

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY

Mr. H. W. Balfour  
Municipal Manager

Planning Department  
August 25, 1967

Dear Sir:

RE: RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY: COMPARATIVE ZONING STANDARDS

This report dealing with the numbers of persons which can be accommodated, under present zoning regulations, in various types of residential uses has been prepared for the information of the Policy/Planning Committee. In preparing the report, a review has been made of a number of other Zoning Bylaws in order to provide a comparison with the residential occupancy standards in Burnaby.

In most communities, residential properties are by far the most numerous of the land use categories and they occupy the most land area. Also, they represent, in the typical community, the largest single investment. The proper zoning and protection of these areas is therefore of paramount importance.

It is customary, in zoning, to divide residential areas into district categories based upon development densities (e.g. single family, two family and multiple family residential districts). In making this division, the common factor is the term "family".

DEFINITIONS OF "FAMILY"

The defining of what is meant by "family" for zoning purposes makes possible the enforcing of the requirements for single family, two family and multiple family dwellings. The term is therefore generally defined in Zoning Bylaws. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule. For example, "family" is not defined in the Bylaws of New Westminster or North Vancouver District. In New Westminster some problems have been created by large numbers of single persons locating in one dwelling unit. However, in most instances these have been overcome by stating that such a group does not constitute a "family", even though the term has not been defined in the Bylaw.

The dictionary defines "family" as a body of persons descended from a common progenitor; or as a group comprising immediate kindred as in the case of parents and children. This is the generally accepted idea of the "family" - that of persons related by blood or marriage.

While recognizing this concept, zoning bylaws usually make some provision for unrelated persons occupying a dwelling unit or a household to also be considered as a "family" for zoning purposes. Although the term is defined in the Surrey, Victoria, West Vancouver and Winnipeg Bylaws, the number of unrelated persons which may be considered as a "family" is not specified. However, the definition of "family" excludes the occupants of such forms of accommodation as boarding houses, hotels, clubs or lodges etc.; in the case of the latter two centres.

In most zoning bylaws, however, not only is "family" defined but the number of unrelated persons which may be considered as a "family" is actually specified. Since the average family size generally ranges between 3.5 and 4 persons per dwelling unit (in Burnaby the figure is 3.5) and this average is employed in the determination of servicing requirements in areas of varying densities, it is necessary that the number of unrelated persons designated as a family be maintained at a similar level.

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RE: RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY

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August 25, 1967

In the overall planning of an area, each level of density (single family, two family, multiple family) is located in proper relationship to corresponding levels of community facilities (shopping, schools, parks) and services (road standards and widths, volumes of water and sizes of sewers required). If it is possible for large numbers of persons to locate in an area where facilities and services have been geared to low density development, these will become overtaxed and problems will inevitably arise. Further, such developments will be of a different character than their neighbours and thus incompatible with these surroundings.

Based upon this reasoning, it is desirable that the number of unrelated persons which may be considered as a "family" be maintained at a scale which is similar to the average family size in the area covered by each particular zoning bylaw. Thus, the definition of "family" in the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw which includes any number of persons related by blood, marriage or adoption, also applies to not more than five unrelated non-transient persons living together as a non-profit group.

In the Lower Mainland area, the number of unrelated persons constituting a "family" is also five in the Coquitlam, Richmond, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody Bylaws. This number is also employed in the definitions of the zoning bylaws for Edmonton, Kitimat, Los Angeles, Ottawa, Portland, Regina, Toronto and Windsor. Similarly, the Model Zoning Bylaw prepared by the Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board in November, 1965, and the Model Zoning Ordinance of the American Society of Planning Officials both use five as the maximum number of unrelated persons which may constitute a "family" for zoning purposes.

In the New Orleans Ordinance, four is the figure designated, while the Zoning Bylaws of Vancouver and North Vancouver City limit the number of unrelated persons to three. In the case of Vancouver, this number was formerly six. However, the definition was recently amended to three due to requests from ratepayer associations concerned by a growing tendency for numbers of students, beatniks and similar groups to occupy single family houses in residential areas.

