

# B.2

## MOTION ON NOTICE

### 2. Making Legalizing Secondary Suites Easier in RT/RM Zones

MOVER: Councillor Carr

SECONDER:

#### WHEREAS

1. Secondary suites provide an important source of affordable rental accommodation that is generally supported by City policy;
2. Many character pre-1940 homes, particularly in RT and RM zones on Vancouver's East Side and inner city, have been converted to three suites (main floor, upper floor, and basement) over the years, especially during the 1940s when the War Measures Act over-ruled municipal housing by-laws to encourage the creation of additional suites to relieve housing shortages, which has resulted in many legal, non-conforming up and down non-strata rental duplexes with unauthorized basement suites;
3. Many of these multi-suite conversions occurred before the BC Strata Act in the 1960s and have remained as affordable rental suites rather than being converted to condos;
4. In the event that the City becomes aware of an unauthorized basement suite in the RT and RM zones, it requires closure of the unauthorized suite where those zones do not have provisions for retention under their zoning schedules, thus resulting in the loss of affordable rental accommodation;
5. Three suites are allowed in homes in RT and RM zones, however legalizing an existing unauthorized basement suite requires going through a Multi-Family Conversion Dwelling process which requires upgrading to current building code standards and entails very high costs that generally necessitates recouping of those costs through stratification of all the suites and thus results in the loss of affordable rental housing;
6. The City's Secondary Suite Program enables the building of a secondary suite in a single-family home under more relaxed rules in terms of adherence to building code standards and thus entails far lower costs than the Multi-Family Conversion Dwelling process.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT Vancouver City Council direct staff to pursue changes to appropriate by-laws and policies so that existing houses in RT and RM zones that have one or two existing unauthorized secondary suites be considered by the City as grandfathered existing legal non-conforming suites under the Vancouver Zoning By-law and Building By-law, and administered under the Secondary Suite Program for health and safety.

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