APPENDIX B:

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARIES

Regulatory & Compliance Framework for Multi-Tenant (Rooming) Houses Across Toronto
Community Meeting #1 Summary Report

Prepared by LURA Consulting
May 2021

Introduction

The City licenses multi-tenant houses, commonly known as rooming houses, to ensure that they are safe and well-maintained. The City is proposing the creation of a comprehensive city-wide zoning approach and enhancements to licensing and enforcement to encourage and regulate safe, liveable, well-maintained and affordable multi-tenet houses across the city.

The proposed framework has four parts:

1. Enhanced operator licensing requirements to promote health and safety
2. An enforcement and compliance program
3. City-wide zoning standards that permit the use across the city
4. Initiatives to support tenants and maintain affordability of housing

The City of Toronto hired LURA Consulting to assist the City with the community engagement process in an independent role. This included the development of a consultation and engagement strategy to ensure community and stakeholders are educated about the topic of multi-tenant housing and have an opportunity to provide input on the proposed city-wide framework.

The engagement and communications process included a webpage, social media, leveraging stakeholder networks, public notices, overview presentation, information sheet, print and digital adds, virtual public meetings and stakeholder workshops, online and phone questionnaire, and DIY meeting toolkit – all to provide residents with a variety of engagement opportunities to learn more about the proposed framework and provide feedback.

Community Meeting #1 Description

On Tuesday, May 4th, 2021 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., the City of Toronto held the first community meeting on the regulatory and compliance framework for multi-tenant (rooming) houses across Toronto online using Webex Events. The purpose of this community meeting was:
- Present the proposed regulatory framework;
- Answer questions of clarification; and
- Gather feedback about how the proposed city-wide regulation of multi-tenant houses can be improved.

Participants could join the virtual meeting either online or by phone to listen to the presentation, ask questions, and provide feedback. The meeting included a presentation on the proposed framework from Carola Perez-Book, City Planning and Emma Bowley, Municipal Licensing and Standards. Following the presentations, participants were invited to ask questions and provide feedback verbally or though writing in the WebEx Q&A functions. City staff responded to questions and LURA Consulting recorded feedback received.

The meeting was attended by 72 participants. There were 60 written questions and comments received through the WebEx Q&A function.

Materials from the meeting can be accessed at http://toronto.ca/MTHreview

The meeting was attended by the following project team members:

- Carola Perez-Book, City of Toronto, City Planning (Zoning)
- Emma Bowley, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Kyle Knoeck, City of Toronto, City Planning (Zoning)
- Jean Paul Nadeau, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Sherri Hanley, City of Toronto, Housing Secretariat
- Aisha Salim, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Amanda Sinclair, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Negin Shamshiri, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Michael Hain, City of Toronto, Transportation Planning
- Jim Faught, LURA Consulting (Co-Facilitator)
- Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting (Co-Facilitator)
- Zoie Browne, LURA Consulting
- Amitai Zand, LURA Consulting

What We Heard

The following is a summary of participant feedback gathered through the community meeting. This feedback is aggregated and organized thematically.

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Participants wanted to understand, with the city-wide expansion of multi-tenant houses, how the licensing standards will be enforced such that the houses do not become run-down properties due to non-compliance. In particular, participants wanted to get a better sense of the role that the requirement of a security deposit will play in ensuring operator compliance.

2. Enforcement & Compliance

Concerns were noted about operators who own multiple properties that may not meet compliance standards. Participants wanted to understand how the proposed framework will enforce necessary upgrades and repairs on negligent operators to ensure the health and safety of tenants.

A few participants expressed concern for the City's ability to identify and transition illegal rooming houses and the capacity of staff to enforce the compliance program. This was particularly noted for illegal rooming houses that are scattered across the city and may be comfortable maintaining their illegal status.

Some participants wanted assurance that the City has considered the impact of COVID-19 on developing the proposed framework and keeping in view the health and safety aspects related to multi-tenant housing. Participants also wanted to understand the strategies the City will employ to get access to the illegal houses in order to verify any infractions and complaints.

3. City-wide Zoning

Participants emphasized the need for clarity on the definition of multi-tenant housing such that its relationship with other similar-built housing forms can be clearly established. In particular, this may help inform the criteria that is established for converting certain forms of housing into multi-tenant houses.

Participants questioned the basis on which the City has come up with the proposed dwelling room maximums (6, 12, 25). City staff were advised to reconsider this requirement keeping in view the current context of multi-tenant houses and neighbourhoods. Furthermore, participants advised City staff to look into site-specific re-zoning to allow good, quality, affordable housing in places where it can be accommodated.

On the issue of parking, a few participants were of the opinion that parking minimums were not needed as many parts of the city are easily accessible by public transit. Participants further noted that 'far from transit' needs to be better defined for it to be used as a criteria for determining whether a property would require two parking spaces or not. One participant suggested a hybrid solution to provide on-street parking permits to residents of properties near transit with a zero-parking minimum requirement.

Participants noted concerns with high costs associated with Toronto Local Appeal Body (TLAB) appeals filed against minor variance applications submitted by operators. Participants encouraged City staff to work with landlords to avoid the need for such applications, devise ways to limit or restrict appeals filed against the submitted applications and also engage directly with the Committee of Adjustment to support operators once appeals are filed.

Participants were happy that the regulations were to be applied city-wide but also expressed concerns with them being more onerous than the ones associated with RentSafeTO program or even traditional apartment buildings. In emphasizing the need for consistency in regulations applied to the various housing programs participants noted that the goal with regulations should always be to achieve multi-tenant housing with ease and not difficulty.

Concerned about the impact of the city-wide expansion of multi-tenant houses on the diverse neighbourhoods participants advised the City to consider limiting the number of multi-tenant houses that can be in a particular neighbourhood or on a particular street. City was advised to keep in view the constitution, infrastructure and culture of the diverse neighbourhoods and how these can be positively or negatively impacted as a

result of this change. Related to this, the participants also wanted the City to consider the impact of the possible increased use of on-street parking on neighbours as a direct consequence of expanding multi-tenant houses across the city.

A suggestion to develop a Rooming House Act was discussed. This would clearly stipulate that a multi-tenant house is taxed and zoned under the act and if the house is sold and transferred the next owners must maintain the operation of the property under the act.

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Participants expressed concerns with the potential impact of increased costs associated with meeting the by-law requirements on both operators and tenants. Participants noted the costs to be a lot more than what incentivizing operators can accomplish and advised that a partnership is established involving all three levels of government to facilitate operator's efforts to meet licensing requirements. This would encourage illegal operators to become licensed as well as achieve affordable rents to support tenants.

It was suggested that a study be conducted to understand how the proposed framework changes may impact rent rates for multi-tenant housing.

5. Implementation Plan

Participants cautioned City staff that the proposed phased implementation approach with enforcement as the starting point as opposed to licensing could produce a squeeze on the housing stock and result in increased rents.

There were concerns raised with displacement of tenants if unlicensed rooming houses fail to meet the proposed by-law requirements. Participants advised City staff to consider the following:

- Take a zero-displacement approach by working with operators on solutions (e.g., provide incentives; alternative compliance options; etc.) such that their operations are not halted;
- Provide alternative housing for displaced tenants or housing allowances in case displacement does occur.

