just messy and they need a place to live too and secondary suites may not accommodate them.
- That the infrastructure will not be upgraded to keep up with the increased density.
- That this step will get lost in a fear of where the slippery slope could lead us.

Opportunities for Water Conservation

Policy initiatives to consider added units such as secondary suites are beneficial to consider alongside supportive programs that promote and incentivize water conservation. As directed, Islands Trust staff have opened discussion with Capital Regional District to explore what programs might be available to supplement the secondary suites land use planning program. This discussion is ongoing.

Secondary Suites Regulatory Approach

Based on the positive feedback from the community information meeting, it is recommended that the LTC direct staff to draft regulatory amendments that would permit secondary suites on North Pender. Draft regulations would propose the following provisions:

- Secondary suites would be permitted as accessory uses in the Rural, Rural Residential, and Agriculture zones.
- Secondary suite would be defined as, "a self-contained unit within a single family dwelling that is separate from the rest of the house."
- One suite would be permitted per lot.
- Maximum floor area 90 m² and 40% of the floor area of the main dwelling
- Prohibit the use of secondary suites for short term vacation rentals
- Require one additional parking space on the lot.

Rationale for Recommendation

Secondary suites are a trusted way of increasing the stock of rental housing in island communities without changing the rural settlement pattern or impacting the sense of place that exists. The LTC hosted a community information meeting where the majority of input was very supportive of secondary suites and the fears people had were more related to secondary suites not being allowed or the process moving too slowly. The suggested regulatory provisions are consistent with those in the recently adopted on others islands in the Islands Trust Area. Direction to draft bylaws will enable consideration of First Reading, which will then follow with agency referrals and targeted public engagement.

Alternatives

- 1. Direct staff to proceed no further with this project.**

NEXT STEPS

The next steps include:

- 1) Draft bylaws for consideration of First Reading
- 3) Agency Referrals
- 4) Community Information Meeting #2
- 5) Consideration of Second Reading
- 6) Public Hearing
- 7) Consideration of Third Reading
- 8) Review by Islands Trust Executive Committee
- 9) Consideration of adoption

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