SECONDARY SUITES REVIEW DEC. 3, 2012

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Context

- Secondary suites allowed in Zoning Bylaw since 1999
- Minimum parcel size is 557 m2 or larger (RS-1 B)
- Not smaller lot sizes (not CD-1-93 or R-3, R-2, or R-1 Zones)
- Temporary Residential Uses and Detached Garden Suites allowed more recently

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Background

- Pressure to allow secondary suites in smaller housing forms
- Preliminary issues related to parking , owner occupation, emergency response and Building Code compliance
- Issues related to illegal suites

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Council Direction - 2012

That staff be directed to prepare a report identifying a comprehensive list of issues and options pertaining to Secondary Suites and Temporary Residential Uses.

That staff be directed to explore the possibility of a restrictive covenant to deal with illegal suites in the R-1, CD-1-93, R-2 and R-3 zones.

Staff report dated July 16, 2012 recommending that the secondary suites review process be endorsed.

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Council Endorsed Process

Action	Status
Establishment of a Staff Working Group comprised of representatives from Planning, Licences, Permits & Bylaws, Fire and others as required;	Completed
Preparation of an online questionnaire on general issues related to secondary suites and temporary residential uses;	Completed
Research into the policies, regulations and practices of other Lower Mainland municipalities and 2011 Census information;	Completed
Focus Group Workshops – with local community groups and organizations, developers and builders	Completed
Community-wide open house event	First Quarter 2013
Preparation of an Issues Summary including key issues and options for Council consideration	First Quarter 2013
Council update and further direction on policy, regulations or other mechanisms available to the District.	First Quarter 2013

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Online Questionnaire and Focus Groups

- Advertised in Maple Ridge News
- Targeted residents, developers and builders, and affordable housing organizations
- Questionnaire ran on the DMR website from November 1 to 23, 2012
- Focus Groups held on November 28, 2012

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Online Questionnaire

1. Are you aware of the regulations related to Secondary Suites, TRU's and Garden Suites in the District's Zoning Bylaw?
2. Do you currently have a Secondary Suite, TRU or Garden Suite on your property ?
3. Are you considering constructing a Secondary Suite, TRU or Garden Suite on your property within the next year? If Yes, what type of unit?
4. What is the primary reason you are considering adding the unit selected in the previous question?
5. Do you live in a neighbourhood that has numerous Secondary Suites or TRU's throughout the neighbourhood?
6. Which neighbourhood do you live in?
7. What is the main issue you think needs to be resolved relating to the Secondary Suites or TRU's in your neighbourhood?
8. Currently in Maple Ridge, the Zoning Bylaw requires that a One Family Residential Use dwelling unit or the Secondary Suite Residential Use dwelling unit be occupied by the registered owner. Do you support this regulation?
9. Do you think that Secondary Suites and Garden Suites are important components of the Maple Ridge housing market?
10. Are there any other comments you'd like to make?

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Preliminary Findings– Online Questions

- Total number of respondents: 67 (anonymous)
- Responses from across entire District

Most Prevalent Responses:

- Do not have secondary accommodation (83%)
- Do not intend to construct secondary accommodation within the year (85 %)
- Support the idea of owner-occupied with tenant (69%)
- Important component of the housing market (79%)

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Focus Group - Suggestions

Parking

- Permitted Parking & Enforcement
- Dedicating lands for parking during the development process, similar to how parkland is dedicated during the rezoning process

Safety

- Design a manageable incremental process to legalize existing suites
- New development: make new homes “Suite Ready”, such as they are doing in other jurisdictions (Langley and Mission)
- Wider road standards to facilitate on-street parking

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Suggestions – cont'd

Infrastructure:

- Review property taxes
- Property taxes could be based on square footage as opposed to a lift in property value with a legal secondary suite
- Plan new development for suites
- Densification is an opportunity to pay for additional amenities and services

Affordability:

- These tenure types are mortgage helpers for home-owners
- Adds more housing choice in Maple Ridge
- TRUs families stay together

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Emerging Themes

- Parking
- Infrastructure Capacity
- Building Code Violations
- Fire Response Access
- Road Congestion
- Impact On Fabric Of Established Neighborhood(s)

Parking is by far the biggest issue.

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Next Steps

1. Analyze input received
2. Issues Summary – report to Council on options for consideration
3. Public Open House – First Quarter of 2013
4. Recommendations presented to Council for consideration

Note:

This initiative is part of the Background Studies' component of the Housing Action Plan.

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