Next Steps

The community engagement and consultation process will continue with other another public meeting, stakeholder meetings, online and phone questionnaire and community-led consultations using the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Workshop. LURA Consulting, will prepare a final engagement summary report for city staff that will form part of a final Staff Report to the Planning and Housing Committee in mid-2021 to inform the next steps of the project process.

Appendix A – Verbal Feedback, Questions, Responses

The following provides a summary of questions received verbally through the community meeting. Similar questions have been combined for brevity and organized thematically and is not a verbatim dictation.

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Property Standards

Question: What standards, practices and licensing requirements will be put in place and enforced to make sure these multi-tenant houses don't become run down, precarious housing that contributes to social inequity and neighbourhood de-stabilization?

Response: We will be asking all operators to submit a Property Standards Plan. This plan would outline ways to address items such as pest management, waste management, and tenant issues. We will be doing follow ups to ensure the plans are being implemented. We will look at both the exterior and interior of the buildings for any zoning and licensing-related concerns. If we do find that buildings are not meeting the required standards we can apply our enforcement strategy whereby we will be issuing notices and orders and if needed, we can carry out remedial work through City contractors. As well, we do have the ability to lay charges outside of the rooming houses licensing regime. If the operators remain non-compliant we can bring them to tribunal and revoke their licenses or put certain implications onto their licenses. Based on the new framework we will be expanding our enforcement resources so that we can effectively deal with illegal houses and bring them under the new zoning and licensing by-laws.

Security Deposit

Question: How much would the security deposit be and what will it be used for?

Response: We are asking for a security deposit because it was proposed by Council. It is a challenge to determine how much to collect for a security deposit because property standards and other details can vary. At this point, we cannot confirm the amount but we will welcome any feedback.

2. Enforcement & Compliance

COVID-19 Impact

Question: Is COVID-19 impact being considered as the new framework is developed?

Response: We have been working very closely with Toronto Public Health. They reviewed our proposed recommendations to ensure that it is in line with the health and

safety guidelines for COVID-19. In the past we have also worked closely with them in providing information on tenants and operators pertaining to COVID-19 protections.

Compliance and Enforcement Strategy

Question: We can have the framework but if landlords are not going to let an officer in their properties to verify an infraction what strategies and tactics do you have to deal with such landlords or such situations?

Response: The basic strategy would be to educate property owners and tenants. If an opportunity is provided for them to be licensed and they do end up pursuing it then it will also be an opportunity for us to address the concerns that are raised by the community or the tenants. We are looking to expand our team and we will have more resources to enforce operators into compliance with the proposed by-laws. The fact that we are providing a pathway for operators to seek compliance and the supports to help them, should encourage more operators to get licensed.

Question: Is there a limit to the number of tenants who can live in a multi-tenant house under the new framework?

Response: There is a requirement on the number of occupants in the Property Standards by-laws that is dependent on the size of the room.

Question: Can landlords have multiple licenses if they own multiple properties?

Response: Yes, there is currently no proposed limit on the number of licenses that an operator can have for operating multi-tenant houses provided they are complying with all the regulations.

Question: Is there anything in the framework that would ensure that the landlords do make the necessary upgrades and repairs in their properties which may be a serious health and safety concern due to the negligence of the landlords?

Response: Since last year we have increased the issuance of notices and orders to such landlords including landlords operating illegal rooming houses. We want to bring them to a standard that is acceptable within the by-law and the community they are based in.

Question: What is modernized housing tribunal?

Response: The current rooming housing commission that we have in place is based on chapter 285 of the by-laws that has been in place since pre-amalgamation. We are looking to modernize this by-law and the rules around the tribunal. This could include expanding the jurisdiction of the commission to be city-wide to align with the recommended zoning permissions.

3. City-wide Zoning

Definitions

Question: If a rooming house is built with four rooms, four washrooms, and four small kitchens, such that nothing has to be shared, with all units self-contained, will such a facility still be considered a multi-tenant house?

Response: That would not be considered a multi-tenant house. The aspect of having your own washroom and your own kitchen that is not shared will make it a self-contained unit which should not fall under the definition of dwelling room.

Question: How do you define a single housekeeping unit? What development or permit fees if any would be involved in converting a single-family house into a multi-tenant house?

Response: Single housekeeping units involves a group of people living together and the various aspects of the expenses and responsibilities in that house are shared. We do not currently have a fee amount to provide for converting a single-family house into a multi-tenant house.

Question: Will the new changes apply to campus co-ops?

Response: If the main accommodation is for individual rooms and people are not living as a single house-keeping unit then it will be considered a multi-tenant house. The key test for a multi-tenant house is whether the accommodation is self-contained or not.

Question: Are student residences and dormitories considered multi-tenant housing?

Response: There are other land uses and other types of uses that provide accommodation in rooms instead of dwelling units. For example, nursing homes, seniors residence, and student residences can provide residences in dwelling rooms but they would not be considered multi-tenant houses. The definitions are not the same.

Dwelling Rooms

Question: Where are these numbers on the maximum number of dwelling rooms coming from?

Response: These numbers are based on what we have seen in the former city of Toronto.

Question: Is dwelling units built into condominium units allowed?

Response: Most condominiums in the city conform to site-specific zoning approvals which set maximum number of dwelling units and they don't necessarily provide for

dwelling rooms. How the dwelling units and condominiums are built and laid out might be difficult to meet the Building Code requirements for more than two bedrooms in a condominium units.

Question: Is there a particular standard on the minimum size of a room?

Response: Yes, there is Building Code requirement for room sizes.

Feedback: We support the City's utilization of the human rights lens in this new framework focused on multi-tenant housing however, for the City to truly align itself with its' human rights lens, it must consider the 6-room cap being placed on the number of dwelling rooms, as well as consider the site-specific re-zoning to allow good quality, affordable housing in places where the buildings can accommodate such.

Parking

Question: Why are you enforcing parking minimums when many parts of the City can be reached by public transit?

Response: We are doing a comprehensive review of the parking requirements under the proposed zoning by-law. We are looking at two options under the proposed changes – one has no parking minimums in the policy areas and the other has very low parking minimums. The main principle we are following is to lower parking minimums or eliminate them in areas that are easily accessible by transit.

Question: When you are defining a 'far from transit' how far a walk from a bus stop is considered far?

Response: Existing requirements in the zoning by-law tightly define the boundaries of the policy areas around transit and we are looking to expand those boundaries (but not through this review).

Question: Would it be possible to have a hybrid solution where a house is zoned to be a zero-parking minimum but could also be zoned to be 'if you are at this house you are allowed to receive a parking permit'?

Response: This is currently not possible but something that we can look into as part of our general parking review.

Question: If legalizing overnight parking bans are annulled, will on-street permit parking be permitted in Scarborough?

Response: The parking referred to as part of the proposed framework is off-street parking that is required to be provided by operators within the boundaries of their property.

Minor Variance Applications

Question: With significant costs associated with TLAB appeals will there be any support provided by the City to limit or restrict third-party appeals for multi-tenant houses that may have to seek relief from the zoning by-laws in case they were illegal? Where variances are required will City Staff be directed to actively support such variances and not just remain silent on variance issues that seems to be current practice?

