



Final  
Affordability Committee

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Wednesday, December 13, 2023

6:00 PM

Council Chambers

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**AFFORDABILITY COMMITTEE REPORT**

**For consideration by General Committee on January 10, 2024.**

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Councillor, J. Harris at 6:03 p.m. The following were in attendance for the meeting:

**Present:** 4 - Mayor, A. Nuttall  
Deputy Mayor, R. Thomson  
Councillor, C. Nixon  
Councillor, J. Harris

**ALSO PRESENT:**

Councillor, C. Riepma  
Councillor, A. Kungl  
Councillor, A. Courser  
Councillor, N. Nigussie  
Councillor, G. Harvey  
Councillor, S. Morales  
Councillor, B. Hamilton.

**STAFF:**

Associate Director of Corporate of Asset Management, K. Oakley  
Associate Director of Waste Management and Environmental Sustainability, S. Mack  
Chief Financial Officer, C. Millar  
City Clerk/Director of Legislative and Court Services, W. Cooke  
Deputy City Clerk, T. McArthur  
Director of Development Services, M. Banfield  
Director of Corporate Facilities, R. Pews  
Director of Operations, D. Friary  
Executive Assistant to the Mayor, E. Chappell  
Executive Director of Access Barrie, R. James-Reid  
General Manager of Community and Corporate Services, D. McAlpine  
Legislative Coordinator, T. Maynard  
Manager of Strategic Initiatives, Policy and Analysis, J. Roberts  
Planner, R. Anderson  
Planner, L. Munnoch

Service Desk Generalist, K. Kovacs.  
Supervisor of Growth Management, T. Wierzba

The Affordability Committee met for the purposes of a Public Meeting at 6:04 p.m.

Councillor, J. Harris advised the public that any concerns or appeals dealing with the application that were the subject of the Public Meeting should be directed to the Legislative and Court Services Department. Any interested persons wishing further notification of the Staff Report regarding the application were advised to sign the appropriate notification forms required by the Legislative and Court Services Department. Councillor Harris confirmed with the Director of Development Services that notification was conducted in accordance with the Planning Act.

The Affordability Committee met and reports as follows:

### **SECTION "A"**

#### **CITY INITIATED ZONING BY-LAW AMENDMENT - AMENDMENTS TO COMPREHENSIVE ZONING BY-LAW 2009-141**

Michelle Banfield, Director of Development Services and Riley Anderson, Planner provided a presentation concerning a City Initiated Zoning By-law Amendment - Amendments to Comprehensive Zoning By-law 2009-141.

Ms. Banfield and Ms. Anderson discussed slides concerning the following topics:

- The purpose of the proposed Zoning By-law Amendment;
- An overview of the current and proposed Zoning By-law Standards;
- An illustration depicting potential configurations of four units per lot;
- The current zoning by-law standards for detached accessory dwelling units (DADU) and proposed new zoning by-law standards for coach houses; and
- The next steps in the process.

Members of Committee asked a number of questions of City staff and received responses.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

1. **Jonathan Nusbaum** spoke on behalf of Convergence Robotics Inc. and provided an overview of the company that was accredited by the United Nations for its commitment to sustainability, social equality, and conscientious business practices.

Mr. Nusbaum discussed Barrie's future including the potential changes in the character of neighbourhoods, and the current and proposed population growth by 2051. He commented that the proposed growth is not just a number but about shaping the future of Barrie that holds space for every family, individual, community, and future residents of Barrie.

Mr. Nusbaum advised that Convergence Robotics Inc. specializes in creating affordable durable prefabricated modular houses, townhouses and additional residential units/garden suites. He discussed the design of the home to last more than a hundred years and built to respect the planet that is assembled onsite with nearly zero waste. Mr. Nusbaum commented that the homes are not just structures but are part of a larger vision to maintain the charm of Barrie while evolving to meet the needs of tomorrow with design and aesthetics to complement existing homes.

Mr. Nusbaum commented on the residents' concerns related to the strain on roads, the need for public spaces, the preservation of green spaces, and the very essence of what makes Barrie special. He advised that his company's approach is not just about building houses and homes across the board but contributing positively to the community while creating spaces that respect privacy, reduce noise and align with the existing character of the neighborhoods, all while maintaining affordability while working directly with the municipality to alleviate these issues.

Mr. Nusbaum commented that his family is looking to move to Barrie, and the company is also considering Barrie for their next construction facility as they feel the city is brimming with potential and opportunity.

