

INFORMATION REPORT



TO **Community Development and Environmental Services Committee**

SERVICE AREA Community Design and Development Services
DATE March 15, 2010

SUBJECT **Shared Rental Housing Spring 2010 Work Plan**
REPORT NUMBER 10-23

RECOMMENDATION

“That Report 10-23 from Community Design and Development Services regarding the Shared Rental Housing Spring 2010 Work Plan, dated March 15, 2010, BE RECEIVED.”

SUMMARY

This report provides a synopsis (preliminary work plan) of the proposed review of alternative policies and regulations to address issues related to shared rental housing in the City of Guelph.

BACKGROUND

On February 16, 2010, staff brought a report forward to Community Development and Environmental Services (CDES) Committee (Report 10-09) recommending that staff be directed to develop a working group to review policies and regulations related to rental housing concerns in other similar municipalities. This recommendation was proposed as a response to feedback to the earlier staff proposal to move to a licensing system to manage lodging houses and two-unit houses (houses with accessory apartments). The CDES committee supported the recommendation and asked for additional information regarding the proposed work plan to study alternative options and make recommendations addressing concerns related to shared rental housing in Guelph (See CDES resolution in **Attachment 1**).

REPORT

The purpose of this report is to present a preliminary work plan for this directed study to determine whether other municipalities facing similar rental housing issues have alternative tools (policies and regulatory practices) that could be applied in Guelph to improve issues in neighbourhoods with shared rental housing. It should be noted that the CDES Committee's direction builds on work completed by staff involving the review of regulations and licensing regimes in other similar municipalities as articulated in the December 2009 staff report which recommended that staff be directed to develop procedures and regulations to license all lodging houses and two-unit houses in Guelph.

Policy and Zoning Regulations:

The working group will be composed of:

- Katie Nasswetter (CDDS – Planning)
- Pat Sheehy (CDDS – Zoning)
- Rob Reynen (CDDS – Building)
- Kim Hodgson (Emergency Services – Fire)
- Allister McIlveen (Operations – Traffic and Parking)
- Bruce Banting (Corporate Services – Legal)

This review, with help from the working group, will examine other municipal policies and regulations regarding rental housing and neighbourhood diversity and stability. Specific areas of concern that will be addressed include:

- Definitions of neighbourhood and related policies
- Definitions of different housing unit types and related zoning regulations (i.e. parking requirements)
- Separation distance requirements between rental units
- Other regulatory tools focused on rental housing
- Address issue of identifying owner and non-owner units
- Public education practices – for tenants, owners and neighbours

By-law Enforcement Practices:

Staff will review by-law enforcement practices related to both behavioural issues (i.e. noise, garbage) and zoning (i.e. parking, property standards). Specific review areas include:

- Enforcement Processes – how warnings and fines are used
- Monitoring and Inspections: proactive versus complaint-based
- Penalties and Fines – amount and frequency
- Ability to charge owners and/or tenants
- University/College roles in addressing student behaviour
- Other regulatory tools - i.e. service fees

Municipalities to be Reviewed:

Staff have determined that the following list of municipalities should be reviewed. This list is focused on municipalities of a similar size that are known to be currently working on similar issues.

- City of London
- City of Waterloo
- City of Hamilton
- City of Barrie
- City of Oshawa
- City of St. Catharines

Staff will develop a standard list of questions based on the items mentioned above that will be asked to these municipalities. Relevant policies and by-laws also will be reviewed. Where significant changes have occurred, staff will visit these municipalities to better understand the impact and potential application of these tools to Guelph's situation.

Next Steps:

On March 22, 2010, a meeting has been arranged by the Mayor's office to visit the City of London to study its approach to this issue. As well, other information on planning policies and alternative municipal tools will be gathered. Upon completion of the London visit and after alternative approaches have been reviewed to determine whether they (policies and regulatory practices) could be applied in Guelph to improve issues in neighbourhoods with shared rental housing, then a full work plan with related timing, staffing and financial implications will be presented to the Community Development and Environmental Services Committee in Spring 2010.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN

Urban Design and Sustainable Growth Goal #1: An attractive, well-functioning and sustainable City.

Personal and Community Well-being Goal #2: A healthy and safe community where life can be lived to the fullest

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications related to the cursory review of other municipalities will be conducted "in-house".

The full work plan to be presented to the CDES Committee in Spring 2010 will contain estimated costs to undertake the review of the policy and regulatory options regarding rental housing. Recommendations will include estimated costs to implement suggested actions.

DEPARTMENTAL CONSULTATION/CONCURRENCE

Staff from Building, Zoning, Planning, Legal, Fire and By-law Enforcement met to discuss and develop this report.

COMMUNICATIONS

None.

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1 – CDES Committee Resolution from February 16, 2010

Original Signed by:

Original Signed by:

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ATTACHMENT 1

CDES Committee Resolution from February 16, 2010

February 18, 2010

Mr. J. Riddell
Director of Community Design
& Development Services

Community Design
and Development Services

FEB 19 2010

Dear Mr. Riddell:

At a meeting of the Community Development and Environmental Services Committee held on February 16, 2010, the following resolution was adopted:

"THAT Report 10-09 from Community Design and Development Services regarding the Shared Rental Housing Open House and Proposed Next Steps, dated February 16, 2010, be received;

AND THAT Report 09-100 from Community Design and Development Services regarding Licensing of Lodging Houses and Two-Unit Houses, be deferred;

AND THAT staff be directed to develop a working group to review policies and regulations related to rental housing and related concerns in other similar municipalities, as articulated in Attachment 3 of this report (10-09);

AND THAT staff report back to the Community Development and Environmental Services Committee with a preliminary work plan in March to study alternative options and make recommendations addressing concerns related to Shared Rental Housing in Guelph."

Yours truly,


Tina Agnello
Deputy City Clerk

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