Response: The rights of appeal to minor variances are granted by the Planning Act so the City would not have the legal authority to limit the rights of appeals. It is the Committee of Adjustment that will have to consider each application and decide whether to grant minor variances. The minor variances process exists within a certain legislative framework that we will need to work within.

Feedback: I would suggest that a light hand be taken with the zoning by-law so that the variances are not triggered all the time, and that the support of planning staff at the Committee of Adjustment can go a long way because it is so rarely given.

Question: if there is a maximum of 6 rooms how will that interact with the rooming housing protections that are currently under appeal, for example, if an operator has to remove rooms to meet the safety requirements will a penalty be imposed on them for doing so?

Response: If an operator has to make any changes to their property they would need to comply with whatever zoning is enforced for their property currently.

Regulations Consistency Across Diverse Housing Options

Feedback: We are happy for the regulations to apply city-wide but we would like to see them being consistent across the different housing options, like for example, we find these new regulations being a lot more onerous than the ones we see with, for example, regular housing or RentSafeTO program. Regulations should not be so difficult to meet in particular for low-income housing lower-end housing such that it becomes easier to build a luxury rental than a rooming house.

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Cost Implications on Operators

Feedback: In order to bring a rooming house up to full compliance it can cost approximately $20,000. It would be wise for the City to consider making such support available to operators for otherwise the cost of putting up a new rooming house can be significant (upwards of $500, 000).

Response: We will be looking at a whole suite of opportunities to support operators. In addition to waiving taxes and exempting operators of certain fees we will also look at the federal / provincial programs that have, historically, supported operators with

expenses pertinent to retrofits. We will remain proactive in finding solutions to possible situations that can occur while working collaboratively with operators.

Question: Can there be a partnership established with different levels of government to support operators with costs associated with meeting the requirements?

Response: The City is developing an incentives program which will assist landlords. We are looking at waiving property taxes, certain fees, and we are also working with Toronto Building to look at alternative standards for compliance. If federal and provincial funding becomes available, we will look at using some of those funds toward retrofit costs for operators. This will be subject to landlords willing to work with us to maintain affordability.

Question: Are these changes going to raise costs for people relying on this form of housing?

Response: We are working on developing ways to assist landlords with meeting the by-law requirements as a means of preventing costs to be passed on to tenants and maintaining affordability. We have proposed that landlords provide rent rolls so that the city can be certain that they are meeting the conditions of rent agreement. We will work closely with operators on this and will have an affordability period agreed with landlords in exchange for any incentives that the City is able to provide them.

Rent

Question: Are there any studies done to look at the impact of these changes on rent?

Response: We have not done any studies on the impact of these changes on rent.

Question: Will tenants of current illegal rooming houses be granted a starting rent equal to what they currently pay should their rooming house becomes legal? Is there a way to control rent increases if it is raised after the rooming house becomes legal?

Response: If we are working with the property owner and providing incentives the landlords will be required to ensure that the rents remain affordable. Unfortunately, zoning does not have the ability to control rents.

5. Implementation Plan

Phased Approach

Question: Your implementation plan is enforcement first and new licensing second. This means your plan is producing a squeeze on the housing stock before any new units come online, and this will certainly result in high rents. What is the reasoning behind planning the implementation in this way?

Response: The phased approach aims to gradually open up licensing opportunities. We are not looking to deter operators from becoming licensed. We will be working collaboratively with them to bring them into the legalized regime.

Illegal Multi-tenant Houses Licensing

Question: What makes the City believe that the illegal rooming houses that are flourishing without being under the legal framework will be willing to transition to a legalized framework?

Response: With an expanded team of enforcement officers, we will have more resources to address these concerns.

Question: Can you explain in how the City will identify unlicensed operators?

Response: We utilize a number of different strategies to identify unlicensed operators. Our approach is geared towards educating operators, bringing them into compliance and enforcing if or when necessary.

Displacement / Emergency Relocation

Feedback: The City needs to consider the possible closures of unlicensed rooming houses and the added burden on homelessness all resulting from the implementation of new enforcement strategy if the operators can't meet the Ontario Building Code, Fire code, new zoning by-laws and other such requirements for various reasons. Perhaps, it would be wise for the City to consider a zero-displacement approach where the City can work with the operators to not shutdown buildings immediately until either alternative housing can be identified or where operators can be assisted with compliance through resources provided by the City. We also encourage the City to consider providing housing allowances in case of an unanticipated displacement to ensure homelessness is kept in check.

Response: Our goal is not to evict tenants but to bring operators to full compliance with licensing requirements and zoning by-laws. We are trying to stay proactive on the displacement issue and are continuing to engage various stakeholders to help in this conversation. For example, we are consulting the tenant advisory committee to learn about the tenants perspective. We are also doing public consultations involving tenants to hear from them directly on ways that we can best implement the new framework without creating any obstacles for tenants.

Question: How will the City be involved in resolving any conflicts that may arise between tenants and operators?

Response: The goal is to establish an open communication with both tenants and operators, to communicate what their rights are, as well as what the requirements are. Ideally, we encourage the two individuals to communicate with each other to resolve issues but if needed, we can issue paperwork to address the concerns of each party.

There is also an opportunity to involve a mediator where the tenant and property owner can communicate their concerns to a third party.

Multi-tenant Housing Protection

Question: Can we have a rooming house act added to the constitution where it is stipulated that if a rooming house has been taxed and zoned (education and realty taxes) under the rooming house act for low density housing for over 40 years then the title of the house will go under the succession law format in the sense that the landlord can only sell to another landlord who will carry it in the same way as it has been for the past 40 years?

Response: This would require provincial legislation and is not something the City has power to do. The City has adopted an Official Plan amendment for the protection of dwelling rooms in multi-tenant houses similar to Official Plan policies that address the protection of rental dwelling units to ensure that those dwelling rooms are not de-converted. The City's Official Plan policies regarding protection of dwelling rooms are currently under appeal.

Neighbourhood-Related

Question: Is there a limit on how many rooming houses could there be in a particular neighbourhood or a particular street?

Response: We are not currently considering any limitation on the number of houses in a particular neighbourhood or a street. We have used the separation distance requirement as a tool in zoning in the past, but we have not found this to improve the land use impacts. As well, it is something that is seen as being discriminatory as it suggests where certain people can or cannot live.

Question: How will it be ensured that the new requirements of 2 parking spots and 6 dwelling rooms will be complied with keeping in view, in particular, the on-street parking becoming a nuisance for other residents?

Response: This is a parking enforcement issue especially in areas where on-street parking is not permitted. There are areas where on-street overnight parking is possible by way of a permit but this is not consistent across the city.

Question: Is there any consideration being given for current family-centred neighbourhoods or streets as the City plans to expand rooming houses across the city?

Response: Multi-tenant housing is just one form of affordable housing. For some people, multi-tenant housing is a choice accommodation over any other affordable housing option for different reasons. Complete communities include a wide-range of housing for a variety of residents.

Question: Will the parking by-laws be considered to ensure that tenants do not use on-street parking?

