



Federation of  
South Toronto  
**RESIDENTS'**  
**ASSOCIATIONS**

June 27, 2021

The Planning and Housing Committee  
10th Floor, West Tower, City Hall  
100 Queens St West  
Toronto M5H 2N2

Attn: Nancy Martins  
email: [phc@toronto.ca](mailto:phc@toronto.ca)

Dear Deputy Mayor Ana Bailao, Chair and Members of the Planning and Housing Committee:

**RE: PH25.15, Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods – Garden Suites – Proposals Report (All Wards)**

To date, the recently founded Federation of South Toronto Residents Associations (FoSTRA) represents 20 residents' associations (RAs) in Wards 4, 9, 10 and 13, as well as Ward 11 south of Bloor Street. Our boundaries encompass a population of over 400,000 people, and our Federation continues to grow, with new RAs and individuals joining every month.

Intensification is necessary in all areas of the City to accommodate the additional 700,000 people who will inhabit it in the next thirty years. Many downtown areas are already overdeveloped. FoSTRA fully supports exploring new and creative alternatives that will address the need for more housing throughout our rapidly growing city, however there are a number of valid issues that need clarification regarding laneway homes and garden suites.

We appreciate how much time and effort the Planning Department has spent testing the Garden Suite Bylaw in various types of neighbourhoods. We trust that, in all cases, the proper provisions for service access for the suites have been accommodated. In all of these test areas, has the need for additional infrastructure and services been assessed? Has the expansion of housing in each proven to be as cost effective for the City as expansion in a downtown neighbourhood would be? Will a full report on these test cases be revealed in the fall?

Problems arise with any great change. Getting the proposed Bylaw right before it is approved and implemented is essential. It will require additional time for research. The study of laneway housing will not be released until the fall of 2021. The two projects are so similar – save for the important issue of access – that a proper assessment of garden suites should only come after the release of the laneway study.

Not only should the new laneway houses and garden suites be of the best possible quality – designed to improve the property of applicants – but they must also improve the community and not compromise the enjoyment of neighbouring properties. This brings us to a specific issue with laneway housing that would seem to apply even more to garden suites.



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This was brought to FoSTRA's attention by one of our member RAs. The West Bend Community Association's delegate to FoSTRA, Ken Sharratt, in his letter to Greg Linten, City Planner and Executive Director, dated 21 June 2021, pointed out a serious flaw with the Laneway Housing Bylaw. The Bylaw stipulates the minimum separation between buildings on the same property but not a minimum separation between it and buildings on adjacent properties.

With the proposed Garden Suite Bylaw, there is, in many cases, no setback at all from the rear of the property; in others, only a maximum of 1.5 metres. On the sides of the property, the setback from the proposed garden suite could be a mere half metre. It is no wonder that neighbours are worried that the enjoyment of their properties will be compromised. FoSTRA believes that this issue should be re-examined.

Other issues of concern are; shading with 6-metre buildings, basements allowing for illegal second units, parking provisions, increased stormwater runoff, reduction of green space and soft landscaping, reduction of privacy and, due to the closer-than-normal proximity to existing buildings, fire safety.

Great concern is also being expressed amongst property owners that the Committee of Adjustment will dilute the proposed regulations and allow the building of monster garden suites of two or three stories, without regard for the surrounding community.

When the reports are made public, when modifications have been made to the proposal, and further consultations are conducted, FoSTRA may have other issues with the proposed Bylaw. Until then, we would strongly encourage further research and study.

Sincerely,

Rick Green  
Acting Chair

Don Young  
Acting Vice-chair

cc. David Driedger, Senior Planner, Community Planning: [David.Driedger@toronto.ca](mailto:David.Driedger@toronto.ca)  
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