

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF BURNABY

TO: HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR  
AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL  
1983 October 05

FROM: CRIME PREVENTION COMMITTEE

SUBJECT: LIGHTING IN AND AROUND SENIORS' HOUSING COMPLEXES

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. THAT the Municipal Manager have a policy prepared to establish lighting considerations as a prerequisite to rezoning for development of seniors' housing complexes.
2. THAT staff continue to work on the lighting improvements outlined in this report, and report to Council when the work is complete.

SUMMARY

The Crime Prevention Committee has undertaken a study of lighting in and around seniors' housing complexes, further to a Notice of Motion to Council on 1983 February 21.

Contact with operators of seniors' housing complexes and coordinators of seniors' activity centers has indicated that isolated cases of harassment of seniors have occurred. Only at the New Vista Society complex was deficient lighting felt to be a contributing factor to incidents of harassment of seniors.

As a result of the study, a number of locations were identified where lighting improvements could be made. These improvements are being handled by staff under existing Municipal policies.

Lighting standards for exterior on-site lighting on seniors' housing complexes are not presently governed by the Municipality. As a result of this study, it is recommended that a Council policy be drafted to establish consideration of lighting as a prerequisite to rezoning for development of seniors' housing complexes.

R E P O R T

This report provides a summary of the Crime Prevention Committee's study of lighting in and around seniors' housing complexes.

I. BACKGROUND

On 1983 February 21, a Notice of Motion to Council was made by Alderman Lawson, Chairman, Crime Prevention Committee, regarding lighting in and around senior citizens' housing complexes in Burnaby. This Notice of Motion was brought forward in response to concern expressed by senior citizens and staff regarding personal assault, theft (e.g. purse snatchings) and harassment in the vicinity of seniors' housing complexes and recreation centres.

- Agenda 1983 October 11  
- Copy - Manager

- Director Engineering  
- Director Planning & Bldg. Insp.  
- Director Recreation & Cultural Services  
- Officer In Charge A.C.M.P.

- Medical Health Officer  
- Chf. Public Health Inspector  
- Secretary, Crime Prevention Committee

At that time it was resolved by Council that:

- (1) A review be conducted of the lighting conditions within and in the immediate neighbourhood of seniors' housing complexes, with a report back to Council; and
- (2) The Crime Prevention Committee, on behalf of Council hold a meeting with:
  - Housing Complex Operators
  - Members of the Simon Fraser University Criminology Department, and
  - Members of Municipal Staff, including the Crime Prevention Unit of the R.C.M.P., Planning & Building Inspection, Engineering and Health Departments,

to initiate the study and set out a course of action.

The Crime Prevention Committee, in consultation with Municipal staff, established a basic process to carry out the study.

## II THE STUDY

Step I of the process involved the preparation of an inventory of housing where seniors move about independently. The operators of a number of these complexes attended a meeting of the Crime Prevention Committee 1983 March 15 to discuss the study, and to report any problems which were being experienced by their residents. The remaining operators were contacted by staff, subsequent to the meeting.

The data collected from the operators of the seniors' complexes indicated that there is not a significant number of incidents of harassment of seniors at the majority of the complexes studied. The operator of the New Vista complex reported a greater number of incidents, and expressed concern that deficient lighting may be a contributing factor.

It was noted that although lighting has not been determined as a factor in most incidents of purse snatching, harassment, etc., improved lighting in some locations could help overcome the fear of residents and staff when leaving the complexes at night.

The second step of the study involved contacting the coordinators of the Municipal seniors' centers. A questionnaire was sent to the coordinators of Bonsor, Confederation House and Edmonds House to determine if problems are being experienced in relation to harassment of seniors.

The responses from the questionnaire indicated that isolated cases of harassment of seniors have occurred. The coordinators did express concern, however, over a number of locations where they felt lighting should be improved.

The third step of the study involved the identification of movement routes frequently used by seniors. At this stage of the study, staff did not conduct site examinations of the routes, but recorded problems that were reported from other sources.

As a result of the contact with housing complex operators, seniors' center coordinators and identification of the movement routes, a number of locations were cited where lighting improvements could be required.