Response: Some parts of the city allow overnight permit parking and others don't. Changes to zoning and licensing won't have any effect on parking regulations. These are controlled by City's various parking by-laws. If people are parking on streets where it is not allowed it can be enforced by parking enforcement.

Appendix B – Written Feedback and Questions Received Via Webex Q/A Function

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Question: I saw mention that Operators would have to submit a security deposit. Can you elaborate on that? How much would it be and what would it be used for?

2. Compliance and Enforcement Program

Feedback: "Once the property has been declared an illegal house we enforce it"

Question: Already there are many illegal basement apartments in my neighbourhood with continuous parking problems. All this does is to frustrate neighbours when help is not there as it should be. How do you expect to manage this new proposal with all the illegal basement apt. that already exist?

Question: As well as controlling the number of rooms, will there be minimum sizes for rooms? Will there be maximum numbers of people per room and per building?

Feedback: Bylaw officers said they couldn't do anything since they couldn't enter homes without being invited in

Question: Can you explain in more detail how the City will identify unlicensed operators?

Question: If possible I would like to ask my question by voice. It's about the ability of bylaw officers to determine that a home may be in violation.

Question: illegal operators often intercept mail such as census and CRA notices. will this be stopped with legalization. They also charge for rent receipts for OW and ODSP recipients who comprise over 10% of Scarborough residents? How will you stop this? will you also enforce operators declaring net rental income for income tax purposes?

Question: Its my understanding bylaws officer do not have the right to enter a home; they must have permission from the owner or tenant. Will this change as often both have am understanding

Question: If you can't contact an illegal Rooming House owner, then how are you currently enforcing the By-Law you enacted?

Feedback: On my street where all semis have 1 garage, tenants are parking on lawns despite the garage and 2 spots on driveway itself....

Feedback: Sorry I couldn't join sooner. I live up inb the Village at York where it seems every fourth house at least is chopped from a single-family home to 6-10 units. In North York where technically it's all illegal.

Question: There are no licenced rooming houses in Scarborough.There are tenents whose houses are being presented for CoA ans TLAB rebuilds who fear contacting police who are not permitted entrance. Any solutions for this injustice?

Question: What confidence is there that any new regulations will help if the ones that exist can't be enforced?

Question: Will there be any requirements on Covid-19 prevention protocols (social distancing, sanitizing, etc.) in the MTH?

3. City-wide Zoning Strategy

Feedback: A rooming house in a condominium it looks like, a 2 bedrooms suite, they owner enclosed the dinning and the living room and deck and make them a rooms.

Question: Following my earlier question, would existing houses with more than 6 rooms be recognized as a "non-conforming use? i.e. would larger houses be allowed to continue with their full complement of tenants? And could they do so should there be a change of ownership

Question: What about rooming house in the condominiums? are those allow?

Question: Given that a large fraction of the construction happening in Toronto today is condominium towers, can you please write the regulations to be compatible with future condo construction that wants to incorporate low-cost multi-unit dwellings?

Question: Will this also capture "co-housing" (i.e. the Golden Girls), and will such arrangements to be licensed and have all the policy standards in place as a supportive MTH would?

Question: Hello! Is student housing/dormitories considered multi-tenant housing? Have post-secondary students and institutions been partnered with in the development of this proposal?

Question: Hi there, this is just a follow up on my earlier question. If people can potentially have more rooms then the regulation for their zone through the appeal, then

why have that limit to start with? Shouldn't the regulation be around what is a sufficient room? And then the issue is just how many can fit in a certain space.

Feedback: I would also support no parking minimums!

Question: If a "rooming house" is built with 4 rooms and 4 separate washrooms and 4 separate small kitchens such that nothing must be shared (which would be Covid-19 friendly I might add), does a house such as this still fall within this new rooming house legislation?

Question: If a non-complying MTH that has more than 6 rooms in it is required to remove rooms to meet the by-law/licensing requirements, will the owner incur a penalty under the rooming house protection policies currently under appeal?

Question: is only one person allowed to live in each room?

Feedback: My concern is that if regulation is done via zoning, this opens things up to minor variances and TLAB appeals (adding risk and $$$ for proponents).

Feedback: No parking minimums.

Question: What is a "modernized housing tribunal"?

Question: For parking, are the 2 parking spaces in addition to, or inclusive of, those required for a dwelling unit that might be on the property?

Question: Room number maximum – why do you have a room number maximum at all? It's not needed for safety because we are already doing a fire code & electrical review.

Question: Some people are renting spaces in a room (usually on the floor) is there any regulation about that?

Question: What development/permit charges can be expected for a property converted from a single-family home to multi-tenant?

Question: What development/permit charges, if any, would be involved if converting a single-family home to be multi-tenant?

Question: What is the rationale for the fixed cap on the number of rooms? Why not linked to the size of the house? I note that if this was applied to the non-profit owned MTHs, the City would immediately lose several hundred deeply affordable rooms

Question: What is the reasoning behind the maximum number of dwelling rooms?

Question: will the parking bylaws be changed to prevent parking by tenants on the streets?

Question: Will there be a limit on the # of rooming houses on in a neighbourhood and street?

Question: will there be a limit on the number of rooming houses allowed in an area?

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Question: Affordability is one of the most important components of housing access (quality doesn't matter a working class Canadian literally cannot afford to live there). This review seems to be a laundry list of ways to make multi-tenant housing more expensive and none to make it cheaper. Have you undertaken any studies to estimate the impact on rents of your proposed changes, and whether that increase in cost is worth the mandated changes?

Question: Hi, I'm living in a rooming house that has a few maintenance issues. Who do I call about windows/heat/plumbing ... Is it 311 or JP?

Feedback: I have a feeling the current amount of fines is minimal because its so hard to prove most homes are illegal rooming houses

Feedback: I rent rooms in my house. I don't serve to the Canadian market. Usually they are mostly international student.

Question: Parking minimum – why? If someone is a low-income worker who wants to rent a cheap home that requires them to walk to the bus so they have enough money to not have to struggle to afford rent AND food AND childcare, why make that illegal?

Question: Thank you for the initiative! Will tenants of current unauthorized buildings be granted a starting rent equal to what they currently pay? If not, is there a way to control rent increase, instead of providing subsidizes?

Question: The framework suggests that all the costs incurred by inspections, maintenance, or necessary upgrades will be paid by the landlords/operators, would that sound punitive to the owners? Is there any chance that a partnership be developed between landlords and the city?

5. Implementation Plan

Question: Will MLS and city agencies take the approach of seeking to legalize and maintain existing units, and have flexibility to ensure more are not lost through enforcement?

Question: will there be any limits on licenses? if so, how will the limits be determined in a way that prevents rampant nimbyism?

Question: Your implementation plan is enforcement first, new licensing second. This means that your plan BY DEFINITION produces a squeeze on the housing stock before any new ones come online, guaranteeing a raise in prices. Why do this in this order? Why not focus on increasing the amount of new compliant housing stock before trying to reduce the amount of existing housing stock?

Question: I very much support the development of this policy framework because rooming houses are an important source of relatively affordable housing. How will the policy support the conversion & legalization of existing unlicensed rooming houses to protect current tenants and retain that stock of affordable housing?

