



## **ROCKLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD ASSOCIATION**

June 4, 2015

Mayor and Council, Victoria

Dear Mayor and Council,

It is with real disappointment and alarm that we respond to the Draft Recommendations from the Task Force on Affordable Housing.

Neighbourhood associations are led by volunteers democratically elected to represent their residents. They spend countless hours on land use issues. That not a single N.A. is on the Task Force is completely unacceptable. The unrealistically short time line provided for our response to the recommendations that we had no share in creating adds to the insult.

Several of the Task Force's recommendations would have negative impacts on our neighbourhood that we would strongly oppose. Consider, for example, "allowing rezoning applications for affordable housing projects to bypass the pre-application meeting required with Community Association Land Use Committees," and "removing the rezoning requirement with the Garden Suite Policy." Disenfranchising those people most impacted by development from their full role in ensuring it is appropriate or desirable will serve only to frustrate and anger them. Is this the new face of civic engagement?

Two of the threats most likely to cause concern in a neighbourhood are increased density and building heights, yet one recommendation is to "allow for higher densities and greater heights than permitted within existing zones." To what purpose zoning?

The Task Force's mandate was to "engage the public and stakeholder groups as appropriate to develop recommendations." If the neighbourhood associations are not considered to be "stakeholders," the City has little notion of what community engagement really is.

Sincerely,

Janet Simpson, President