

Detached Secondary Suites

Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law Amendments

Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee (PAC/HAC)

October 13, 2022



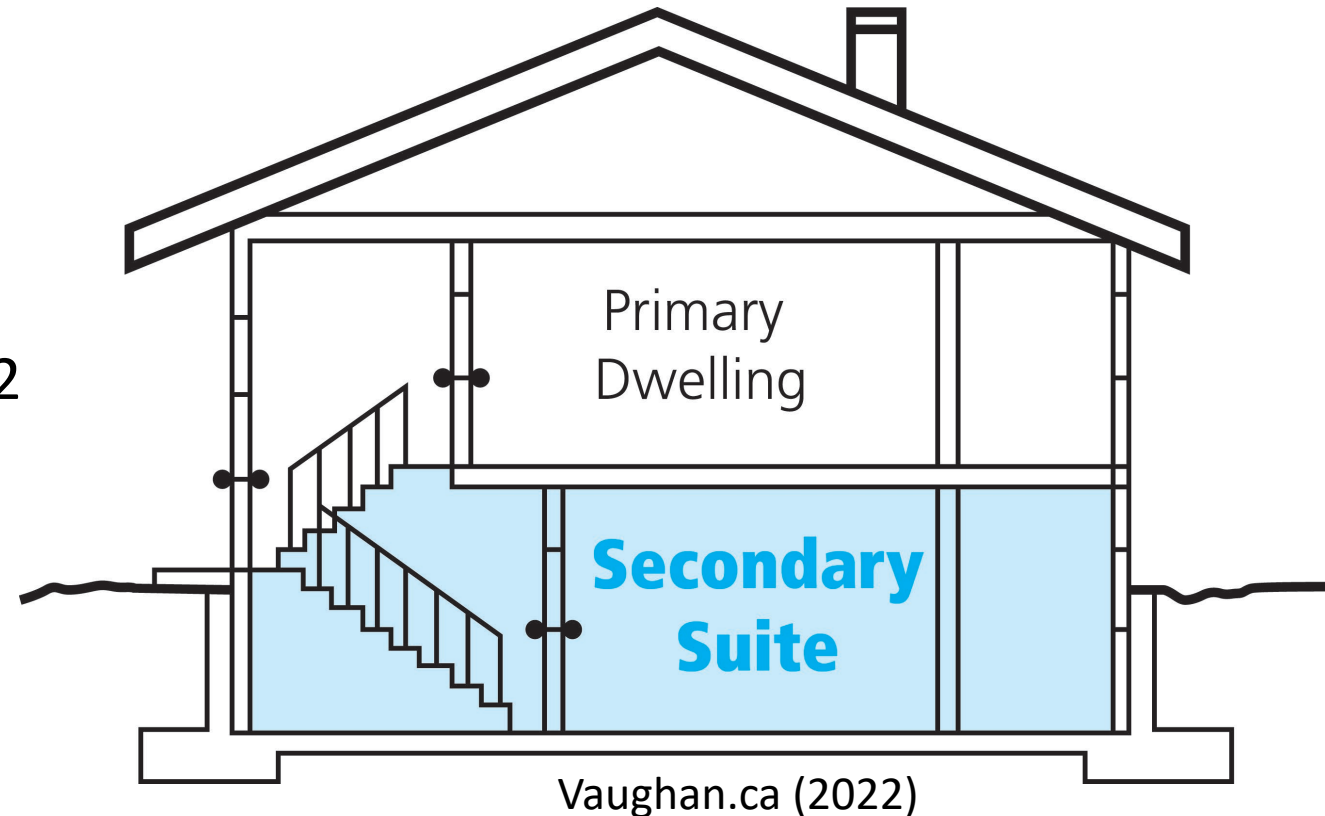
Background

- January 26, 2021
 - the Family Resource Centre, a member of the West Hants Housing Coalition, applied for amendments to all planning documents in West Hants Regional Municipality to permit secondary suites within single and two-unit dwellings and to align the definition of secondary suites with the definition in the National Building Code
- Approved by Council on July 27, 2021