Of the 20 Zoning Bylaws reviewed with respect to the definition of "family", the breakdown is as follows:

<u>No. of Bylaws</u>	<u>Status of "Family"</u>
2	Term not defined
4	Number of unrelated persons not specified
11	Used up to 5 unrelated persons
1	Used up to 4 unrelated persons
2	Used up to 3 unrelated persons
<u>20</u>	

COMPARATIVE STANDARDS FOR RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY

A review has been made of the residential occupancy standards for eight Lower Mainland Zoning Bylaws. The number of persons which may be accommodated by different types of residential use in various zoning districts are shown below.

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RE: RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY

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In each area the basic maximum number of persons who can be accommodated per single dwelling unit, which corresponds with single family and other lower density residential categories, appears under column A. Similarly, areas where the greatest numbers of persons may locate are shown under column C, which in most areas coincide with the Multiple Family Zones where higher density forms of accommodation such as boarding, fraternity or sorority houses are generally permitted. Column B represents a sector of intermediate proportions in the table which follows.

See attached table.

The general areas covered by the three basic density standards shown on the foregoing table will also be outlined in colour on a large scale map of the Lower Mainland area. The coloured areas on the map correspond to the standards which appear in the table as follows:

Column A	Yellow
Column B	Red
Column C	Brown

Examination of Column A of the table indicates that two boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit, in addition to one family, are permitted in all Residential Zones as a basic provision by seven of the eight zoning bylaws. The one exception, New Westminster, allows four boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit. However, this number also includes foster children, whereas the Burnaby Bylaw makes provision for four foster children per dwelling unit as an alternative to two boarders or lodgers. This is also the case in Richmond. In Vancouver allowance is made for five foster children per dwelling unit.

At the medium density level (Column B of the Table) the Burnaby Bylaw provides for small boarding house development (five boarders in addition to one family) in R5 Two-Family Districts. A similar provision in the Vancouver Bylaw permits boarding houses in RT-2 (duplex) and R1 (Garden apartment) Zones. In this case the number of boarders is not specified since such areas are subject to Technical Planning Board approval. In North Vancouver City five boarders may be accommodated in a boarding house in Multiple Family Zones, while the West Vancouver regulations permit four boarders in Two-Family and Multiple-Family Districts. Both of these instances, however, represent the maximum numbers of persons accommodated which in Bylaw's such as Burnaby's, that allow for greater densities, appear under Column C of the table.

In Burnaby, boarding, lodging or rooming houses accommodating up to 15 boarders or lodgers, and sorority or fraternity houses for unlimited number are permitted in the R1, R2 and R3 Multiple Family Zones. Provision is also made for high density dormitory unit accommodation in association with various types of institutional uses. Similar provisions are included in the Vancouver and Coquitlam Bylaws in medium and high density apartment zones, with the exception that no upper limit has been placed on the number of persons accommodated by boarding, lodging or rooming houses. In New Westminster and North Vancouver District, on the other hand, up to 15 sleeping rooms may be included in a boarding, lodging or rooming house. However, in the case of North Vancouver, such development is considered as a Special Use and thus generally subject to approval through rezoning.

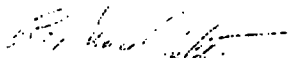
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CONCLUSIONS