Question: If illegal operators decide to get out of the business and sell out at historically high prices, how will the city deal what could be mass displacement of some very low-income tenants?

Question: Rooming houses are currently illegal in the former city of North York yet are flourishing. What makes you believe they will not transition to a legal framework. enforcement is currently minimal and hard to prove.

Question: Ugh typical scripted call with scripted citizens always in full support. This will ruin my neighborhood & community.

6. Community Engagement / Other

Feedback: but I just want it to be noted what I support

Question: In the past 5 years, how many apartment Buildings were approved by City of Toronto to be built?

Question: An overnight parking ban is in place with no exceptions and aggressive overnight ticketing in Scarborough. This ban was put in place according to former councilors to prevent rooming houses. If legalized, would overnight parking bans be annulled and would street permit parking be implemented in Scarborough?

Question: Any considerations for current family centered neighborhoods/streets? This does not fit well in many neighborhoods. Rent control would be a better avenue to pursue

Question: Do any of the panelist currently have a Rooming House as a neighbor?

Question: Hello, I'd like to know how many people are here today from Scarborough?

Regulatory & Compliance Framework for Multi-Tenant (Rooming) Houses Across Toronto
Community Meeting #2 Summary Report

Prepared by LURA Consulting
May 2021

Introduction

The City licenses multi-tenant houses, commonly known as rooming houses, to ensure that they are safe and well-maintained. The City is proposing the creation of a comprehensive city-wide zoning approach and enhancements to licensing and enforcement to encourage and regulate safe, liveable, well-maintained and affordable multi-tenet houses across the city.

The proposed framework has four parts:

1. Enhanced operator licensing requirements to promote health and safety
2. An enforcement and compliance program
3. City-wide zoning standards that permit the use across the city
4. Initiatives to support tenants and maintain affordability of housing

The City of Toronto hired LURA Consulting to assist the City with the community engagement process in an independent role. This included the development of a consultation and engagement strategy to ensure community and stakeholders are educated about the topic of multi-tenant housing and have an opportunity to provide input on the proposed city-wide framework.

The engagement and communications process included a webpage, social media, leveraging stakeholder networks, public notices, overview presentation, information sheet, print and digital adds, virtual public meetings and stakeholder workshops, online and phone questionnaire, and DIY meeting toolkit – all to provide residents with a variety of engagement opportunities to learn more about the proposed framework and provide feedback.

Community Meeting #2 Description

On Tuesday, May 11th, 2021, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. the City of Toronto held the second community meeting on the regulatory and compliance framework for multi-tenant (rooming) houses across Toronto online using Webex Events. The purpose of this community meeting was:
- Present the proposed regulatory framework;
- Answer questions of clarification; and
- Gather feedback about how the proposed city-wide regulation of multi-tenant houses can be improved.

Participants could join the virtual meeting either online or by phone to listen to the presentation, ask questions, and provide feedback. The meeting included a presentation on the proposed framework from Carola Perez-Book, City Planning and Emma Bowley, Municipal Licensing and Standards. Following the presentations, participants were invited to ask questions and provide feedback verbally or though writing in the WebEx Q&A functions. City staff responded to questions and LURA Consulting recorded feedback received.

The meeting was attended by 121 participants. There were 81 questions and comments received through the Q&A box.

Materials from the meeting can be accessed at http://toronto.ca/MTHreview

The meeting was attended by the following project team members:

- Carola Perez-Book, City of Toronto, City Planning (Zoning)
- Emma Bowley, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Jean Paul Nadeau, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Sherri Hanley, City of Toronto, Housing Secretariat
- Aisha Salim, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Amanda Sinclair, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Michael Hain, City of Toronto, Transportation Planning
- Negin Shamshiri, City of Toronto, Municipal Licensing and Standards
- Jim Faught, LURA Consulting (Co-Facilitator)
- Liz McHardy, LURA Consulting (Co-Facilitator)
- Leah Snowden, LURA Consulting
- Amitai Zand, LURA Consulting
- Sunil Issac, LURA Consulting

What We Heard

The following is a summary of participant feedback gathered through the community meeting. This feedback is aggregated and organized thematically.

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Participants concerned about the upkeep of the properties and its impact on the well-being of tenants and neighbourhoods, advised the need for more clarity in the application of property standards. Garbage disposal, particularly, was raised as a major concern when it comes to licensed or unlicensed multi-tenant housing operations.

2. Enforcement & Compliance

Participants emphasized tenant education, and in particular, that tenants are made aware of their rights and the application of these rights in situations where they are violated by the landlords. Participants stressed the need for developing and improving programs and services aimed at tenant education and support. As part of supporting tenants, participants also recommended that City staff devise approaches to deal with tenants who are violating by-law requirements and causing concerns for both operators and neighbourhoods.

Participants expressed frustration with operators and tenants that remain disrespectful to neighbourhoods and stressed the need for a more robust and less cumbersome system of reporting such operators and tenants.

3. City-wide Zoning

Several contrasting opinions were presented by participants on issues relevant to parking and proximity to transit. Some noted that parking standards should not be reduced on the basis of proximity to transit as it can lead to a concentration of multi-tenant houses in certain transit-accessible neighbourhoods. Others noted that multi-tenant houses in areas with good transit access support tenants of vulnerable populations who may not be able to afford a car and require affordable housing options with access to public transit.

With various other planning initiatives currently underway in the city, participants emphasized the need for increased coordination among different initiatives to develop knowledge that can better inform the proposed framework for the city-wide expansion of multi-tenant housing.

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Participants discussed the possible high costs involved with bringing properties into full compliance with proposed by-law requirements, and the potential limitation of any incentive program that can adequately support operators in a substantial way. Participants encouraged City staff to proactively work at establishing relationships with financial institutions and lenders to create loans and financing options for operators. Noting that financial institutions often view rooming houses with a stigma, participants recommended that City staff must have a plan in place to address the issue of stigmatization associated with multi-tenant housing as they engage financial institutions.

On supporting tenants in vulnerable situations, the participants expressed the need for more clarity in how the proposed multi-tenant housing strategy would accommodate the needs of people with disabilities. As well, with rent being a key factor in maintaining affordability of multi-tenant housing, participants advised City staff to consider placing limits on rents for multi-tenant housing units to avoid the possibility of rent increases for properties transitioning to legal status.

In relations to the engagement efforts especially involving students participants noted the struggles international students face in securing reasonable, safe, affordable housing. Keeping in view how vulnerable students can be, participants stressed the need to involve them throughout the project process.

5. Implementation Plan

Participants expressed uncertainty in how the City will bring illegal rooming houses into compliance with limited enforcement resources and powers. Participants advised the City to devise their strategies and approaches to identifying and enforce illegal

operators and the resources that may be involved based on the reality of the high number of illegal rooming houses spread across the city and the many challenges that they are posing to the City, the tenants, as well as the neighbourhoods.

A suggestion was presented that technology be made use of to streamline the system and make it more efficient. In particular, technology was noted as a way that the proposed framework can be best aligned with programs like RentSafeTO. It was suggested that digital information can have the ability to centralize health and safety audits, reporting and enforcement codes and standards, increase tenant representation and visibility in decision making, create access to landlord-tenant board records in partnership with the province and provide needs-based referrals and supports.

