

ITEM 3  
MANAGER'S REPORT NO. 1  
COUNCIL MEETING 1989/01/03

RE: DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS IN THE R "a" DISTRICTS

ACTING MUNICIPAL MANAGER'S RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT the recommendation of the Director Planning & Building Inspection be adopted.

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TO: MUNICIPAL MANAGER 1988 DECEMBER 20  
FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING & BUILDING INSPECTION  
SUBJECT: DESIGN GUIDELINES FOR SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS IN THE R "a" DISTRICTS  
PURPOSE: To obtain Council approval of urban design guidelines for assessing single-family dwelling development in the R "a" Districts.

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RECOMMENDATION:

1. THAT Council approve the design guidelines described in this report for the purpose of assessing single-family development proposals in the R1a, R2a, R3a, R4a, R5a and R9a Residential Districts.

R E P O R T

1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

- 1.1 On 1988 July 11 Council gave Final Adoption to an amendment to the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw which established a minimum lot area and lot width requirement equal to 150% of the minimum lot area and width of each of the single family and two-family zoning districts as the minimum lot size for application to an R "a" zoning district category.

The implementation of the 150% lot area and width requirement was not, however, considered to be adequate to ensure that the residential lots which meet these requirements will be developed in a manner that will not detrimentally impact the surrounding neighbourhood. It was stated in the report on rezonings to the R1a, R2a, R3a, R4a, R5a and R9a Residential Districts that unless otherwise directed by Council, staff will pursue the preparation of a report on urban design guidelines for the development of larger single and two-family dwelling lots. These guidelines are intended to be utilized in assessing single-family dwelling development proposals in connection with rezoning applications to the R "a" Residential Districts.

Staff have now concluded their assessment of urban design guidelines for the development of larger single and two-family dwelling lots in Burnaby, which are submitted for Councils' approval in this report.

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2.0 **INTRODUCTION:**

- 2.1 The overall objective of utilizing urban design guidelines for the development of larger single and two-family dwelling lots under the R "a" zoning district would be to ensure general compatibility with the surrounding neighbourhood and to avoid larger single-family dwellings having a negative impact on adjacent residential properties and development. 120
- 2.2 While it must be acknowledged that any discussion on the compatibility of single-family dwellings may be considered subjective in nature, there are a few basic development standards which should be considered when assessing proposals for single-family dwellings which are larger than the standard development density permitted in the "R" Residential District zoning categories. These would include the development of large single-family dwellings which are in scale with the surrounding neighbourhood and the general scale of dwellings in the neighbourhood in terms of massing and visible bulk; with respect to both magnitude and modelling, and with respect to existing adjacent residential development in terms of such factors as privacy, shading and overall scale. In order to ensure compatibility between single and two-family dwelling development utilizing the standard "R" Residential District regulations and development proposed under the R1a - R5a, R9a District, the increased potential development density (0.60 F.A.R. applied to lots 1.5 times the minimum lot area and lot width) on those larger lots must be recognized, and appropriate siting and design guidelines applied to the development of the larger single-family dwellings on these lots.
- 2.3 In consideration of the size of the residential properties involved and their potential development density under R "a" residential zoning, these guidelines are considered reasonable and widely applicable. Upon approval by Council, the various guidelines will be applied on a site specific basis. The guidelines are kept relatively simple in order for the owners of such residential properties to understand the resulting development potential for large dwellings.

3.0 **DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES:**

- 3.1 The following are offered as guidelines for the development of single-family dwellings on lots in the R1a, R2a, R3a, R4a, R5a and R9a Residential Districts:
- (1) Limit the scale of the dwelling to a two-storey appearance or to the scale of the neighbouring dwellings, whichever is less.
  - The most consistent concern staff have in assessing single-family development proposals in both the "R" and the R "a" Residential Districts and the most frequent complaint received from the public is the height of the dwellings. While the Zoning Bylaw currently permits single-family development up to 9.0 m (29.53 ft.) in height or 2 1/2 storeys on a cellar, single-family development can give a three-storey appearance which is out of character with the surrounding residential area. A maximum two-storey appearance and a design in scale with the neighbouring dwellings is considered more suitable for large single-family homes. This can be achieved by lowering a potentially overly tall dwelling into the site.

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- (2) Maintain the existing pattern of front yard setbacks established along the street frontage, if the prevailing setback pattern is beyond the minimum required in the "R" District regulations.
  - In older residential neighbourhoods in the Municipality, a pattern of generous front yard setbacks are observed on occasion. Respecting this pattern and the resultant increased landscaped areas along the street is considered beneficial.
- (3) Require a minimum rear yard setback of 35% of the depth of the lot and limit the depth of the dwelling to a maximum of 60 feet.
  - The purpose of this guideline is to discourage the excessive shading of the rear yards of neighbouring properties and privacy intrusions and to discourage long, monotonous walls facing the neighbouring dwellings which can result from the development of dwellings with long building depths.
- (4) Encourage the side yard setbacks for development under R "a" zoning to be doubled from that required in the pertinent "R" District zone.
  - This would minimize the sense of crowding and lack of space perceived with the development of large single-family houses, in terms of both the relationship to the immediately adjacent residences and the general streetscape.
- (5) Encourage modelling and faceting by means such as indentations or additional setbacks, bay windows, balconies, porches and some variation in roof lines - particularly for any building face adjacent a street.
  - This guideline is intended to achieve a greater variety in building appearances and to avoid an oppressive bulky, high, boxy building face while encouraging faceting and building modelling around the dwelling.
- (6) Eliminate large and excessive numbers of windows or active deck areas which are in close proximity to neighbouring dwellings.
  - The purpose of this guideline is to minimize privacy intrusion problems.
- (7) Encourage the preservation of as much existing landscaping and mature trees as possible and the provision of appropriate new soft landscaping while avoiding an excessively hard, urban look to the site.
  - This guideline is intended to allow the existing planting on the site to provide the larger dwelling bulk with the maximum screening possible, while encouraging the development of additional soft, passive landscaped areas around the dwelling, which fit well with the suburban nature of Burnaby's residential neighbourhoods.

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4.0 CONCLUSION:

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These guidelines are submitted to Council for its approval, to be utilized by staff in assessing development proposals for larger single-family homes on R "a" District zoned sites. These guidelines are intended to provide Council and staff with a framework for assessing large single-family dwelling proposals in order to ensure development which is compatible with the surrounding neighbourhood, while still providing a reasonable potential gross floor area which can be developed on the R "a" District zoned lots.

Upon Council approval of these guidelines, staff will also be enabled to pursue a suitable development proposal with the applicant for Rezoning Reference #87/88, in which Council authorization for staff to work with the applicant towards a suitable plan of development was pending Council consideration of the urban design guidelines for single-family dwelling large lot development.

  
A. L. Parr  
DIRECTOR PLANNING &  
BUILDING INSPECTION

*ANP*

BW:ap