

CITY OF BURNABY

COMMUNITY PLANNING & HOUSING COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: ARMSTRONG AND MONROE AVENUE AREA REZONING

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** Council deny the request for an area rezoning of the 8800 - 8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue (south side) and Armstrong Avenue (north side) to the R4 District.
2. **THAT** the residents and property owners in the area proposed for rezoning be notified of Council's decision.

REPORT

The Community Planning and Housing Committee, at its Open meeting held on 2002 April 23, received and adopted the attached report reviewing the results of the public consultation process regarding a proposed area rezoning of the 8800-8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue and Armstrong Avenue to the R4 District. Of the 25 properties in the area, only 10 indicated support for the area rezoning, and 10 indicated opposition. Therefore, the benchmark figure of fifty percent of all properties in support of the area rezoning was not reached. Accordingly, the Committee recommended that this rezoning request be denied.

Respectfully submitted,

Councillor C. Redman
Chair

Councillor G. Begin
Member

COPY: - CITY MANAGER
- DIR. ENGINEERING

Councillor D. Johnston
Member

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS April 18, 2002
COMMUNITY PLANNING AND HOUSING COMMITTEE

FROM: DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE:16.400.19

SUBJECT: ARMSTRONG AND MONROE AVENUE AREA REZONING

PURPOSE: REQUEST FOR AN AREA REZONING TO THE R4 DISTRICT OF THE 8800-8900 BLOCKS OF MONROE AVENUE AND ARMSTRONG AVENUE

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. **THAT** the Community Planning and Housing Committee recommend to Council that the request for an area rezoning of the 8800 - 8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue (south side) and Armstrong Avenue (north side) to the R4 District be denied.
2. **THAT** the Community Planning and Housing Committee recommend to Council that the residents and property owners in the area proposed for rezoning be notified of Council's decision.

REPORT

1.0 BACKGROUND

At its meeting of April 24, 2001, the Community Planning and Housing Committee was presented with a petition from owners of two properties located in the 8800 block of Monroe Avenue to request a rezoning of the 8800-8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue (south side only) and Armstrong Avenue (north side only) to the R4 District to permit the future subdivision of seven larger lots, each into two smaller residential lots (see Figure 1 *attached*). The petition was signed by 18 of the twenty five property owners. On the recommendation of the Community Planning and Housing Committee, Council, at its regular meeting of July 9, 2001 authorized staff to initiate a consultation process to determine the level of support for this citizen initiated area rezoning process.

The purpose of this report is to review the results of the public consultation process regarding a proposed area rezoning of the 8800-8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue and Armstrong Avenue to the R4 District. This report describes the consultation process, summarizes and analyzes the results of the Open House and mail-back questionnaire and comment sheets.

2.0 THE NEIGHBOURHOOD

The 8800-8900 blocks of Armstrong (north side) and Monroe Avenue (south side) are currently zoned R2 District and R9 District. Of the 25 lots, all but seven of the lots have a width of 45 feet and an area of 4456 feet. Five of the lots have a width of 90 feet and an area of roughly 8900 square feet, and 2 of the lots have a width of 85 and an area of 9000 square feet. Under the R2 District, subdivision of these lots is not possible.

The housing stock is between 20 to 30 years in age, with the exception of an older house at the eastern end of Armstrong Avenue. While having a mix of lot sizes, most of the houses were built at the same time creating some general consistency in building form. In general, the housing stock, including six of the seven houses located on lots that would gain subdivision potential, are in good condition.

The neighbourhood was also the subject of a previous area rezoning proposal in 1997. At that time, a larger area bounded by 15th Avenue, Armstrong Avenue, Cascade Street to Cariboo Road was considered for an area rezoning to the R5 District. The area rezoning was not pursued due to a lack of support in the neighbourhood. Two major reasons were cited for the lack of support; firstly the fact that the R5 District would give two-family potential to the lots on the north side of Monroe Avenue, and that the neighbourhood was viewed to be a very stable area. As four years had elapsed since the previous area rezoning was attempted, and the proposal involved a different zoning category (R4 District rather than R5 District) and different geographic area, it was recommended by the Community Planning and Housing Committee that a new area rezoning process be pursued.

3.0 THE REZONING REQUEST

Of the 25 properties in the subject area, the proponents collected 18 signatures in support of an area rezoning to the R4 District.

Seven lots with widths of 90 feet or greater currently do not have the ability to subdivide under the provisions of the R2 District. If the area rezoning was successful, under the provisions of the small lot subcategory of the R4 District, each of these lots would achieve future subdivision potential with the ability to construct a single family dwelling on each lot.

4.0 THE CONSULTATION PROCESS

The consultation process included the distribution by mail, in February 2002, of a brochure and questionnaire to the property owners and residents in the area proposed to be rezoned, and the distribution of a brochure and comment sheet to property owners and residents in the consultation area. A public Open House meeting was held on February 25, 2002 at Armstrong Elementary School. A similar area rezoning proposal for the 8800 block of 15th Avenue was also the subject of the Open House meeting. A reminder notice was also mailed to those owners and residents who had not returned the questionnaire or comment sheet by March 4, 2002.