Participants expressed concerns with the possibility of displacement and encouraged the need for developing housing partnerships especially involving hotels and shelters. Participants reminded City staff that the best way for the City to align itself with its human rights lens is to find ways to build more affordable housing.

In emphasizing the need for an equitable distribution of multi-tenant housing across the city, participants advised the City to study the infrastructure and uniqueness of each neighbourhood. On rooming houses protection, participants encouraged City staff to look into Right of First Refusal plan for social housing or affordable housing. As well, City staff were asked to consider if the rooming houses can be sold to other multi-tenant housing operators.

Next Steps

The community engagement and consultation process will continue with other stakeholder meetings, public meetings, online and phone questionnaire and community-led consultations using the DIY Workshop. LURA Consulting, will prepare a final engagement summary report for city staff to inform the next steps of the project process.

Appendix A – Verbal Feedback, Questions, Responses

The following provides a summary of questions received verbally through the community meeting. Similar questions have been combined for brevity and organized thematically and is not a verbatim dictation.

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Property Standards, Other Requirements

Question: What will the City's plan or standard for garbage disposal?

Response: Operators will need to provide a Property Standard Plan for the city to review and approve. Through this plan the operators will have to demonstrate how

exactly are they going to maintain their property which would include a waste management plan.

Question: Is the sprinkler system a requirement under the new framework?

Response: We will be working with Toronto Fire on annual inspections. As part of the inspections the fire inspectors will determine such needs as sprinkler systems and work with operators to complete such requirements.

2. Enforcement & Compliance

Education & Outreach

Feedback: We are finding that tenants are often not aware of their rights as tenants.

Question: Do you have programs to educate tenants on their rights as well as how they will be supported with complaints pertaining to violation of their rights?

Response: The Housing Secretariat has developed information material to educate tenants on their rights and how they can be assisted when their rights are violated. We have recently updated our website with relevant content available in plain language. We will be looking to work with various partners including post-secondary institutions and students in developing relevant materials.

Question: How will you deal with tenants who violate any by-law requirements?

Response: Operator and tenant education will be an essential part of our compliance and enforcement program where we will be prioritizing tenant and operator education and any relevant supports to ensure that operators and tenants remain compliant and respectful to neighbourhoods.

Question: Is the City a member of the Town & Gown Association of Ontario?

Response: We have a partnership table with post-secondary institutions where we are discussing different relevant issues including affordable housing. City staff will have to check and see if there is a membership with the Town & Gown Association of Ontario specifically.

3. City-wide Zoning

Parking / Proximity to Transit

Feedback: If we reduce the parking standards on the basis of proximity to transit we will put more accessible neighbourhoods on the radar again leading to concentrations. There needs to be equitable distribution of multi-tenant houses throughout the city. The more affluent neighbourhoods need to absorb their fair share as well.

Feedback: The concern is about people who are looking for affordable housing, end up in a rooming housing with bad transit and, thus, forced to buy a car which they, in the first place, can't even afford. This will perpetuate the poverty trap that many people are living under.

Question: Why can't we limit rooming houses to good transit zones instead of spreading them all over the city?

Response: A large majority of neighbourhoods are close to transit. However, we understand that not all transit is created equal. There are many illegal multi-tenant houses that exist all across the city, regardless of transit access, which tells us that these are the kind of choices that people are already making. The purpose of expanding the zoning permissions, to be consistent city-wide, is to enable multi-tenant housing as an affordable housing option across all neighbourhoods and to be sure that when those options are taken advantage of that they are done with regulations and licensing to ensure safety.

Meeting Zoning Requirements

Question: How will an operator know which zone they are in such that they know the relevant zoning requirements?

Response: We are proposing a maximum of 6 dwelling rooms in most residential areas. We will remain accessible to operators for any zoning or licensing related questions they may have pertinent to their specific situations.

Conversion of Multi-tenant Houses

Question: Will a multi-tenant house stay a multi-tenant house or can it be converted into a single-family unit?

Response: Multi-tenant houses can be converted into single-family units since they were originally a single-family unit before they were converted into a multi-tenant house.

Multi-tenant Houses & Other Planning Initiatives

Question: Are you coordinating on other planning initiatives involving garden suites or laneway housing?

Response: We are in constant communication with our zoning colleagues as we consider various types of housing and if there is a need to come up with any associated regulation to support this work we will do that.

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Operator Support

Question: Has the City made any progress with financial institutions and lenders to create credit options to help operators?

Response: The City has several programs that support partnerships around financing. The Housing Secretariat has had meetings with different financial institutions and Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) around different models of financing. This is an important issue and we are continuing to work on it.

Question: How is the City going to respond to the issue of stigmatization that results from financial institutions perception of rooming houses as places that are undesirable?

Response: One reason for expanding and legalizing rooming houses is to make multi-tenant houses more acceptable. This is one way that we can deal with the issue of stigmatization.

Tenant Support

Question: What is the City doing to accommodate people with disabilities?

Response: A number of multi-tenant houses exist as personal care units and meant for people with different types of disabilities. As part of the new framework a number of robust changes have been proposed to how the personal care multi-tenant houses are operated to best facilitate the needs of tenants with disabilities.

Question: Will there be any limit on rent for multi-tenant houses?

Response: Rent is regulated by the provincial government. The City does not set or limit rents.

Feedback: Student voices have been underrepresented in multi-tenant housing discussions in the past, and in particular, the international students have a lot of difficulty finding housing.

Question: What consultations were being conducted and available for post-secondary students? What exactly are you hoping to hear from post-secondary students regarding the framework?

Response: Students are one of the stakeholder groups we are hosting specific meetings with. We are looking to hear from them on all four components of the framework and get feedback on their personal experiences with multi-tenant housing. We want to hear what would help them as they are navigating affordable housing. There is also a Do-It-Yourself (DIY) Workshop kit that is also available to engage students in this important conversation.

5. Implementation Plan

<u>Licensing of Illegal Multi-tenant Houses</u>

Question: How will you get operators to seriously consider getting licensed?

Response: We want to utilize three strategies to help landlords become licensed. First, ensure access to licensing is accessible to operators. Second, introduce enhanced enforcement tools. Third, provide incentives for landlords to meet compliance standards.

Question: Can the City provide us with an estimate on the total number of illegal multi-tenant houses in the city?

Response: Currently, there are 400 licensed rooming houses but the number of illegal houses can't be confirmed.

Question: If a rooming house operator is difficult to get a hold of and / or operating the property remotely how would MLS deal with such a situation?

Response: Our experience has been that there is normally an individual at the facility who can be contacted. If, and when necessary, there are different levels of enforcement that we can utilize in order to establish contact with property owners and those who have some element of control over the property.

Question: What can be done with a landlord who continues to ignore tenant complaints around issues like fumigation?

Response: Tenants and community members can present such complaints to us framing them as issues relevant to property maintenance. We will keep the complaint anonymous and will take the necessary steps to engage the operator on such complaints.

