

ITEM	7
MANAGER'S REPORT NO.	16
COUNCIL MEETING	1979 02 26

RE: GROUP HOMES

Following is a report from the Director of Planning regarding a proposed change to the Burnaby Zoning By-Law regarding the definition of "Group Home".

Following is the definition for "Group Home" which currently appears in the Zoning By-Law:

"GROUP HOME" means a home, approved as a group home by the Child Welfare Division of the Province of British Columbia, which provides care, food and lodging for children living apart from their parents or guardians in a family type setting under the guidance and supervision of group home parents who are employed by the Social Service Department of the Corporation. (B/L No. 5451-68-111-12)

RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendations of the Director of Planning be adopted.

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1979 February 21

TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER
FROM: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING
RE: GROUP HOMES

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT the Council receive the report of the Planning Department and give approval to the deletion of the existing definition of "Group Home" from Section 3 of the Burnaby Zoning By-law and its replacement by the following:

"GROUP HOME means a residential care home which provides care, food and lodging and an opportunity for the social, emotional, physical and intellectual growth of children under the age of nineteen years living apart from their parents or guardians under the continuing guidance and supervision of group home parents or other qualified persons and which shall comply with all applicable provincial and municipal regulations."

2. THAT the Council request the preparation of a by-law by the Municipal Solicitor to delete the present definition of "Group Home" to permit the introduction of the above amendment into the Burnaby Zoning By-law, and that this amendment be advanced to a Public Hearing on 1979 March 20.

REPORT

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A. BACKGROUND

The Planning Department has reviewed the existing regulations governing group homes in this municipality. This review, undertaken in close consultation with Human Resources and municipal Health Department staff, has resulted from the need to bring the Burnaby Zoning By-law regulations into conformity with recent changes in Provincial legislation.

B. THE FUNCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE GROUP HOME

The group home, which is designed to provide skilled and effective parenting or child care services for a small group of children in a family-type setting, forms a part of the established welfare services in a community. The emphasis is on meeting the specialized needs of adolescents, severely neglected or deprived children, and on the treatment of disturbed children through the use of this family-type setting. Group home children are not unduly retarded nor so severely disturbed that placement in an institution is necessary. Such children attend public schools and are capable of being integrated into the community.

Family-type group homes are normally staffed by resident houseparents. These homes generally accommodate from 5 to 8 children and are primarily suitable for adolescents. Group homes may also perform specialized functions such as receiving, assessment, short-term treatment or long-term care of difficult children or they may provide a combination of services. Group homes offering specialized services are usually supervised by child care workers rather than by resident houseparents.

Group homes may be contracted for with private individuals, societies or a combination thereof. Such a use is desirably located within a detached single family type of house in a residential environment. This permits the children to be more easily integrated into the community and avoids the segregation and differentiation inherent in the placement of a child in an institution. A group home is not regarded as an institution, but rather as a residence where the children are brought up under as normal an environment as possible.

C. PROVINCIAL LEGISLATION

Group homes, which formerly came under the Child Welfare Division of the Province of British Columbia, were defined as "foster homes" and as such did not require licensing. They presently operate in conjunction with the Family and Children's Services Section of the Ministry of Human Resources. Under the recently revised legislation, residential care for children (group homes) is governed by the Provincial Child Care Facilities Regulations of the Community Care Facilities Licensing Act. Group homes are regarded as a "community care facility" of the type "that provides personal care, supervision, social or educational training, or physical or mental rehabilitative therapy, with or without charge, to three or more persons not related by blood or marriage to the operator of the facility."

The Act establishes a number of controls which must be met by an applicant wishing to establish a community care facility. These include specific requirements for staffing, as well as detailed regulations for the building proposed for the accommodation of such a use which must comply with municipal regulations relating to building, fire and health that are applicable to a privately used dwelling. Such a determination, in the case of Burnaby, is made by the Inspection

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Committee (Building, Fire and Health). The license application also requires a letter of confirmation of municipal zoning approval for the facility, including the maximum number of children to be accommodated.

