

Subject: FW: Secondary Suites

Date: Sun, 10 Apr 2005 20:27:52 -0700

From: "Ernie Crist" <ernie_crist@dnv.org>

To: <fonvca@fonvca.org>

Subject: RE: Secondary Suites

Dear Dr.

From the municipal government point of view, taxing secondary suites is, in many ways attractive since, in most cases, such suites result in higher costs to the municipality. Also, in most cases they provide the owners with additional income which, in the absence of a progressive taxation policy when it comes to local government in Canada, appears only fair and equitable.

Generally speaking, secondary suites do result in higher cost to the municipality for such items as water, sewage, waste and other demands on services. Still, I have serious reservations. This is because the District of North Vancouver has for many years and continues to this very day a policy of subsidising the City of North Vancouver via our present recreation agreement when there is no justification for it other than for purely political reasons.

The City of North Vancouver is building the high-rises and we are building the playing fields. The District has 3 swimming pools and the City has one but it is not contributing a single penny towards the capital maintenance of District pools eventhough the population in the City is more than half of what it is in the District.

This is only possible because the people in the District do not complain and seem not to care one iota that their taxes are being used for that purpose even though it has been pointed out to them a thousand times and in a thousand different ways.

There is an old saying that those who don't sew up the hole in their purse will end up short. The point is that the people in the District have never said boo and so the bleeding is continuing. That this is dumb by any standard apparently does not bother them. In the meantime, the District is short of money and is trying to get it by way of least resistance, namely the District taxpayers.

Needless to say, I do not agree with that, but since nobody listens it will surely continue; hence the secondary suite charge.

It may be of interest to you also that in the last 12 years taxes in the District have gone from the second lowest in the region to the second highest. This too does not seem to bother the District residents and neither does it upset them or so it seems that during that same time the District Heritage Fund amounting to hundreds of millions dollars has been used up more or less, not to speak of the fact that, unlike any other municipality in the region, the District today is without any infrastructure reserve fund which in 1997 stood at \$91 million.

Apathy can cost a great deal of money. On the other hand ignorance, albeit by choice, is bliss or so the saying goes.

You are undoubtedly familiar with the Elois who were being used as food by the Moorlocks in H.G. Wells' "Time Machine". This is another way of saying we get what we deserve.

Be that as it may, I have done my duty and pointed this out a thousand times and so have others but to no avail. Indeed, those who have, were either not elected and/or were kicked off Council. The message is clear. Don't upset the public with facts for they will never forgive you.

Indeed those who are in the main responsible for this fiasco not to speak of scandals like Northlands, KPMG, Canlan etc., have been promoted to higher office - I rest my case.

And finally, should you wish to verify what I have said above, I would urge you not to consult elected officials but people such as Dr. Corry Kost, Brian Platts, David Sadler and Allan Orr for example who are outstanding individuals and know what is going on in the District and have seen the scenario unfold for years.

Yours truly,

Ernie Crist

Sent: Sunday, April 10, 2005 11:50 AM
To: DNVCouncil
Subject: Secondary Suites

Dear DNV Council

I have dutifully filled in my secondary suite declaration. I do not have a problem with this and understand that there are additional taxes to having a secondary suite. Still, I feel I have to get it off my chest and let Council know how I feel about this.

We (my wife and I) would never rent out our suite. It provides accommodation (as well as dignity) to a senior citizen ('grandma') who might otherwise be forced to seek subsidized (tax payer subsidy) housing in order to live. I now feel that I am looking after our elderly (at our expense) and being taxed additionally. If your intent was to tax us for housing an extended family, then perhaps a Poll tax might be more useful. If your intent was to tax second kitchens, I appreciate that.

Having said that, I feel a bit 'bummed' about having my extended family taxed when there are so many around me renting illegal suites, some with kitchens and others without, who may not be complying with district regulations, not declaring their 'income' and utilizing district services on non-family members. If the District's intent was to 'regulate' illegal suites, then I think you should re-think how it was done and consider that you may have just made it harder for some (we'll survive) to house their parents with dignity. I think you should first crack down on the illegal suites not meeting district regulations with undeclared incomes. Please consider that this puts me in an awkward situation as I do not wish to raise the hackles of my dear neighbours, of which nearly 50% of them have illegal suites. Consider that I am a bit rankled at the thought that I will be dutifully paying the tax whereby many (who should) will not!

Anyways, I have it off my chest. I understand that District Council has done their best to deal with this prickly situation and will support it. Short of running for council myself (I don't intend to, I assure you), I appreciate your efforts.



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