

Isfeld, Lori

From: Karen Sawatzky 5.22(1) Personal and Confidential
Sent: Thursday, September 21, 2017 4:28 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Support for item 9 on tonight's agenda - Increasing Housing Choice and Character Retention Incentives in the Mount Pleasant and Grandview-Woodland Communities

Dear Mayor and Council,

As a Grandview-Woodland resident and renter, I would like to express my qualified support for the staff recommendations on item 9. As with number 8, I would like to see the city go further in this direction, providing for a greater diversity of housing choices. As the recent census data for Grandview Woodland indicates, incomes in this area have risen substantially over the last census period - and previous census data has shown that the percentage of renting households is decreasing, as it has been in the rest of the city since 1991. If we want to allow renters to stay in the city and contribute to its economy, we need more spaces for renters to live, and I don't believe suites and laneway houses are at all adequate to that task, given our chronic vacancy rate problem. However, the recommendations you will consider tonight do move in the right direction, thus my support.

Please consider bolder moves in the near future. The current approach - building virtually no new purpose-built rental housing in Grandview Woodland for the last 30 years or so - clearly hasn't been effective when it comes to staving off gentrification and allowing renters to keep living here. I'll also say that I think that for me, people are what determine the character of the neighbourhood, rather than a certain vintage or era of house or set of design guidelines or particular angle of roof pitch. As a long-time resident, I've witnessed the people character of the neighbourhood become far less diverse (e.g. in terms of age, language and race and occupation) over the past few decades, as wealthier people bought the houses, moved in and displaced renters, as well as charging exorbitant rents for their basement suites. More choices for renters means a more interesting and vibrant Grandview-Woodland.

best,

Karen Sawatzky
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