

From: [Sean Galbraith](#)
To: [Planning and Housing](#)
Subject: My comments for 2022.PH30.2 on January 12, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee
Date: January 11, 2022 1:39:56 PM

To the City Clerk:

Please add my comments to the agenda for the January 12, 2022 Planning and Housing Committee meeting on item 2022.PH30.2, Expanding Housing Options in Neighbourhoods - Garden Suites - Final Report

I understand that my comments and the personal information in this email will form part of the public record and that my name will be listed as a correspondent on agendas and minutes of City Council or its committees. Also, I understand that agendas and minutes are posted online and my name may be indexed by search engines like Google.

Comments:

Dear Committee,

I am a Registered Professional Planner whose practice generally revolves around helping homeowners navigate the city's planning process for minor variances. A not-small part of my experience is in trying to get "missing middle"-type projects approved, and thankfully most of my clients have been successful in helping the city expand housing options in neighbourhoods.

I am in strong support of the proposed Garden Suites permissions. Allowing for laneway suites will advance many city goals, including:

- allowing for aging in place
- improving relative affordability of rental units in established neighbourhoods that only contain single detached houses currently
- making more efficient use of city infrastructure, resources, transit, and schools
- supporting local retail with more potential customers within walking distance
- creating smaller, but still family sized, housing options closer to places of work and schools
- increasing more equitable access to established neighbourhoods

In doing so, the neighbourhood fabric will not be significantly altered or impacted (though if neighbourhood character is keeping people out of these areas, is that really something we want to maintain?). Policies are proposed to protect tree coverage and back yard soft landscaping, as has been done with laneway suites successfully.

The creation of garden suites will be a generational change and take time to grow in awareness and popularity (see: laneway suites uptake rate). Things won't happen overnight. And not all properties will qualify for a garden suite. But a great many will, and this will be a positive change for our neighbourhoods.

For the last few years since laneway suites were allowed, I've had to let a few dozen residents (at least) know that they couldn't do something similar because they don't have a lane or street in the back of their property. I look forward to telling future callers that they might have new options for their family and property (and ideally they won't need me to help them get it approved).

All the best,

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Sean Galbraith, MCIP, RPP
President

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