- (1) The designation of five unrelated persons as a "family" for zoning purposes in Burnaby is greater than in Vancouver or North Vancouver City where the corresponding figure is three.
- (2) The use of five unrelated persons as a "family" appears to be the most commonly adopted number for zoning purposes.
- (3) While the designating of a specified figure may be considered as somewhat arbitrary, it is desirable that the permitted number of such persons be kept small and of a similar scale to the average family size in the area in order to maintain a reasonable dwelling unit density that will be in keeping with the levels of community facilities and services provided.
- (4) There is considerable similarity in the basic maximum numbers of persons permitted per dwelling unit in Residential Zones, and Burnaby compares favourably with other Lower Mainland municipalities in this respect.
- (5) Examination of the map shows that the R5 area (coloured red) in Burnaby, where small boarding houses are permitted (five boarders or lodgers), is considerably greater than similar areas in other municipalities.
- (6) The maximum numbers of persons which may be accommodated by certain higher density residentially oriented uses (boarding, fraternity or sorority houses, dormitory units, etc.) in Multiple Family Districts in Burnaby compare favourably with the corresponding standards in Vancouver, Coquitlam, New Westminster, and North Vancouver District, and are significantly larger than permitted by the North Vancouver City, West Vancouver or Richmond Bylaws.

Respectfully submitted,



A. L. Parr,  
PLANNING DIRECTOR

RBC/daj

c.c. Municipal Clerk  
Senior Planner

COMPARATIVE RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

210

BURNABY

	A	B	
No. of persons accommodated	One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus 2 boarders or lodgers, or 4 foster children per dwelling unit.	One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus 5 boarders or lodgers in a boarding, lodging, or rooming house.	One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus 15 boarders in a boarding or lodging house, or unlimited numbers of fraternity or sorority student members in a fraternity or sorority house.
Zoning Districts	A1 (Agricultural) A2 (Small Holding) R1, R2, R3, (Single Family) R4 (Two-Family)	R5 (Two-Family)	RM1, RM2, RM3 (Multiple Family)

VANCOUVER

No. of persons accommodated	One family (including 3 unrelated persons), plus 2 boarders or lodgers, or 5 foster children per dwelling unit	One family (including 3 unrelated persons), plus boarders in a boarding or lodging house of not more than 2 storeys in heights (subject to T.P.B. approval).	One family (including 3 unrelated persons), plus unlimited numbers of boarders or students in a boarding, fraternity or sorority house.
Zoning Districts	RA-1 (limited Agricultural) RS-1, RS-2, RS-3 (Single Family) RT-1 (Two-Family)	RT-2 (Two-Family) RM1 (Multiple Family)	RM2, RM3, RM4, (Multiple Family)

COMPARATIVE RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

		A	B	C
NEW WESTMINSTER	No. of persons accommodated	One family, plus 4 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.		One family, plus the occupants of up to 15 sleeping rooms in a boarding house.
	Zoning Districts	RS-1 (Single Family) RT-1 (Two-Family)		RM1, RM2, RM3, RM4 (Multiple Family)
COQUITLAM	No. of persons accommodated	One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus 2 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.		One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus unlimited numbers of boarders in a boarding house.
	Zoning Districts	Agricultural Small Holding R1 (Single Family) R2 (Two-Family) RM1 (Multiple Family)		RM2, RM3 (Multiple Family)
NORTH VANCOUVER CITY	No. of persons accommodated	One family (including 3 unrelated persons), plus 2 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.	One family (including 3 unrelated persons), plus 5 boarders in a boarding or lodging house.	
	Zoning Districts	RS (Single Family) RT (Two-Family)	RG, RM1, RM2, RH (Multiple Family)	
NORTH VANCOUVER DISTRICT	No. of persons accommodated	One family, plus 2 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.		One family, plus the occupants of up to 15 sleeping rooms in a boarding or lodging house.
	Zoning Districts	Single Family Multiple Family		Special Use

COMPARATIVE RESIDENTIAL OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

		A	B	C
WEST VANCOUVER	No. of persons accommodated	One family, plus 2 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.	One family, plus 4 boarders or lodgers per dwelling unit.	
	Zoning Districts	Single Family	Two Family RM1, RM2, RM3 (Multiple Family)	
RICHMOND	No. of persons accommodated	One family (including 5 unrelated persons), plus 2 boarders or lodgers, or 4 foster children per dwelling unit.		
	Zoning Districts	Agricultural Small Holding R1, R2, R3 (Residential) RM1, RM2, RM3 (Multiple Family)		