Mr. Nusbaum advised that the company plans to host in-person events to engage with residents to help guide the company's vision building for the future of children, the next generations and for those who deserve a chance to call Barrie their home. He noted that without a decision in favour of the proposed zoning by-law amendment changes, the next generation of homeowners might not be able to live in the municipality and potentially be forced to move to neighbouring cities and townships.

2. **Cathy Colebatch, 97 Cumberland Street**, discussed a previous City Council meeting held on October 4, 2021, and the deputations provided by residents concerning proposed amendments to zoning by-law related to Affordable Housing.

Ms. Colebatch discussed concerns about the proposed changes to coach house standards, minimum rear yard setbacks, historic neighbourhoods, boundary trees and shrubs. She felt that since the municipality does not have a private tree by-law, there should be protection for boundary trees or trees along property lines. She

described the significant loss of the tree canopy in the Allandale Historic Neighbourhood.

Ms. Colebatch further discussed concerns with the proposed building heights, and that one parking space per unit is unrealistic for four units per lot. She indicated that parking is already a problem in neighborhoods with on-street parking and parking on front lawns, which she feels would be better handled through by-law enforcement than a land use policy.

Ms. Colebatch described the pressure from the Province of Ontario and their backtracking on poor decisions. She questioned why the province allows for demolition and renovations of perfectly good housing stock and is not looking towards restoration and renovation of existing homes. She felt that the province should consider bringing back rent control instead of forcing the municipality to make bad choices for Barrie.

3. **Arlene McCann, 50 William Street**, discussed previous planning applications in that staff did not have the planning tools to put the restrictions in place and how coach houses have caused serious conflicts in the neighbourhood and did not create affordable housing.

Ms. McCann suggested that there needs to be a policy decision based on a solid policy as she feels we are not creating affordable housing. She felt that anything that we do to Accessory Dwelling Units and Second Suites is not going to solve the problem and that there needs to be bolder steps taken.

Ms. McCann discussed a previous City Council Meeting on October 4, 2021 to increase back and side yard setbacks to effectively reduce the number of additional residential units being built, and she wondered what has changed between then and now.

Ms. McCann commented on the Province of Ontario's Building Faster Fund and the City not wanting to miss out on the funds from the province to build affordable housing. She discussed concerns related to the proposed zoning by-law amendment for four units per property to meet the necessary targets and how the municipality has already built 1400 units, which has surpassed the municipality's growth target of 1350 target.

Ms. McCann commented that just because other municipalities feel the need to pre-emptively make this change prior to submitting their requests to the province for their share of the Building Faster Fund does not mean the City should do the same, as the municipality has already been able to reach their target without the proposed change.

Ms. McCann discussed the City's new Official Plan, including how planners consider all the components and determine the various

densities from lowest to the highest for residential land use. She commented that by throwing this proposed blanket of higher density across the residential landscape is preposterous.

Ms. McCann discussed concerns related to a neighbouring rental unit not having enough by-law officers to monitor existing properties, that the changes will expose residents to far greater challenges than before, and the impacts of four units per property with less side and back yard setbacks, no minimum landscaping between yards, and increased height of buildings.

Ms. McCann commented that Barrie has plenty of land that sits idle becoming urban waste space of weeds and brush that give cover to negative behavior. She suggested that the municipality encourage these property owners either through incentives and/or fines to develop these lands, which has the potential to create thousands of new affordable housing units.

Ms. McCann commented on studies from Harvard studying California's statewide implementation of ADU's and University of British Columbia studying ADU's in Vancouver.

Ms. McCann suggested that the City be a leader in creating affordable housing by setting standards without ruining mature neighbourhoods and tree canopies.

4. **Rick Croke, 150 Essa Road**, commented on the proposed zoning by-law amendment for four units per property. Mr. Croke advised that he supports the four units per property, and questioned whether additional units would be built for rental, is available for HST rebate for families or multi-families who can share in costs.

Mr. Croke discussed the statistics of residents in Mississauga and Toronto who do not own automobiles and have concerns with one parking spot per unit. He noted that there is a lot of land in Barrie that is not developed yet, and how he always tries to come up with ideas for these properties.

Mr. Croke commented on Barrie's former police station and the potential of making that location into affordable housing units.

5. **Zach Greenwald, 2 Wellington Street East**, discussed concerns about unaffordable housing. He commented that he moved from Markham to the City, and with the cost of housing, having more units is beneficial, and is a huge advocate for it.

Mr. Greenwald felt that there are a lot of voiceless people who unfortunately don't own property, are not speaking up, or are homeless, and it is easy to say we want bigger setbacks. He commented that people need roofs over their heads, and people are

really struggling and that adding more density is a huge thing, especially with bigger lots.

