



Decision Letter

Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing

Meeting No.	4	Contact	Nancy Martins, Committee Administrator
Meeting Date	Monday, November 23, 2020	Phone	416-397-4579
Start Time	7:00 PM	E-mail	phc@toronto.ca
Location	Video Conference	Chair	Councillor Paula Fletcher

RH4.2	ACTION	Amended		Ward: All
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2021 Work Plan on the Preservation of Affordable Rental Housing

Subcommittee Decision

The Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing recommends that:

1. The Planning and Housing Committee adopt the new mandate and terms of reference for the Tenant Advisory Committee outlined in the report (November 9, 2020) from the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat and direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to issue a call for members by the end of the fourth quarter of 2020.
2. The Planning and Housing Committee direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat in consultation with the new Tenant Advisory Committee and the City's Interdivisional Staff Working Group on Protecting Affordable Rental Housing to develop annual Preservation of Affordable Rental Housing Work Plans, starting in 2021, including consideration for developing the framework for a City-wide housing data strategy within 2021.
3. The Planning and Housing Committee direct all City divisions developing renter-related services, policies, programs or consultations to consult with the Tenant Advisory Committee.
4. The Planning and Housing Committee direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat to report on the progress made on annual Preservation of Affordable Rental Housing Work Plans, as part of the annual HousingTO 2020-2030 Implementation Plan update, starting in 2021.
5. The Planning and Housing Committee direct the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat and the General Manager, Shelter Support Housing and Administration to engage the services of a consultant to explore options and feasibility to:
 - a. develop a process to permanently track and monitor formal and informal evictions;
 - b. develop an interim measure to track formal and informal evictions during the COVID-19 pandemic;

and provide an update report to the Planning and Housing Committee in the first Quarter

of 2021 on this initiative.

Origin

(November 9, 2020) Report from the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat

Summary

The City of Toronto is a city where almost half the households are renters. According to the 2016 Census, Toronto's housing market was comprised of 1,112,930 households with 53% living in ownership housing and 47% living in rental housing[1]. In December 2019, City Council approved the HousingTO 2020-2030 Action Plan ("HousingTO Plan") based on extensive public consultations and feedback. The HousingTO Plan is the City's blueprint to address issues across the housing spectrum including housing affordability, poor living conditions, displacements due to illegitimate evictions and lack of affordable housing choices. The HousingTO Plan also sets targets and outlined actions to preserve the City's existing rental housing stock.

While the Toronto housing context was challenging pre-COVID, the urgent need to help renters has become more critical due to the pandemic. For instance, overcrowded congregate living settings are no longer simply uncomfortable, they are now unsafe from a public health perspective. In addition, more renters are facing challenges paying rent due to precarious employment through the pandemic. The pandemic has also disproportionately impacted racialized and vulnerable populations including people from low-income, racialized communities, seniors and women-led households.

To support delivery of the HousingTO Plan with a focus specifically on helping renters, the City's Protection of Affordable Rental Housing Advisory Group ("Advisory Group"), was established by the Planning and Housing Committee in December 2019. The Advisory Group has called for improved City coordination of renter issues to not only improve customer service, but to improve the effectiveness of City renter policies and programs. This point was reinforced by deputations made at the September 24 2020 meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Protection on Affordable Rental Housing. Participants called for a "One-City" approach to address the affordable housing crisis, ensure that every resident has access to adequate housing and to preserve the existing affordable housing stock.

Work is currently underway across City divisions on specific policies and programs to assist renters and other work is being planned or contemplated. This report seeks approval for a new Tenant Advisory Committee with an expanded mandate and terms of reference to replace the existing Advisory Group.

The Tenant Advisory Committee would be supported by the Housing Secretariat and engage regularly with an interdivisional staff team to ensure that connections are made across City divisions. In order to move forward on actions identified in Housing TO Plan and the accompanying implementation plan, City staff will map existing renter programs and policies and work with Tenant Advisory Committee to identify gaps and annual work plans. Progress on this work would be reported as part of the annual HousingTO 2020-2030 Implementation Plan updates.

The report also recommends that all City divisions involved in developing or undertaking services, policies, programs or consultations that affect renters, consult with the Tenant Advisory Committee. This will help ensure that staff are more likely to be made aware of and

consider any unintended consequences for renters and that any new direction and actions are communicated in a way that is clear and understood by renters.

This report was developed with input from the following City divisions: Shelter, Support and Housing Administration, Seniors Services and Long-Term Care, Toronto Building, City Planning, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Social Development, Finance and Administration and City Legal.

Background Information

(November 9, 2020) Report from the Executive Director, Housing Secretariat on 2021 Work Plan on the Preservation of Affordable Rental Housing

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/rh/bgrd/backgroundfile-158186.pdf>)

Attachment 1: Draft 2021 Work Plan Details

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/rh/bgrd/backgroundfile-158187.pdf>)

Presentation from the Policy Development Officer, Housing Secretariat

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/rh/bgrd/backgroundfile-158789.pdf>)

Communications

(November 23, 2020) Letter from Jonathan Robart, Senior Advisor, Policy, Litigation and Law Reform, CERA - Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation (RH.New.RH4.2.1)

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/rh/comm/communicationfile-123420.pdf>)

(November 23, 2020) Letter from Jonathan Robart, Right to Housing in Toronto

(R2HTO) (RH.New.RH4.2.2)

(<http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2020/rh/comm/communicationfile-123631.pdf>)

Speakers

Kemba Robinson, York West ACORN

Marcia Stone, Weston ACORN

Michelle Spencer

Aaron Caplan, Toronto St. Paul's Tenant Associations Network

Philip Zigman

Helen Chilas, 1501 Woodbine Tenants Group

Jonathan Robart, Right to Housing in Toronto Network

Benjamin Pullia

Annie Hodgins, CERA - Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation

Patricia Edwards, Toronto ACORN

Benny Van Velsen