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## **RE: PH29.2 – Agenda Item Nov. 25 – Changing Lanes**

**The City of Toronto's Review of Laneway Suites - Zoning By-law Amendments - Final Report**

*SENT BY EMAIL*

**Planning & Housing Committee** – attention of Nancy Martins, Secretariat Contact, [phc@toronto.ca](mailto:phc@toronto.ca)  
**Councillor Bailao, Chair**, [councillor\\_bailao@toronto.ca](mailto:councillor_bailao@toronto.ca)

### **INTRODUCTION**

I was retained by FoNTRA to review the maximum permitted building height standard for Laneway Suites. My opinion is based upon 20-years experience operating Chizen & Mills, a design-build practice primarily renovating and constructing additions to houses in the former City of Toronto, and my 18-years of practice as a Registered Professional Planner.

**It has been recommended to increase height to 6.3m (20'-8"), primarily to address wood/soil contact and insulation considerations...**

**In my opinion, no such increase in the maximum permitted building height is necessary. Currently, 2.44m (8'-0") ceiling heights can be attained with an R-60 roof assembly.**

Furthermore, in my opinion, there are good reasons for not increasing the building height standard. Laneway Suites are not intended to emulate the scale of the main house. These buildings should be of a more modest scale – recognisant of their ancillary building origins.

### **ABOUT BUILDING HEIGHT**

The following schedule is an *'indicative' model*, intended for reference purposes. It identifies the components of a Laneway Suite that cumulatively amount to the building's overall height. A height is ascribed to each component. The intention is to permit each component to be reviewed separately, whilst being recognisant of the effect on the overall building height.

I have intentionally set up the model to reflect the current 6.00m (19'-8") height standard. This model permits individual component heights to be adjusted, to increase some and to reduce others, whilst maintaining the planned building height.

## INDICATIVE MODEL


MAIN FLOOR	– height above grade	0.20m	(0'-8")
	– floor-to-ceiling height	2.44m	(8'-0")
SECOND FLOOR	– floor assembly thickness	0.30m	(1'-0")
	– floor-to-ceiling height	2.44m	(8'-0")
ROOF ASSEMBLY	– assembly thickness	<u>0.58m</u>	<u>(1'-6")</u>
		<b>5.96.m</b>	<b>(19'-7")</b>

Each component is briefly discussed below in terms of potential height savings. Of note, if all the potential height savings were applied – 0.33m (1'-1") – then a cumulative height could be achieved that is below the current maximum permitted building height standard, namely, achieving a height of a 5.66m (18'-7"). However, that is not the intention of this exercise—but rather it is to determine whether there is enough latitude in the current 6.00m (19'-8") standard to accommodate appropriate and desirable Laneway Suite solutions.

1. **main floor assembly** – No height savings have been identified in this element. Insulated concrete floors can address wood/soil contact and associated moisture issues within this condition. If wood floor assemblies are preferred a ventilated recessed crawl space can be incorporated.
2. **floor-to-ceiling heights** – a height savings of up to 0.11m (0'-4½") per floor could be attained by adopting OBC minimum room height standards, and a smaller savings if partial reductions were selected.
3. **second floor assembly** – a height savings of up to 0.10m (0'-4") could be attained by reducing span lengths by introducing interior load bearing walls. In so doing, reducing joist thicknesses.
4. **roof assembly** – a height saving of 0.13m (0'-5") could be attained by utilizing high R-value foam insulation, as I find some builders have already adopted.

As mentioned further above, no savings are actually necessary.

Sincerely –



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Also sent to –

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