D. EXISTING ZONING REGULATIONS

In the Burnaby Zoning By-law the term "Group Home" is currently defined as "a home approved as a group home by the Child Welfare Division of the Province of British Columbia, which provides care, food and lodging for children living apart from their parents or guardians in a family type setting under the guidance and supervision of group home parents who are employed by the Social Service Department of the Corporation."

Group homes are presently permitted in single family dwellings in the R4 and R5 (Two-Family) Residential Districts. For an R4 District, a minimum lot area of 8600 square feet is required, while a 7200 square foot lot area is specified in the R5 District category.

E. EXISTING GROUP HOME FACILITIES IN BURNABY

Burnaby has four family-type group homes staffed by resident houseparents, which accommodate from five to eight children. In general, these homes are used for boys and girls between the ages of twelve and seventeen. The average placement exceeds one year and is, therefore, considered to be long term.

The younger children placed in these facilities usually return to their natural family. In some cases where the natural family cannot provide for the child's needs, a placement may be made into a regular foster home. The older teenagers in these facilities often move on to independent living situations. In a few cases youngsters who do not respond to this type of setting may be placed in a more specialized treatment resource.

Family-type group homes include the following:

	<u>Home</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>
1)	The Quirk Group Home	6125 Sperling Avenue	The Burnaby Children's Village Society
2)	The Eley Group Home	4751 Sardis Street	The Burnaby Children's Village Society
3)	The Stoffer Group Home	4484 Royal Oak Avenue	Privately subsidized
4)	The Leslie Group Home	6930 Mario Court	Privately subsidized

In addition to these four family-type group homes there are seven homes which offer specialized services. These homes, which generally accommodate from five to eight children, provide specialized group living resources and programs such as receiving, assessment, short term emergency and treatment facilities or long term programs of a rehabilitative nature, residential care programs or a combination of such services. These homes generally accommodate older adolescents or teenagers and they are usually supervised by child care workers operating on a continuing shift basis, rather than by resident houseparents.

Group Homes included in this category are as follows:

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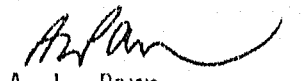
	Home	Address	Sponsor
1)	The Inman Receiving Home	4503 Inman Avenue	The Elizabeth Fry Society
2)	The Orenda House	4737 Victory Street	The Elizabeth Fry Society
3)	The Cambridge House	3774 Cambridge Street	The Elizabeth Fry Society
4)	The Roberts Street Group Home	6375 Roberts Street	St. Leonard's Society
5)	The Victory House	5023 Victory Street	St. Leonard's Society
6)	The Children's Foundation Group Home	3847 Trinity Street	The Children's Foundation
7)	The Browndale Group Home	7378 Morley Street	The Browndale Care Society

F. CONCLUSIONS

As indicated in the preceding section, the Burnaby Group Home Program is made up of a range of facilities. According to Human Resources, the group homes in this municipality are functioning well and the problems encountered with adjacent residences have been quite minimal. Further expansion of the group home program is considered unlikely. However, the modification of existing homes by adding child care staff to assist resident houseparents may become necessary in order to provide an improved service.

In general, it is considered that the present Zoning regulations meet the major requirement for group homes - that of the integration of the children involved into the community by placing them in a family-type setting within a residential environment. However, as noted earlier in the report, the revision of the Provincial legislation and the replacement of the municipal Social Service Department by the provincially operated Ministry of Human Resources has resulted in a number of changes in the regulations governing group homes. They no longer operate under the Child Welfare Division of the Province nor are the group home parents employed by the Social Service Department of the Corporation. Both of these items are included in the current Zoning By-law definition of "Group Home".

The only change which, therefore, seems necessary in order to bring group homes in line with the present Provincial regulations would be in the existing definition of this use in the Burnaby Zoning By-law. It is important that the definition be broad enough in scope to cover all group homes including both privately and society sponsored and operated facilities. In addition, sufficient flexibility should be provided to ensure that possible future changes in legislation would also be covered.


A. L. Parr
DIRECTOR OF PLANNING

RBC/hf
c.c. - C.R. Sinclair - Ministry
of Human Resources
Chief Public Health Inspector
Municipal Clerk
Municipal Solicitor
Assistant Director - Long Range
Planning and Research
Medical Health Officer