Question: How will the compliance and enforcement be carried out knowing the fact that illegal rooming houses are all over the city and without a search warrant one can never know if the house exists legally or illegally?

Response: There are various ways by which we are able to identify and address illegal rooming houses. When complaints are received, we carry out investigations and, if and where necessary, we issue notices and orders to operators who remain non-complaint. With a dedicated, expanded team under the new framework we will visit the illegal rooming houses and engage the operators on licensing and zoning by-laws. Generally, our enforcement strategy would include increased fines on operators who are failing to comply with the new requirements.

Question: How many enforcement officers will be hired, and on what basis the budget for such an expense has been determined?

Response: The City will be looking at hiring up to 28 new enforcement officers. We have come up with the estimate on the budget that will be needed to expand our enforcement resources based on the modeling that has been done on various affordable housing programs with enforcement component attached to them (e.g., RentSafeTO). We will be presenting our budget on expanded enforcement resources to the Planning and Housing Committee and Council for approval.

Phased Approach

Question: How much time is it going to take to implement this new framework? Will these phases of implementation work concurrently or consecutively?

Response: The implementation of the framework will be a multi-year, gradual process where we will start with focusing on bringing existing operators into compliance through expansion of a dedicated enforcement team, and then work with new operators as they apply to get licensed.

Innovation & Technology

Question: Have we looked into co-designing and use of technology in developing this framework? How has this been aligned with programs like RentSafeTO and how this could be converted into a digital platform that would centralize health and safety audits, reporting and enforcement codes and standards, increase tenant representation and visibility in decision making, create access to landlord-tenant board record in partnership with the province and provide needs-based referrals and supports?

Response: As part of our implementation plan we are looking to launch a new licensing system with a digital platform. We are learning lessons from RentSafeTO but we are also looking to create a dedicated system for multi-tenant houses in the future and all the goals mentioned will be taken into consideration.

Displacement / Emergency Relocation

Question: Does the City have a partnership with hotels and shelters for emergency transition services recognizing the fact that the implementation of this framework may result in people losing their housing?

Response: There is work being done on City's broader approach to emergency relocations if any facility needs to be shut down for Fire or Building Code violations. There is an inter-divisional staff team that has been put together to address this issue. While we do have access to hotels and shelters we are also working on a more proactive approach.

Question: What part of the City has the greatest need for multi-tenant housing? If human rights do matter why is the City not doing enough to build affordable housing?

Response: Need exists all over the City. As a planning policy we want to create complete communities. We want to provide different options for housing across the city.

Neighbourhood-Related

Question: How has the City taking into account the current infrastructures (schools, transit, garbage disposal etc.) in neighbourhods where rooming houses have not been permitted in the past and are now going to be permitted?

Response: When the City undertook a city-wide review of secondary suites recently one of the things that was considered was the infrastructure of the neighbourhoods because of the concern that by increasing secondary suites we are increasing the number of people in neighbourhoods city-wide. We actually discovered during the review that the infrastructure was actually designed to accommodate a large number of people because of the larger family sizes. In terms of schools and other services it is something that City planning reviews when we are considering certain intensities of development, for example, where a large site is being re-developed or a large tower is being proposed with hundreds of units but in this case we don't think the increase will be at such a level that it would require that level of consideration.

Question: Are there any limits being established for different neighbourhoods to ensure more equitable distribution of dwelling rooms?

Response: Implementing new zoning regulations has to be done on the basis of land use impacts that are well demonstrated and easy to see. We have attempted to address issues of distribution in the past through separation distances however we have not found this to address concerns with land-use impacts.

Question: Is there a pathway to report on landlords and illegal rooming houses?

Response: You can contact 311 either by phone or email.

Feedback: If you allow multi-tenant houses in apartment buildings you will start driving families out of these buildings.

Question: Where are these figures of $400-700 / month for multi-tenant houses coming from for the neighbourhood where I live the average rent for a rooming house starts from $800 upwards?

Response: These figures are from a study that the City undertook that reviewed the private rental market. This included licensed multi-tenant houses data and may have included some unlicensed properties.

Multi-tenant Housing Protection

Question: Has the City looked into a Right of First Refusal plan for social housing or affordable housing; something that does exist in Montreal and basically prevents landlords from going straight to the market to sell their properties?

Response: We do not have the same policy in place as municipal authorities in Quebec are different from Ontario. The City can look into this further.

Question: Does the City have a policy in place to protect rooming houses?

Response: The City had recently amended the official plan to include some new policies on dwelling rooms protection. Unfortunately, it has been appealed and thus, currently, there is no active policy in place.

Question: Can a rooming house that has existed for many years be sold to another multi-tenant operator? Are there any organizations like Parkdale Activity Recreation Centre (PARC), Parkdale Neighbourhood Land Trust (PNLT), that City is aware of that can take over existing rooming houses and maintain them as rooming houses?

Response: Yes, a multi-tenant house can be sold to another operator. The city is aware of organizations to work with on the acquisition of rental properties and has worked with PNLT in Parkdale in the past.

Question: Will there be some sort of a partnership or arrangement with the private developers and non-profits under which the land can be offered by the City for affordable housing?

Response: Incentives, including fees waived will be offered to operators, including private developers and non-profit groups, in exchange for maintaining affordability of housing.

Appendix B – Written Feedback and Questions Received Via WebEx Q/A Function

1. Enhanced Licensing Framework

Feedback: Increased regulations create greater likelihood for investors/operators to invest their capital/energies elsewhere, which works against the City's objective to increase affordable housing stock.

Feedback: As a large supportive housing program landlords tell us they are intimidated by the work it takes to become licensed, especially if its a house with 4 tenants. They often ask LOFT to take this on and get a multi tenant unit licensed. It takes a long time and a lot of manpower to accomplish this. Can we include this as an incentive to have funds available to purchase this from supportive housing programs to take this on. Its an expertise we can take on but need funding to hire people to work with the City.

2. Compliance and Enforcement Program

Question: Are the enforcement officers going to deal with the overcrowding issue?

Question: Are the enforcement officers going to be given powers to deal with tenants violating fire hazardous, such as hot plates, removing smoke detectors?

Question: Illegal tenants currently living in illegal rooming houses have NO interest or commitment to the community they are renting in. They throw garbage in the street as well as thousands of cigarette butts and don't care about the area or environment. What will the CIty do to stop this disrepect of property and streets?

Question: Tenants to report their landlords?

Question: Within a 5 second to 2 minute walk from my house there are at least 10 illegal rooming houses - do you really believe that they will register and what is the City going to do to stop this? Inspectors are non-existent and IF one comes they don't go in and then send a report that there is NO rooming house?

Feedback: Single-family homes are being renovated every day to be illegal rooming houses and turning every room into a bedroom and NOT being inspected. 3 bedroom homes are now becoming 8 + bedrooms and collecting $60,000 - $120,000. per year tax free?!

Question: Suggestion: In addition to these improvements and deployment of inspectors, there should be a confidential Hotline set up outside of 311 for tenants to inform MLS about issues.

Question: With all the illegal basement apartments in Scarborough and all related parking problems, what steps will be taken and how can we be assured that landlords will comply with acceptable standards the city is proposing? Ps: There is no compliance now!

