

John Long

From: Ben Ewen-Campen <benforward3@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 10, 2019 11:06 PM
To: John Long; Daniel Bartman
Subject: Forwarded Public Comment on Accessory Dwelling Units

Dear John & Dan -

Can you please forward the public comment regarding Accessory Dwelling Units to the Council? Testimony was sent to me from Sonia Lipson, 22 Prospect Hill Ave., sonialipson@yahoo.com:

"My name is Sonia Lipson and I reside at 22 Prospect Hill Avenue, a property I have owned for over 30 years.

I am writing today to add my voice to the conversation around how the city pursues the building of accessory housing and specifically, the possibility of converting existing structures into additional housing.

I bought my property with a coach house adjacent to the two family home I moved into with my family and a renter. For years, we were deterred from repairing the structure, which was beautiful (it actually had a hay loft and farm equipment still) but falling apart. When the building started to lean into our home, we needed to decide quickly to do something. In 2006 I was able to get permission to tear the building down (as it had already been condemned) and to rebuild on the same foot print a building that would resemble the coach house but with all the upgrades needed.

With time, many things changed in my life, I have a daughter who is mentally ill, needed the companion of a dog, and was difficult to live with. Originally I had my partner stay in the house, separated but that became impossible, so with time we had him informally stay in the back building. He became ill with

cancer, at which time I needed to upgrade the building to accommodate him, and with time he settled in very happily, with the full knowledge of our community.

However, we were both aware we were in non compliance and also aware that one neighbor apparently didn't want to let us 'live in peace' so contacted the city to complain. I was forced to hire a lawyer and 'make arrangements', which then resulted in my partner moving out completely.

I have hoped for years to be able to create a small home for my mother, my mother-in-law, and or myself, so that I continue to stay in my home here and share the property. I should also mention that for a brief time I also had my disabled brother (who had been in the hospital for 2 months with multiple fractures) stay in the building as he was unable to climb stairs at his own home.

I understand that the city is now reconsidering their policy about converting outer buildings into housing. I believe that this would not only be a god send for me in my very difficult situation, but a benefit for so much of the community. I have tried several times to discuss the options for conversion with my aldermen in the past with great discouragement, but now it sounds like their exists the possibility for change.

I hope the city will take the opportunity to help people like myself, who are not well off but are blessed with the possibility of extending our options to create affordable living arrangements for our families.

Thank you."

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Ben Ewen-Campen
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