Secondary Suite

- means a dwelling unit within a dwelling unit limited to a maximum of
 - (1) 80% of the total floor area of the dwelling unit if 80% is less than 862 sq. ft. (80 sq. m.) or
 - (2) 862 sq. ft. (80 sq. m.) or
 - (3) greater as established in the National Building Code



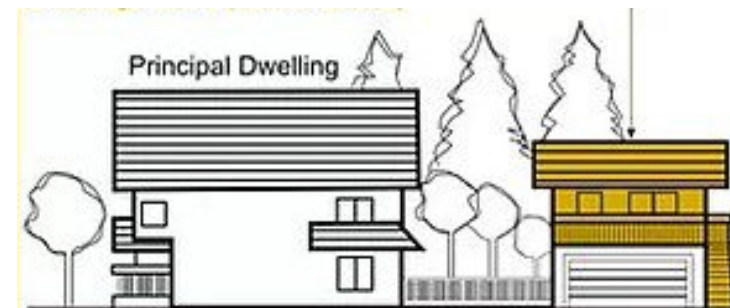
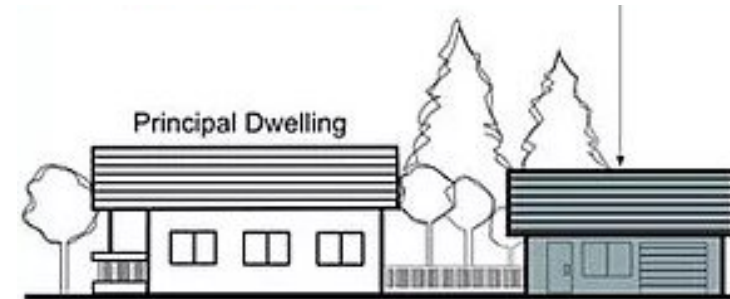
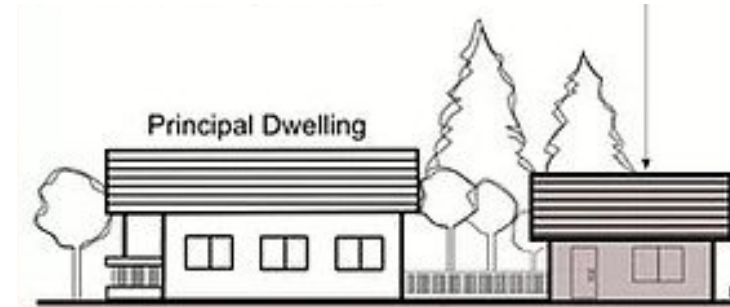
Application

- On July 4, 2022 the Family Resource Centre applied for an amendment to all planning documents in West Hants Regional Municipality to permit detached secondary suites accessory to single and two-unit dwellings



Detached Secondary Suite

- May also be known elsewhere as a backyard suite, garage suite or garden suite
- Accessory to the main dwelling
- Located in an accessory building which may include an existing garage, a converted outbuilding, or the construction of a new building on site



Markham.ca (2018)

something inspiring awaits



National Building Code

- Defines a secondary suite as *“a self-contained dwelling unit with a limited floor area which is contained within a house or another building which contains only residential occupancies. The Secondary Suite and the Main Suite must constitute a single real estate entity.”*
- Limits the size of a suite and includes requirements for ceiling height, smoke alarms, separation of units, ventilation, egress, and heating systems to ensure both the secondary and main suites are safe for occupancy



Provincial Support

Statement of Provincial Interest

- Regarding housing: goal is to “provide housing opportunities to meet the needs of all Nova Scotians” by incorporating housing policies into the municipal planning documents which address affordable housing, special-needs housing, rental accommodation, and providing for manufactured housing
- Detached secondary suites help achieve this Provincial interest by providing an affordable housing option and rental accommodation that does not appear to increase density in low density neighbourhoods as the suites are located in a building accessory to a main dwelling unit



Provincial Support Cont.

