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May 18, 2021

Councillor Ana Bailão
Chair, Planning and Housing Committee
City of Toronto

Dear Chair and Members,

Re: Evaluating New Westminster Renovation Prevention Measures

In 2019, the Planning and Housing Committee approved the creation of a Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing to, amongst other things, address the problems "renovictions" posed for many Toronto tenants.

"Renovictions" are when false or misleading information about renovations is used to evict tenants. The Landlord and Tenant Board document for notifying tenants about renovations is an N13 – "Notice to End your Tenancy Because the Landlord Wants to Demolish, Repair or Convert the Rental Unit." Quite often the work that actually occurs does not require a tenant to permanently vacate the unit.

The City of New Westminster adopted a bylaw in 2019 to deal with renovictions. By all accounts, the bylaw has been very successful. New Westminster recently won a court challenge to that bylaw. The British Columbia Court of Appeals ruled in April 2021 that New Westminster was within its rights to implement the bylaw.

In its work with City staff, tenant and anti-poverty advocacy groups, legal aid clinics, tenants associations and tenants, the Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing has learned "renovictions" continue to be a serious threat to the supply of affordable housing in Toronto.

To address this problem, the measures adopted in New Westminster should be reviewed to determine how they might be adapted to help deal with the situation in Toronto.

We would ask the Committee to approve the following:

The Planning and Housing Committee request:

1) The Executive Director, Housing Secretariat, to work with the City Solicitor to review the City of New Westminster's renovictions policy and to include that analysis in a report to the June 14th meeting of the Subcommittee on the Protection of Affordable Rental Housing on improving the City's policies and programs to prevent renovictions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paula Fletcher, City Councillor
Ward 14, Toronto-Danforth

Mike Layton, City Councillor
Ward 11, University-Rosedale