

ITEM 31  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 45  
COUNCIL MEETING July 12/71

31. Re: Racing Pigeons (7763 Coquitlam Street - Finch).

Appearing on the Agenda for the July 12, 1971, Council Meeting is a communication from Mr. Finch regarding the keeping of racing pigeons.

On May 27, 1971, the License Department received a complaint from a resident on Eleventh Avenue to the effect that the pigeons owned by the above were causing a nuisance in the area. Visits were made to the Finch residence and it was found that the birds are exceptionally well housed and Mr. Finch denied that it was his birds that were responsible for the nuisance.

However, on June 4, 1971, a warning letter was sent to Mr. Finch pointing out that the keeping of pigeons on this property was contrary to the Zoning Bylaw as pigeons can only be kept in Agricultural Zones.

As a result of this letter, Mr. Finch came to see the Chief License Inspector on June 23, 1971, to discuss the problem. It was pointed out to him that the only way he could legally keep the pigeons was to have the "Home Occupation" section in the Zoning Bylaw amended to include such a use being classed as a "Recreational Hobby". Never did the Inspector say, as Mr. Finch indicates in his letter, that "I could see no reason why these birds should cause a problem", although he admits that he is sympathetic and thinks that the keeping of, say, twenty birds on a residential property, properly housed on a permit basis, could possibly be classed a recreational hobby and permitted in a residential zone.

A report dated July 7, 1971, from the Planning Director in that connection follows.

The Planning Director recommends, and the Manager concurs, that the regulations not be changed to permit the keeping of pigeons in residential districts.

\* \* \* \* \*

PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
7 JULY, 1971

MR. MELVIN J. SHELLEY.  
MUNICIPAL MANAGER.

DEAR SIR:

RE: RACING PIGEONS

A. BACKGROUND

The attached letter, which concerns the keeping of racing pigeons on the property at 7763 Coquitlam Street, has been addressed to the Mayor and Council. The owner maintains that the Zoning By-law regulations should be relaxed to permit such an activity in a Residential District. A report from the Planning Department has been requested on this matter.

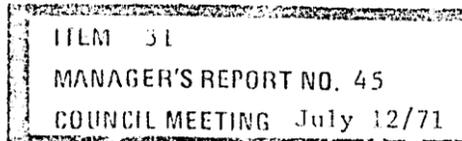
B. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The keeping of pigeons, which is not a recognized use in residential areas, is specifically included as a permitted use in both the A1 (Agricultural) and A2 (Small Holdings) Districts under the current Zoning By-law regulations. The large minimum lot area requirements in these zones makes it possible to permit this and similar activities without creating undue disturbance or nuisance to neighbouring properties. However, such uses are considered incompatible with the purpose and character of smaller lot residentially zoned areas. THIS DEPARTMENT WOULD THEREFORE RECOMMEND AGAINST ANY CHANGE IN THE BY-LAW REGULATIONS THAT WOULD PERMIT THE KEEPING OF PIGEONS IN RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS.

Mr. Melvin J. Shelley  
Municipal Manager

Re: Racing Pigeons (contd.)

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C. SIZE, LOCATION AND ZONING OF THE SUBJECT PROPERTY

The subject property (Lot 17, S.D."C", Blk.1, D.L.13, Plan 17520) is located on the west side of Coquitlam Street between Armstrong and Karrman Avenues within an area generally described as the Cariboo-Armstrong Neighbourhood. The lot has a frontage of 58.77 feet on Coquitlam Street and a depth of 110 feet. The twenty racing pigeons which the owner keeps, are housed in a separate structure at the rear of the property.

The existing zoning is R3 (Single Family) Residential. The surrounding area is built up with good quality and well maintained single family homes.

D. EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS

Under the existing Zoning By-law regulations, the keeping of pigeons is not a recognized activity in Residential Districts. However, the keeping of pigeons or poultry is specifically included as a permitted use:

- a) for domestic or commercial purposes in A1 (Agricultural) zones, and
- b) for domestic purposes only in A2 (Small Holdings) Districts.

In the Small Holdings District, which is essentially a large lot type of residential zone, provision is made in the by-law for persons to keep a horse, for example, or up to five dogs. The one acre minimum parcel size permits additional animals and birds to be kept without undue disturbance to the neighbouring properties. In more densely developed residential districts, however, the by-law recognizes the nuisance and possible health problems that could be created by allowing large numbers of birds or animals to be housed or maintained as a "recreational hobby".

E. OBSERVATIONS

While it might be argued that some individual property owners could, with special care and attention, prevent their particular hobbies from creating a nuisance within a residential area, there would be many others who would not take the time or trouble to make the necessary effort. This contention is borne out by a recent discussion with Health Department officials who indicate that a considerable number of complaints have been received concerning pigeons in residentially zoned areas.

The opening up of the by-law to allow for such activities would, we feel, only create problems and give rise to innumerable further complaints. Most property owners in Residential Districts expect and, in our view, are entitled to certain assurances in the form of regulatory controls which place limitations on the keeping of birds and animals in such areas.

Respectfully submitted,



A. L. PARR  
Planning Director

RBC:ea  
Atchmt.

c.c. Chief Licence Inspector     □  
      Chief Public Health Inspector □  
      Municipal Clerk             □  
      Senior Planner             □

L. G. FINCH  
7763, Coquitlam, St.  
BURNABY-3-B.C.

June 24/71.

MAYOR + COUNCIL:

Dear Sirs:-

I received a letter from your  
Chief license inspector Mr H.  
Buckley, regarding the keeping  
of racing pigeons on my  
property.

I was into see Mr Buckley and  
I explained to him just how  
these birds were cared for, and  
I invited him up to inspect  
my loft at any time.

He could see how reason as  
to why these birds could cause  
a problem to anyone, and he  
advised me to write a letter to  
you and your Council as your  
Zoning by-law # 4743  
prevented them from making

any other suggestions.

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This by-law doesn't help  
last year's budget in any way,  
as these birds are kept strictly  
for recreational and not to  
raise money.

If you are receiving complaints  
about these birds sitting on  
some one's roof all day, I can  
assure you that they are not  
mine, as my birds are  
never allowed to range, they  
are only let out for a fly when  
I'm here and when they  
have had their fly they are  
brought in and feed.

So I would appreciate it if you  
would check into this problem  
and I will be available to  
answer any question at any  
time.

Yours Truly  
J. H. Finch