Affordable Housing Commission Report

- Recommendation 15 was to “address the specific needs of rural and non-urban communities”
- The issue was described as: “Many non-urban and rural communities in Nova Scotia face shortages of affordable rental housing, a problem exacerbated by low incomes, diversifying and changing populations, conversion of permanent rental housing to short-term rental accommodations to support tourism, and lack of municipal infrastructure to attract investment and support real estate development.”
- One solutions discussed: “The Province must work with municipalities and other partners to offer more housing options in rural and non-urban communities.”
- Although the authors of the report are referring to Provincially provided affordable housing, the Municipality can enable more housing options, such as detached short term rentals, through its planning documents

Municipal Support

Municipal Planning Strategy

- Part 3.2.6 (HMPS), 4.11 (WHMPS), and 4.18 (WMPS) address the general policies for housing
- These proposed amendments to allow detached secondary suites align with Council's intent to provide diverse housing types to satisfy the housing needs of all residents in the Region

Municipal Support

Council Strategic Plan 2021-22

- Theme 4, objective 3B of Council's 2021-22 Strategic Plan is to support affordable housing initiatives including creating or amending documents to support affordable housing
- These proposed amendments directly align with this objective by creating more affordable home ownership and more affordable rental opportunities
 - Renting out a detached secondary suite can provide an additional source of income to the owner of the main dwelling unit
 - Allowing detached secondary suites can also increase rental opportunities in established neighbourhoods



Municipal Support

RAD Consulting Community Engagement Report

- On February 23, 2021 Council approved in principle all recommendations presented in the RAD Consulting Community Engagement report
- Recommendation 12 encourages Council to address affordable housing by considering options such as secondary and backyard suites
- Permitting detached secondary suites would accomplish this recommendation



Amendment Considerations

- 1 secondary suite, whether attached or detached, will be permitted per dwelling unit of a single or two-unit dwelling
- The requirements of accessory buildings will apply to detached secondary suites including:
 - a minimum of 6 ft. (6.5 ft. Hantsport) from the main building,
 - a minimum of 4 ft. (3.2 ft. Hantsport) from the side and rear yards, and
 - a maximum of 20 ft. (16.4 ft. Hantsport) in height
- 1 parking spot per secondary suite
- Other amendments are proposed to update the documents based on Plan Review material accepted by PAC/HAC regarding accessory uses and structures



Policy

- West Hants Regional Municipality has a separate Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law for each of Hantsport, Windsor and West Hants
- Each document has been considered and amended separately

- Hantsport Policy IM-3
- Windsor Policy 16.3.1
- West Hants Policy 16.3.1

Public Information Meeting

- A Public Information Meeting was held on September 6. The meeting was broadcast live on the Municipal Facebook page.
- 3 members of the public attended the Public Information Meeting
- The deadline for comments was September 23
- 3 written letters of support were received via email



Public Information Meeting Cont.

- Does a detached secondary suite need:

(a) a separate septic system?

Public Works Department confirmed that in serviced areas they will allow a second service to the detached secondary suite subject to specific req.

In areas without municipal services, the Building Official requires confirmation that the existing septic system can handle the increased demand

(b) a separate Nova Scotia power meter?

Detached secondary suite could share the same meter as the main dwelling as they are on the same lot; depends on capacity of the existing electrical panel and on homeowner desire to determine power costs



Process

Public Information Meeting – September 6

Staff Review

PAC/HAC Review and Recommendation – October 13

Council First Reading – October 25*

Public Hearing & Second Reading – November 22*

Ministerial Approval

Notice of Approval in Local Paper

*anticipated dates
final dates will be set
by Council



Recommendation - Hantsport

...that PAC/HAC recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider amending the Hantsport Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit detached secondary suites accessory to single and two-unit dwellings, in a manner substantively the same as Attachment A of the staff report to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee #22-12 dated October 13, 2022.



Recommendation – West Hants

...that PAC/HAC recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider amending the West Hants Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit detached secondary suites accessory to single and two-unit dwellings, in a manner substantively the same as Attachment A of the staff report to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee #22-13 dated October 13, 2022.



Recommendation – Windsor

...that PAC/HAC recommends that Council give First Reading and hold a Public Hearing to consider amending the Windsor Municipal Planning Strategy and Land Use By-law to permit detached secondary suites accessory to single and two-unit dwellings, in a manner substantively the same as Attachment A of the staff report to the Planning and Heritage Advisory Committee #22-14 dated October 13, 2022.





West Hants
something inspiring awaits

westhants.ca