Question: What are some of the enforcement tools mentioned in order to bring non-compliant operators into compliance?

Question: What about houses where there are 3 or 4 people in one room? I have visited such houses in Toronto as well as Scarborough. We have brought MANY to your attention and nothing is being done about it - so please don't say that something will be done when it doesn't happen

Question: Please expand on how the city plans to provide meaningful enforcement. For example, the presentation referenced a "modernized housing tribunal" - is this realistic, given that the Landlord and Tenant Board is a provincial body? (2) For inspections of rooming houses - will these be complaint-based or regular, scheduled inspections?

Feedback: This licensing framework seems to protect the city of Toronto but there is nothing to protect the current homeowners that own their own homes.

Question: The success of the framework will very much rest on the ability to enforce. Do you anticipate that you will have enough staff and be able to respond quickly enough to complaints? If not, this could very quickly become a political issue. I think, for example, about the recent issues that have occurred with hotels being used in residential neighbourhoods for housing the poor (e.g. complaints of certain unsavoury activity on streets etc.).

3. City-wide Zoning Strategy

Feedback: 6 dwelling rooms in a multi tenant house is far too many. The limits are placed on apartment and condominium construction. The legalization of multi tenant housing will create mini apartments on streets not zoned as such. Limit the dwelling rooms to 4.

Feedback: Definition of multi-tenant house should be for a building with three or more dwelling rooms.

Question: Need clarity in the definition in case of multi-tenant housing use within apartment buildings. If an apartment building, with a number of suites, has dwelling rooms within them how are the following scenarios considered?

- Is it 4 dwelling rooms per dwelling unit in the case of an apartment building? Or
- if there are multiple dwelling rooms across multiple suites does it cross the threshold because they are more than four in an entire building?

Question: Would there be coordination with other planning officials working on garden houses/coach houses because it would be horrible to have both kinds in individual properties in your neighborhood?

Question: Is there a minimum room size for dwelling rooms?

Feedback: Rather than an 'as of right' permission in all residential neighbourhoods, consideration could be given to carving out a section of a low-density residential neighbourhood, back to a certain depth, within an area that is adjacent to an arterial with transit, where lodging houses would be a permitted use.

Question: Suggestion re definition: A multi tenant house is a dwelling unit that contains more than three dwelling rooms. I think this will bring a lot of clarity to the apartment case. Otherwise, there will be way too many strange cases that get trapped by the definition. Think of a 100 dwelling unit apartment building. If it has one two bedroom that a landlord is renting to two students. And then one other landlord rents another two bedroom to two students the building would now require a multi-tenant license.

Question: Will condominiums be included in this initiative to provide extra housing in the city?

Question: Will amendments to the City-wide zoning by-law introduce multi-tenant houses as a permissible use in residential zones such as RD/RS?

Feedback: When the limit of multi-tenant housing on a street is not written into the new multi tenant housing it is "discriminatory" against residents who have worked a life time to own and enjoy a single family dwelling on a street with other single family dwellings. Limits on the street need to be in place.

Question: What is definition of a cooking facility? is a bar fridge in a dwelling room a cooking facility? or bar fridge with microwave? Or just a countertop? Will this be defined more clearly?

Feedback: The updated definition should be for a building with three or more dwelling rooms. The proposed 4 or more dwelling rooms is high and should be reduced.

Feedback: The proposed maximum number of dwelling rooms in a multi-tenant house should be 5 rooms since it is in a residential neighbourhood.

4. Supporting Tenants and Maintaining Housing Affordability

Feedback: I strongly recommend a tenant Bill of Rights that is posted in public view. Maximum capacity/rooms should be shown. In my neighborhood, landlords are maximizing floors space. My neighbor observed a dozen mattresses delivered to one house.

Question: Mortgage brokers have explained to me that basically the options are private lenders but they are laying terms that are unfavourable (very high rates etc.). Also, can the City facilitate greater insurance options? There are also very few options according to insurance brokers that exist to legally insure multi-tenant housing. Again, this results in high insurance costs that landlords must bear. This costs ultimately are passed on to the tenants and/or results in disincentivizing landlords from operating multi-tenant houses.

Feedback: Regarding possible incentives these are excellent and sharing this with supportive housing (like LOFT Community Services) providers so we can share with landlords. Many landlords will not find out otherwise. So communication strategy is as important as offering incentives so they get accessed. Thanks

Question: So your saying taxpayers are going to fund these retrofits?

Question: Who at the City can I contact to explore the financing that you mentioned?

5. Implementation Plan

Question: Are inspectors a different group of staff from enforcement 0fficers? If so, how many inspectors are you going to ask the City for?

Question: For areas where rooming houses have not been permitted but do exist how will you begin to enforce these rules? Many operators don't live in these houses; some do not even live in the country. Where would you start?

Feedback: FYI; we have heard that in Scarborough many apartments are already being used as multi-tenant houses.

Question: In which part of the city is the greatest need for multi-tenant housing?

Feedback: It seems the City is interested in creating greater affordable housing opportunities throughout the city, but if access to finance these forms of housing is severely limited and stigmatized by lenders, even if investors/landlords wish to support this initiative there will not be any money available to facilitate/support growth of this important housing stock.

Question: Scarborough has been considered the Wild West re unlicensed apartments, rooms etc. Twenty enforcement officers wouldn't even be able to deal with 2 wards in Scarborough. I see it as an enforcement nightmare considering that only the fire department currently can enter the home to investigate a complaint or identifying an illegal unit? Have the panel members considered the impact on the Fire Department?

Question: Single-family homes were NEVER built to be rooming houses. That is why illegal rooming houses will never register and definitely wouldn't pay fees to the City. What do you think about garages being turned into rooms for rent? at a cost of $1,200/ month?

Question: Will there be development charges during legalization process?

Question: What is the timeline for each phase of this project?

Question: What are the next steps? Is it true that these proposals are going to be tabled/approved in June 2021?

6. Community Engagement

Question: Will this meeting be recorded and posted?

Question: I would like to ask my questions by voice please

Question: When is best time to ask questions?

Question: Thank you for your work on this initiative. I myself was a beneficiary of rooming houses when I first moved to Toronto and I am eager to see them legalized. With an understanding of the importance of safety, but also of the costs of compliance, I am pleased to see that there will be an alternative compliance to the OBC. What kind of consultation and research is being done to develop this material and to ensure that these measures will indeed be cost-effective?

Feedback: That involves both neighbourhood groups and the institutions Just talking top UofT and York etc. isn't enough

7. Other Relevant

Need for Affordable Housing

Question: If this is a human rights issue then why is the City not doing more to build more affordable housing or ask for province's help in building more affordable community housing?

Feedback: My question was essentially: RentSafeTO is a failure of a program; how will this program be better? And the answer was "we're modelling staffing requirements based on RentSafeTO. " LOL Thankyou.

Feedback: Scarborough does not have public transit to support multi-tenant housing and the many proposed condominium developments. City Council needs to consider putting in place the transit and services for "people" before the population is increased. Crowded and inconsistent buses and congested streets already exist. Public Transit needs to be addressed before legalizing multi tenant housing