Mr. Greenwald advised that he has a garden suite on his property and would like the opportunity to add more units just to help with his own affordability and housing costs, and it also helps put a roof over other people's heads.

Mr. Greenwald indicated that it is a tough thing to balance and make sure these units look good and fit into the neighbourhood. He advised that he is a huge advocate for density, and feels it is what the City needs to help more people and be beneficial.

6. **Shane Graham, 2 Short Street**, discussed his family's history of living in Barrie for almost a hundred years. He commented that Short Street was a nice, quiet little street until about the last four years, his family has been having problems with the neighbours. He advised of neighbouring houses being sold to an individual who lives out of the City and rents them out. Mr. Graham commented that over the past 3 years, there have been at least 12 to 15 people living in 3 bedroom houses at a time.

Mr. Graham discussed concerns with the amount of traffic going in and out all day, safety concerns resulting in frequent calls to police and by-law enforcement with nothing really done about the issues, the impacts of allowing additional units per lot that will only result in increases to the issues already taking place and increases to parking issues on Short Street with people that want to visit the waterfront and do not want to pay for parking.

Mr. Graham commented that he wants to see the city continue to grow and for families to be able to raise their kids where it's safe. He noted that, however, only developers are coming and buying up the houses who are absent from the properties and do not care about the neighbours or the community.

7. **Taylor David McAleer, 82 William Street**, described the location of his home and the areas surrounding his home. He discussed adhering to the Municipal Act and felt that it is unconstitutional and taking the rights away from people in this matter.

Mr. McAleer questioned the percentage of multi-dwelling units, also known as additional residential units (ARU), of 4 or more that exist in the City, what the gap is, and whether or not the City can up their performance indicators with the province to identify what each other is doing. He also questioned if the City is meeting the provincial mandates, and what are the real benchmarks or performance indicators. Mr. McAleer suggested revisiting the topic entirely and possibly exploring other options before deciding.

Mr. McAleer discussed his concerns and the impacts on neighbours and neighbourhoods with the increase in the development of ARUs including, the increases in building and ROWA permits needing to be policed, and traffic and safety concerns.

Mr. McAleer suggested increasing one metre from 4.5 to 5.5 to the side yard setback to allow for more space or reverting back to the 1.2 metres to limit damages to adjacent properties.

### **WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE**

1. Correspondence from Enbridge Gas dated November 29, 2023.
2. Correspondence from Ministry of Transportation dated November 29, 2023
3. Correspondence from Bell Canada dated November 24, 2023.
4. Correspondence from Wesley Linton dated December 7, 2023.
5. Correspondence from Jan Carmichael dated December 8, 2023.
6. Correspondence from Devansh Jishtu dated December 9, 2023.
7. Correspondence from Phil and Franca Marinelli dated December 8, 2023.
8. Correspondence from Dale Elliott dated December 11, 2023.
9. Correspondence from Jeff Garner dated December 11, 2023.
10. Correspondence from Tara W. dated December 11, 2023.
11. Correspondence from Brenda Jones dated December 11, 2023.
12. Correspondence from Donna Dellio dated December 11, 2023.
13. Correspondence from Jacquie Coulter dated December 13, 2023.
14. Correspondence from Taylor McAleer dated December 13, 2023.
15. Correspondence from Stephen Turner dated December 13, 2023.
16. Correspondence from Steve Pauls dated December 12, 2023.
17. Correspondence from Constance Elliott dated December 12, 2023.
18. Correspondence from Mike and Wendy Linseman dated December 13, 2023.
19. Correspondence from Vanessa Lawetz dated December 13, 2023.
20. Correspondence from Barbara Mackie dated December 13, 2023.
21. Correspondence from Arnie Ivsins dated December 13, 2023.
22. Correspondence from Arlene McCann dated December 13, 2023.

The Affordability Committee met and reports as follows:

### **SECTION "B"**

#### **REPORT OF THE HERITAGE BARRIE COMMITTEE DATED NOVEMBER 28, 2023**

The Report of the Heritage Barrie Committee dated November 28, 2023, was received.

**DEVELOPMENT OF A HERITAGE PROPERTY TAX RELIEF PROGRAM**

That staff in the Development Services and Finance Departments be directed to develop a heritage property tax relief program under the *Ontario Heritage Act*, as outlined in the Memorandum from L. Munnoch, Planner to Heritage Barrie Committee dated November 28, 2023, and report back to Heritage Barrie Committee. (23-G-157)

No further action was taken.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 p.m.

CHAIRMAN