

H. W. Balfour

Municipal Manager

A. L. Parr

Planning Director

October 2, 1967

RE: TRAILER COURTS IN BURNABY

The following factors are generally characteristic of this type of development:

- (1) A greater concentration of units (and people) per acre than in single family residential areas.
- (2) A higher site occupancy and less open space per resident and per unit.
- (3) A more concentrated demand for water and sewerage facilities.
- (4) Greater traffic volumes per occupied area.
- (5) Greater turnover of residents.

The arguments usually advanced for permitting permanent trailer park accommodation in Burnaby include:

- (1) Trailer park development will help to relieve the present housing shortage and provide a more economical form of accommodation for those who desire it.
- (2) A growing segment of the population favours living in trailers for reasons of convenience and mobility. A location in Burnaby is preferred since it is close to Vancouver, the centre of the metropolitan area.
- (3) The addition of trailer parks will increase the types of accommodation available to the people of the Municipality. To-days trailer is a complete, independent home on wheels equipped with all the facilities of the ordinary single family house.
- (4) The development of trailer parks will permit a greater variety of people to live in the community and a wider range of income groups, thus modifying the consequences of a uniform population and social structure.

The arguments most frequently made against this form of development are generally as follows:

- (1) The use of trailers to meet the housing needs of even a portion of the permanent resident population is undesirable. Trailer parks cannot compare with other forms of residential accommodation in terms of living and amenity space, accessibility to community facilities and services and aesthetics. Further, they tend, in time, to become low quality permanent housing.
- (2) There is little need for the mobility of accommodation provided by the trailer within a highly urbanized area.
- (3) In many trailer parks, little attention is given to housekeeping and yard maintenance. Such developments are difficult to regulate and frequently pose serious public health and welfare problems. Conditions of overcrowding are often associated with permanent trailer courts. They provide a poor location for children.
- (4) Trailer courts can often result in the depreciation of adjacent property values.

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Mr. H. W. Balfour  
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RE: TRAILER COURTS IN BURNABY (cont.)

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- (5) Trailer court dwellers tend to be temporary or short term residents of the community, have less sense of "belonging" and are less likely to develop "roots" or to take any interest in local affairs.
- (6) Trailer court developments require the same services as permanent residences (parks, schools, roads, police and fire protection, water, sewers, etc.) without contributing towards the upkeep of these facilities.

Many of the above arguments against trailer courts (items (1), (3) and (4)) can probably be overcome by proper regulations and controls, provided that they are diligently enforced. Nevertheless, most of these disadvantages have a basis in fact and are thus firmly entrenched and difficult to overcome.

Aside from these arguments which have largely arisen from poor examples of trailer court development in the past, the fact remains that trailer parks need and must be provided with the same services and facilities as other forms of accommodation, yet do not contribute the funds required for their use and upkeep. The problem of taxation, which has never been satisfactorily resolved, remains as the most convincing argument against the provision of this type of residential accommodation in this Municipality. Even if this problem could be overcome, a trailer park would be one of the least productive uses of land from a Municipal revenue point of view.

In view of the above considerations, Planning recommends against making any change in the Zoning Bylaw that would permit the development of permanent trailer parks in this Municipality.

A related subject which may merit some consideration, however, is the provision of facilities for the tourist or vacation trailer. A facility of this type should only be operated during the summer months and the regulations provided should reflect the needs of the transient tourist and not be adaptable to pressures for conversion to permanent mobile housing courts.

A. L. Parr  
PLANNING DIRECTOR

RBC:daj

cc - Municipal Clerk  
Chief Building Inspector  
Parks Administrator  
Senior Planner