

To West Vancouver Mayor and Council. December 8 2009

1610-20-4617  
(4.1)

Dear Madame Mayor,

I am writing to you after last night's council meeting on legalizing suites in the municipality.

I live in a small rancher in the municipality and I rent out a small 1 bedroom suite to a young person who ~~lives~~ works in West Vancouver. I am a senior citizen and a long-time widow. The suite is rented for \$780.— per month. I receive a small pension and monthly OAS. I live frugally and carefully. My income is fixed. The R.T.A. does not allow me to raise rent more than 3.7% a year. I don't think my tenant would agree to contribute to the "fee" or costs that West Vancouver plans to implement and I think I am right in saying that the Residential Tenancy Office will not allow me to "attach" it to the rent.

I am a "green" home-owner — of necessity and out of a life-long respect for Mother Nature and the modern "Environment". Between us, my tenant and I put out 1 garbage bin each week — it is never full. We conserve water but I pay \$60.—/mth. for that. I provide a fire extinguisher for my tenant. I imagine our Fire Dept will want to add to this, maybe some structural "improvements", that will be costly. I say again — the R.T.O. will not allow me to pass any expense on to my tenant. Most alarming is that the B.C. Assessment Authority would re-assess the property. This would in no way acknowledge the money I have put into the home (roofing, drain tiles, electric, safe deck etc)

that were essential improvements — and which are very different from the wide-spread "cosmetic renovations" in the municipality, which chiefly drive up the cost of real estate in our (once) modest community.

I really don't need this kind of stress at this stage of my life. As a last resort I would have to give up the suite. I think we would all be losers, especially my young tenant who, I believe, deserves a chance to live here.

Sincerely,

( )

Resident of West Vancouver, for 31 yrs

+ I omitted to include: some suites rent for over \$1000.— and \$2000.— per month, with more tenants? Could there not be scaled charges depending on the area occupied? The number of tenants might vary, but area, or number of rooms, would not?

1610-20-4617  
(4.2)

**From:** ( )  
**Sent:** December 8, 2009 11:36 AM  
**To:** MayorandCouncil  
**Subject:** re REAL Secondary Suite Costs

I watched, with great interest, the initial debate on the "true cost" of the planned bylaw on secondary suites  
 have a few comments per the aspect of income and costs

1. per Michael Lewis on the cost per household per West Vancouver Budgets, approximately \$6,000 per household, is both correct and "real"
2. the anticipated revenue per assessments is in question, to the best of my knowledge assessment are based on square footage, age, and location. IE a rented house is assessed exactly the same as a private residence, so I am very unclear as to where this extra assessed value, and hence taxation revenue is coming from. In any case even if there is an increase in assessed value and taxation, it is highly unlikely it will approach an increase of \$6,000 revenue per suite.
3. Perceived revenue from suites is also interesting. Approximately 60% of the tax rolls in W Van are single family residences (per 2009 budget data), hence 9,500 homes could have suites.
  - a. Staff has indicated, and council accept that there are presently 1,000 (Dec 7) to 3,000 (North Shore News Nov.) This would mean that at the lowest every 10<sup>th</sup> house or at the maximum every 3<sup>th</sup> house presently has an illegal suite. I think these numbers are a tad unrealistic.
  - b. If a suite does not already exist, the costs, in particular the re-wiring and sprinkler systems, makes conversion a very long term economic payback
  - c. As a result I suspect that the anticipated rush, of either existing suites, probably over estimated, and new applicants, also probably over estimated, due to conversion costs, does not exist
4. Increased staffing costs (numbers approximate)
  - a. Staff clerk                      \$62,00 per year                      benefits at 20%                      wage \$50,000                      value is not there on any basis, use existing staff or contract out
  - b. Fire Inspector                      \$100,000 per year                      benefits at 25%                      wage \$75,000                      value is not there on any basis, contract out
    1. ( I would recommend that a qualified electrician is of more safety value than a fire official in any case)
  - c. By Law Inspector                      \$86,000                      benefits at 20%                      wage \$70,000                      value is not there on any basis, use existing staff
    1. considering the existing record of prosecution of existing illegal suites ( I gather 0), I would suspect the existing bylaw officer has sufficient time in his/her schedule)
5. Additional Costs (numbers approximate)
  - a. Office and computer equipment                      \$5,000 times 3                      \$15,000 per year
  - b. Vehicles                      \$45,000 times 2                      \$90,000
  - c. Operating costs per vehicle                      \$500 per month per                      \$12,000
  - d. Etc.

Hence the administration total, and I am sure these costs are not complete, cost is \$245,000 direct and \$115,000 indirect for a total of \$360,000

Plus a redirected cost of \$6,000 per suite to the rest of the W Van taxpayers of \$6,000,000 (based on 1,000 suites) to \$18,000,000 (based on 3,000 suites)

Anticipated revenue, including a one time registration fee, say @ \$500, hence income is between \$500,000 and \$1,500,000 for year 1 and \$100,000 and \$300,000 for ongoing years if and only if the number of suites reaches, at a minimum of one in ten residences.

(I used to live near Douglas Park in Vancouver, all single family homes, and the density was no where close to 1 in 10 suites)

I am sure council and staff wish to "feel good" about this issue, but I think the economics of this deserve a much wider resident input that one more council meeting.

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1610-20-4617  
(4.3)

From: ( )

Sent: December 14, 2009 2:34 PM

To: MayorandCouncil

Subject: legal suites in West Vancouver

Dear Madam Mayor and Councillors;

I would like to follow up on the discussion during last Monday's City Council Meeting, December 7, 2009.

Prior to the discussion on suites, residents were informed about the budget increases we were facing, not the least of which was garbage pick-up. This set the tone for the ensuing discussion.

I agree with Councillors Lewis and Soprovich; the discussed fees for homeowners wanting to operate a suite in their homes is not too high, in fact, might be too reasonable. There will be an added demand on the municipality's infrastructure and having a suite is after all a business venture, a money-making venture, not a charitable undertaking by the municipality. Might we see an entrepreneur (landlord) buying up several houses and converting them into suites, etc. as his/her business? Some of the increased costs, as Councillor Walker pointed out, include staff to facilitate and oversee the implementation and inspection of this undertaking.

And as an aside, I did peruse the North Shore News one day last week to see what rents in West Vancouver suites might be. Contrary to what Councillor Evison estimated, the only one bedrooms (unauthorized) suites that I could find that day were in the range of \$1000 - \$1100 per month, not \$400 - \$500 per month as he contended. This might help to put things in perspective.

Perhaps the proposal by the Squamish Nation to build a series of condos in this municipality could be an answer for some people who want to live here; a percentage of these could be deemed rental units subject to rent control legislation.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Regards,

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