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Prince Edward Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission  
P.O. Box 577  
Charlottetown, PE C1A 7L1  
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To: The Island Regulatory and Appeals Commission,

re: LA19016 Matthew Richard v. City of Charlottetown

On October 7, 2019, the Planning & Heritage Department issued advice to the Planning Board that they recommend to Council to approved the request for lot consolidation of 91 King St, 93 King St, 94-98 Dorchester St, & 100-102 Dorchester St., in conjunction with alterations to required lot frontage and setbacks for bonus height eligibility purposes. The intention of this recommendation is to allow for the construction of 5-storey, 43-unit apartment building, via the demolition of 21 occupied affordable rental homes, which was approved by Council on October 15, 2019.

The project as proposed will require provision for public benefit, which could include affordable housing dwelling units, amongst 7 other options arguably easier to achieve by the developer yet less important to a community experiencing a housing crisis, with a rental vacancy rate close to 1%. Furthermore, the required amount of public benefit in exchange for the density will not be sufficient to deal with the displacement resulting from this proposal if it proceeds.

Though the lot consolidation and request for density bonus superficially aligns with the intent and purpose of the Official Community Plan (OCP), including the promotion of compact urban form and infill development (Section 3.1.2), there is a blatant disregard for Section 3.3, Housing Needs and Variety.

Though the intention of encouraging in-fill development is reasonable, it is not reasonable to expect existing residential populations to be disproportionately and unjustifiably harmed in the process. It is also unethical to prioritize the addition of new housing stock with complete disregard for local area demographics, especially the existing 21 households poised to be displaced.

According to the [Canadian Rental Housing Index](#), average rent in Charlottetown is \$861 per month. Forty-one per cent (41%) or approximately 3,400 renter households spend over 30% of their income on rent and utilities, placing them in Core Housing Need as defined by the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC). Nineteen (19%) or approximately 1,575 households spend over 50% of their income on rent and utilities.

The forced relocation of 21 lower-income renter households likely already facing extraordinary cost burdens, in a City with particularly limited rental housing stock, with no relocation support (monetary or otherwise) and no first right of refusal to return upon occupancy of the new development, contradicts the intent and purpose of the OCP to ensure adequate housing supply to all residents.

In order to “ensure that there is an adequate supply and variety of affordable housing for all sectors of the population” (OCP 2020, Section 3.3, p. 20), it is imperative that those in power recognize the intentional and unintentional consequences of the projects they are approving, and use their authority to amend policies and apply development controls to ensure that advancing municipal and private objectives does not cause undue harm to residents.

As Development Manager with the Community Land Trust Group of Societies located in Vancouver, BC, I am responsible for the development and redevelopment of a number of projects that have the potential to result in displacement. However, as an organization we actively work to ensure that no existing resident is displaced without consistent and ongoing support, and with first right of refusal to return upon occupancy. It is precisely because of

the work that I do that I additionally recognize the importance and benefit to adding additional rental housing stock to Charlottetown's downtown core, but it should not be in spite of existing residents.

Expressly where major variances to the Official Community Plan are being requested, the City should, at a minimum, expect that the developer will work closely with current residents to find appropriate solutions for interim or permanent housing, and to be invited back at their current rents for the entirety of their tenancy. Furthermore, particularly during a housing crisis, the City has an obligation as articulated through the intent and purpose of the OCP, to ensure adequate supply for all residents, not just those who can afford luxury and/or new private market rental suites. One appropriate action for the municipality that would help meet all OCP objectives would be to seek opportunities for the inclusion of perpetually affordable housing in every residential development, but at a minimum, the City should use its powers requiring the proposed public benefit in exchange for the added density be for the provision of Affordable Housing Dwelling Units in perpetuity with first right of refusal given to existing households to return at their current rental rates.

Professional Planners are obligated to adhere to fundamental responsibilities, as governed by the Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) and the associated Provincial and Territorial Institutes and Associations (PTIAs), to adhere to a prescribed set of codes of conduct and ethics in order to uphold their responsibility to the Public Interest. It is expressly stated in the Canadian Institute of Planning (CIP) [Code of Conduct](#) that for a Planner to uphold their responsibility to the public interest, Members shall:

1.3 acknowledge the inter-related nature of planning decisions and the consequences for natural and human environments; and

1.4 provide opportunities for meaningful participation and education in the planning process to all interested parties.

Moreover, the Atlantic Planning Institute's (API) [Code of Ethics](#) states that in order to comply with the ethical responsibilities of planning professionals, members must:

2.4 Balance the interests of communities with the interests of individuals.

Due to the lack of notice provided to residents of the affected properties, of 1) the lot consolidation application and, 2) of the general intent that via this lot consolidation the buildings are to eventually be demolished and residents displaced with no compensation or support, indicates that CIP Code of Conduct item 1.4 noted above has not been closely adhered to.

Due to the lack of consideration for the displacement of 21 households as a "shortcoming" of the proposal, as articulated in the analysis presented by the Planning and Heritage Department to the Planning Board on October 7, 2019, presents a disregard for items 1.3 of the CIP Code of Conduct and 2.4 of the API Code of Ethics as outlined above.

Due to the information presented above, it is my opinion that the recommendation to approve this proposal was based on a narrow analysis of project shortcomings and potential impact. It is my opinion that the Planning Board should reconsider this lot consolidation proposal, recognizing the Official Community Plan inconsistencies inherent to the project, and work to reconcile the significantly harmful and traumatic impact the proposed development will have on the existing residents.

Sincerely,



Lilly Wilson, MCRP  
*Development Manager, Community Land Trust Group of Societies*