



Toronto needed to clarify parking rules

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TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO STAR

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Imagine this scenario: you are a homebuyer who, with the help of your REALTOR®, has found a property that seems to match exactly what you are looking for. But then you find out there isn't parking. It is likely that, unfortunately, even though you love the property, you will have to keep looking.

Although many people choose car-less lifestyles, adequate parking is still one of the key things considered by homebuyers. That's why REALTORS® recently took action to tell Toronto that it needed to clarify some of its rules that are creating confusion about where residents can park their vehicles.

Our concerns stemmed from confusing language that was included in the City's new Zoning By-law.

Zoning By-laws play an important role in determining how cities grow and change by regulating how certain types of property can be used. By doing so, they help to prevent issues that can deteriorate quality of life for residents and the success of businesses.

Unfortunately, with regard to parking, the technical language of the City's new Zoning By-law created confusion about whether or not vehicles could be parked in driveways. In fact, according to media reports, the City's by-law enforcement officers were actually issuing notices to some homeowners deemed to be contravening the new by-law's parking rules. Although the City issued statements indicating that the new rules would not apply to existing homes, confusion remained as the media continued to report that the by-law was, in fact, being enforced against existing homes.

REALTORS® understand that the home buying process is not the time for surprises, so we strongly believed that the City needed to unequivocally clarify the by-law to ensure that parking in driveways would not be restricted. We told City Councillors that the confusion created by the new Zoning By-law would unnecessarily burden existing home owners who could be suddenly left with inadequate parking for existing vehicles. We also told them that it could raise concerns for many homebuyers for whom adequate parking is a critical consideration in their home-buying decisions.

I am happy to tell you that Toronto City Council heeded the advice that it was given and approved an amendment to the Zoning By-law to remove the confusion surrounding the ability to park in driveways.

Bill Johnston is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 31,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.

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