



RENTAL, SOCIAL AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING TASK FORCE
Review of Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy
Virtual Thursday, April 29, 2021 - 4:00 pm – MS TEAMS
MINUTES

Members: Kelly Bond at 4:25pm
Keith Collyer
Bruce Crowe (Chair) by phone
Hesam Deihimi
Phil Dupasquier (Vice-Chair)
Katherine Fagerlund at 4.30pm
Heather Fowler
Ellison Mallin

Regrets: Ian Cullis, Michael Sadler, Derek Holloway

Staff: Arielle Dalley, Community Planner
Josh Cairns, Community Planner
Tina Atva, Manager, Community Planning
Mary Jukich, Committee Clerk

1. Welcome

The meeting was called to order at 4:07 pm.

2. Review of the Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy (RTRAP)

Arielle Dalley, Community Planner, reviewed the proposed revisions to the Residential Tenant Relocation Assistance Policy. It was noted that feedback was also requested from industry groups, and the draft was forwarded to the Urban Development Institute, Landlord BC and the Tenant Resource and Advisory Centre.

The following comments and feedback were provided by the Task Force members present at the meeting:

- A question was raised whether the responses from the industry organizations will be made public. Staff indicated that the feedback will be summarized in the Report to Council.
- With regards to the voluntary nature of the policy, clarification was requested on what would happen if the developer agrees to provide certain provisions but subsequently does not comply. Information was provided by staff that if the rezoning application is approved, then the tenant assistance package will be secured by way of a covenant, which is enforceable by the municipality.
- A question was raised whether other municipalities, i.e. Burnaby, are facing the same issue with making the policy mandatory. Information was provided by staff that some municipalities do use stronger language indicating that assistance must be provided, but that the District has followed the advice received from the Municipal Solicitor that the policy must remain voluntary.

- Comment from some Task Force members that staff have come to a good balance with the policy, considering the suggestions as previously provided and taking into account other considerations. Staff indicated that the Task Force’s suggestions were reviewed line by line, and that some suggestions were more appropriate to be addressed outside of the scope of revising the policy.
- Several members felt that the policy had “no teeth” as it would not be compulsory; for instance, future Councils could choose to not enforce the policy. Information to be gathered to assess the renters’ ability to weather a demoviction were insufficient; for instance, the number of seniors affected would not be gathered.
- Comment that in cases where tenants are not eligible for compensation, the notification should be made in writing.
- Comment that the size of the existing bedrooms would be helpful to request as part of the Current Occupancy Assessment Summary, as some large bedrooms could accommodate two children and others would only fit one child.
- Comment that the age of the tenants should be collected, as tenants who are older may need more support and may find navigating this process challenging.
- Concern was raised around the statement that if an appropriate unit cannot be found at the recommended maximum rent level, then a unit at the closest comparable price will be provided. Task Force members expressed that they did not feel like this provided enough support, and that they prefer rent top-ups like what is provided in Burnaby’s policy, as that would support tenants better. A Task Force member noted that requesting a rent top up be provided by developers may encourage developers to build units quicker.
- Concern was expressed that the Tenant Relocation Coordinator assigned by the developer might act in the best interests of the developer rather than the tenant. A suggestion was made to have the Tenant Relocation Coordinator be a third-party.
- Comment that it would be helpful to have an accounting of where purpose-built rental exists so that we are aware of where people may be displaced.
- Comment that the rates included in the policy should be reconsidered on a yearly or other regular basis to ensure they are adjusted with cost of living changes.
- Comment that living on a temporary housing site, i.e., a construction site, may be undesirable.
- Concern was raised with respect to the higher rent level allowed for the replacement units found by the Tenant Relocation Coordinator, and that this could lead to further displacement in the future.

- Comment that tenants should be notified of the agreed upon tenant assistance package in a manner that is not second-hand from the developer.
- A question was raised whether it would be appropriate to include a provision in this policy that allows for density bonusing if the developer replaces older rental housing with similar housing at a subsidized level. Staff advised that this would not be the appropriate policy for a provision such as the one suggested.
- A member of the Task Force felt that relatively few of the changes recommended by the RSAHTF in September 2020 had been made to this new RTRAP.

3. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:09 pm.