These locations are listed below:

1. New Vista Society Complex - 7550 Rosewood Street
  - street lighting in and around the complex.
2. Edmonds House - 7282 Kingsway
  - the rear of the building, specifically the parking lot and downstairs exits.
3. Confederation House - 4585 Albert Street
  - the parking lot of McGill Library, adjacent to the Centre.
4. Movement Routes
  - the area between Edmonds House and the Edmonds bus loop
  - the area between Edmonds House and Hall Towers
  - the Edmonds bus loop
  - the area between the bus route at Willingdon and Hastings, and Confederation House, specifically the 4500 block Albert Street
5. Laurelynn Place - 3896 Laurel Street
  - street lighting in the vicinity of the housing

The Engineering Department has worked with the appropriate departments to examine lighting in the areas which were reported to the Crime Prevention Committee as a result of the study.

Engineering & Environmental Health staff performed a site visit at New Vista and determined that two additional street lights can be installed under the Municipal Interim Street Lighting Policy. These lights have been installed at the end of the 7500 block Holly Street among the New Vista cottages, and at the end of the 7200 block New Vista Place. Steps have also been taken by the New Vista operators to improve the lighting and alarm system on site.

In addition, the R.C.M.P. Crime Prevention Unit is monitoring the New Vista situation and has provided public awareness seminars at the complex for the seniors. Staff of New Vista note any problem incidents on "unusual occurrence" reports. Reports which were forwarded to the Crime Prevention Committee by way of the Burnaby R.C.M.P. Crime Prevention Unit will continue to be sent to the Unit.

Engineering has coordinated with Recreation and Cultural Services and have identified deficiencies in lighting in the carport area behind Edmonds House, the McGill Library parking lot and Confederation House. Recreation and Cultural Services have noted these deficiencies and will consider lighting improvements in the future on a priority basis. Lighting over the front entrance to Edmonds House has been upgraded by Recreation and Cultural Services and lighting improvements are underway in the parking lot.

Following an examination by staff of lighting at the Edmonds bus loop, it has been determined that the present fixtures do not produce an adequate level of light. Contact was made with the Metro Transit Operating Company by the Engineering Department, requesting that they consider changing the type of light fixtures in the bus loop. More efficient lighting was installed in September.

The Engineering Department has determined that street lighting on Laurel Street in the vicinity of Laurelynn Place is within the Municipal design standards for ornamental lighting in a residential area. Additional lighting is to be installed adjacent to Laurelynn Place, however as a condition of a development which is taking place on the property to the east. This lighting will be an

Page 4

improvement for the end of the street, as well as the dark area between the buildings. No staff action was required in this area.

An examination of lighting in other areas reported to the Crime Prevention Committee revealed that an adequate level of lighting is provided under present Municipal street lighting policies.

The fourth step of the study was to determine what control exists over the level of on site exterior lighting at seniors' housing complexes. An investigation by staff revealed that the Municipality does not set the standard for the level of lighting that is provided on site because the present codes and by-laws do not address exterior lighting. The Municipality can address deficient street lighting around seniors' housing complexes and activity centers under the Interim Street Lighting Policy.

The Planning and Building Inspection department has examined the feasibility of establishing lighting standards for seniors' housing complexes. Staff have reviewed the methods for regulating lighting and have recommended that it can best be handled through the adoption of a Council policy establishing lighting considerations as a prerequisite to rezoning for development of seniors' housing complexes.

Staff feels that the alternative of incorporating lighting standards into the zoning bylaw would be difficult to pursue and could entail an amendment to the Municipal Act. The recommended method of a Council policy would be more feasible to implement, and would accomplish the desired result of provision of adequate and effective lighting.

### III CONCLUSIONS

Lighting is seen as one important aspect in the safety of seniors. The results of this study indicate that it does not appear to be a major contributor to the harassment of seniors in most of Burnaby's seniors' housing complexes.

However, the examination of lighting in this study has indicated the importance of the provision of a safe environment for seniors and the potential influence of lighting over that environment.

It is therefore a recommendation of this study that a policy be prepared to establish consideration of lighting as a prerequisite to rezoning for development of seniors' housing complexes. The Crime Prevention Unit of the R.C.M.P. will continue to monitor incidents of harassment, specifically at New Vista, and will continue to provide public awareness seminars for seniors.

Municipal staff of Planning & Building Inspection, Recreation & Cultural Services and Environmental Health Departments consider the welfare and safety of all Burnaby residents through existing development and licensing procedures. Staff awareness with regard to safety of seniors has been raised as a result of this study and greater consideration will be given to the development of seniors' facilities.

The work of the Crime Prevention Committee with regard to lighting in and around seniors' housing complexes has now been concluded. All necessary actions will be dealt with by staff through existing Municipal policies and report to Council when the work is complete.

Respectfully submitted

Alderman D.A. Lawson  
Chairman  
Crime Prevention Committee