

January 22, 2010

VIA E-MAIL: larry.obrien@ottawa.ca

Corporation of the City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

Attention Larry O'Brien

Dear Mayor O'Brien:

I am the President of the Ottawa Chapter of the Canadian Condominium Institute. I am writing to you in that capacity and on behalf of our board and our membership.

The chapter is the collective voice of condominium unit owners and their boards of directors in the City of Ottawa and surrounding areas. Our membership accounts for more than one half of all condominium owners in Ottawa and our membership is growing. With an increase in condominium development in recent years and a transition to new management of our Association, we will be undertaking new initiatives for 2010 to ensure that the benefits of CCI membership are available to all members of the Ottawa Condominium Community.

This community consists of:

- The boards of directors of more than 800 condominium corporations;
- The unit owners of condominium units located in every electoral district of our City;
- Approximately 75 trade members on whom our corporations rely for their day to day services in the areas of construction, maintenance, etc.;
- Approximately 120 professional members (property managers, lawyers, accountants/auditors, engineers, architects and others);
- Approximately 100 individuals (mainly unit owners) who have consistently supported our organization for many years and who invest their own money in membership in our association (in conjunction with their boards and communities, who join our ranks as a group).

Through CCI National, our local chapter of CCI has the benefit of lobbying services through our national intergovernmental relations committee, with representation at Queen's park. This is a relatively recent initiative and has proven very successful in its first years.

It is clear to us that we need similar representation at the local level. To that end, we will be forming a local governmental relations committee to liaise with council members and staff at the City of Ottawa on issues of importance to our members.

As a condominium unit owner, you are well aware that each of our condominium unit owners is essentially a part of their own miniature municipality. Under the *Condominium Act*, the corporation and its board of directors is held to a very high level of accountability – fiscal accountability, accountability for the planning and success of major capital projects, and accountability in terms of responding to concerns expressed by owners and boards.

In the past, we have found that policy and planning decisions at the municipal level are often made with regard to single family properties and without any consideration of relevance and practical applicability to condominiums. In the coming year, we intend to pursue and, with your help, resolve certain municipal issues that have resulted in significant expense and concern to all owners of condominium units in this City. These include:

- The new tree by-law which has serious and, we believe, unintended financial implications for condominium owners;
- Management of the green box program in multiple unit residential development;
- Water billings and the implications of shifting other billings and charges from the tax account (which is paid by the owners, individually) to the water account (which is a common expense);
- The City's policy on street parking permits (which are necessary whenever an aging building undertakes garage repairs. As many of our buildings "come of age" this issue appears to negatively impact a number of our members. Between years 20-35 of their life span, virtually every condominium in the City will undergo major repairs to its garage or exterior parking areas.

These are just a few of the issues identified by our membership at our Annual General Meeting last fall. Our membership is rightfully insisting on some interaction between the Chapter and the City with respect to these issues in the coming year. There are many other issues, but these issues require our immediate attention so that we can improve confidence, among our membership, that their municipal tax dollars are being well spent.

We are hopeful that, over the coming year, we may improve relations between condominium owners, boards, and the City of Ottawa and that our mini municipal governments will work with City Council and staff to achieve workable results for all.

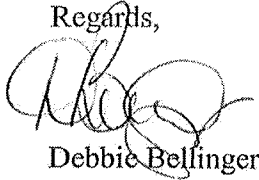
Here is what we are proposing:

- We will have a committee of no more than five members to deal with City staff, City committees and councillors;
- We would like the City to strike a similar committee, consisting of councillors and staff members charged with responding to issues of concern to the condominium community.

- We would like to meet with the City's committee to confirm a process whereby issues of interest to the condominium community can be brought before staff, council and committees in a manner that is efficient and beneficial to all concerned.
- We would like to arrange a forum in September of 2010, and invite all of the councillors to attend, discuss and better understand issues of concern to the condominium community.

We will be publishing a copy of this letter in our next issue of CCI Contact, our chapter newsletter. We welcome a responding submission from your office and look forward to working together in the future.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Debbie Bellinger', written in a cursive style.

Debbie Bellinger