

Toward Transparency & Accountability in BC Strata Developments – 2015 Update

Introduction

In early 2008 the Vancouver Island Strata Owners Association conducted public consultations with strata owners to identify their concerns with BC strata legislation. The outcome was a May 2008 report entitled “Beyond the Sales Pitch: Ensuring Transparency and Accountability in BC Strata Developments”. The report was shared widely with government, MLAs in all parties as well as media and called for a comprehensive public review of BC strata legislation. Although no such public review has happened there has been some government response, albeit limited, to some issues identified in that 2008 report. This update reviews the issues identified in that report.

Background to the 2008 VISOA Report

In May of 2007 a committee of VISOA Board Members met with individual Vancouver Island MLAs in both political parties. Following these meetings, in early 2008 VISOA prepared a 13-point discussion paper that was circulated to its membership and the MLAs it previously met with. The discussion paper was also made publicly available on the VISOA website and circulated to interested homeowner associations on the lower mainland. A series of publicly advertised meetings open to all strata owners was held (in Courtenay, Nanaimo and Victoria). In addition to the many issues and proposed solutions raised by strata owners at the public meetings, 38 written submissions were received from strata owners and representatives of homeowner associations on the lower mainland.

Outcome of VISOA’s Consultations

Issues identified from the 2008 consultations were categorized as follows:

- A. Strata Governance
- B. Strata Management Licensees
- C. Disclosure
- D. Property Taxation
- E. Strata Fee Equity

The 2015 Update Report describes 30 specific issues identified in 2008 under the above 6 categories, as well as the solution proposed for each at that time. The Document also describes the legislative response to each issue. It shows that 2 issues have been completely addressed by government, 4 have been partially addressed and 2 more are in the process of being addressed. However, the remaining 22 issues remain unresolved.

Furthermore, the issues identified in 2008 were not presented as an exhaustive list and it was hoped that a comprehensive public review by government would identify more issues. BC strata owners are still waiting for a government legislation review process that includes them.

BC Out of Step With Other Provinces

Since 2008 both Alberta and Ontario have undertaken comprehensive public reviews of their legislation affecting condominium owners. The BC government continues to deny strata property owners such a review while making piece meal amendments.