4.1 The Open House

Twenty-eight people attended the Open House at Armstrong Elementary School. The majority of the people (about 85%) attended the meeting to learn more about the Monroe/Armstrong Avenue area rezoning. Throughout the meeting, it was apparent that there was a strong difference in opinion amongst the attendees regarding the area rezoning proposal. Staff made a short presentation to ensure that consistent information about the area rezoning was understood, and to facilitate a question period. Very strong views in opposition to the area rezoning were voiced by a handful of people in attendance. The following comments were made by those in support of the proposal:

- Rezoning of the area made sense as only 18 of the 25 lots were undersized according to R2 standards.
- Unfair to not allow subdivision of the larger lots.
- Three property owners of the large lots offered to put a covenant on their property preventing two-family development.

The following comments were made by those in opposition to the proposal:

- The seven additional houses would add to traffic problems in the area. It is difficult to exit Monroe Avenue during before and after school times, and the additional houses would exacerbate this situation.
- Illegal suite problem would increase with seven new houses.
- Against any change in density in the neighbourhood.

- Felt that the process was motivated by the potential financial gain of the large property owners.
- Felt that since residents rejected the area rezoning in the past, this process should not have been initiated again.
- Concern about the process itself. Not all property owners were asked to sign the originating petition by the proponent; residents on other side of Monroe Avenue (area not proposed for rezoning) felt that they should have had a questionnaire rather than a comment sheet as this proposal directly affects them.

4.2 The Questionnaire and Comment Sheet Results

Questionnaires were sent to all property owners and residents in the area directly proposed to be rezoned in the citizen-initiated area rezoning process. As with our usual practice and contained in Council adopted policy on citizen-initiated area rezoning proposals, comment sheets rather than questionnaires are sent to properties adjacent to the area under consideration for rezoning. The following table contains the results of the questionnaire:

**TABLE 1: Owners* Questionnaire Results:
 Monroe and Armstrong Avenues**

	# Properties	Yes	No	Undecided	No response
Monroe Ave.	12	6	6	0	0
Armstrong Ave.	13	4	4	0	5
Total	25	10	10	0	5

* all respondents were resident owners. No tenants or owners who lived elsewhere responded.

Comments from those in favour of area rezoning:

Two of those in support of the area rezoning offered to put a covenant on the property to restrict the use of the lot to single family houses only. Another in support noted that the 45 foot wide lots in the Cariboo Heights area have been a success from the perspective of the neighbourhood. Another proponent felt that he should be permitted to subdivide his 90 foot wide property in a manner similar to the majority

of the neighbourhood. One respondent stated their support as long as the rezoning does not involve an increase in assessed value of his property and an increase in property taxes. Six of those indicating support for the proposal own lots that would gain subdivision potential if the area rezoning was successful.

Comments from those opposed to the area rezoning:

Most commonly cited concerns were related to increased traffic, cars and reduced parking resulting from the additional houses. Specific concern was raised about increased traffic on the lane between Armstrong and Monroe and especially the substandard lane that is parallel to Cariboo Road. One respondent suggested that Monroe Avenue be re-opened to Cariboo Road in order to allow easier access and egress to the area. Four respondents stated their general opposition to an increase in density in the neighbourhood. Concern was also raised from one respondent about an increase in illegal suites from the proposed area rezoning. Two respondents had a concern about the process as they were not approached to sign the original petition circulated by the proponents, and they felt that owners on the north side of Monroe Avenue were entitled to a questionnaire to comment on the rezoning. Nine of the ten respondents opposed to the area rezoning proposal owned lots that would not gain subdivision potential under the proposed area rezoning.

Comment Sheets were sent to the owners and residents of 21 properties adjacent to the area proposed for rezoning to the R4 District. Of these, four sheets were returned with two respondents indicating that support for the area rezoning as they feel houses on 45 foot lots were appropriate in this area. Two respondents opposed the area rezoning, citing increased traffic, suites, crowding of schools and too much density. One of the respondents elaborated that suites should be required to pay their share of taxes and water/sewer levies.

5.0 ANALYSIS

The City initiated area rezoning process was developed as a way that property owners and residents in a neighbourhood could request that an area be rezoned to permit small lot development. The process to consider the area rezoning is initiated by residents in the neighbourhood in order to proceed to a review process, and if successful, a formal rezoning.

The key factor in ascertaining whether an area rezoning process will proceed is the determination of whether a “majority opinion” in support of the rezoning exists. Through the public consultation and questionnaire process, staff determine whether the neighbourhood supports or does not support the rezoning. If it was determined that a majority opinion exists, then staff would recommend to the Community Planning and Housing Committee that the proposed rezoning proceed to the formal rezoning stage and be referred to a Public Hearing.

To initiate the request, the proponents submitted a petition that indicated a strong support for the area rezoning to the R4 District, with 18 of the 25 property owners indicating support. It is important to note that the process does not require the proponent to approach every property owner. The proponent only needs to demonstrate that there is a strong interest in the neighbourhood in exploring the area rezoning option. In order to ensure a transparent process that is free of a perception of bias, only the questionnaires and comment sheets distributed by City staff are considered in the analysis that determines whether or not the area rezoning is supported by the neighbourhood.

Majority opinion in support of an area rezoning process is determined by the presence of at least one-half of the property owners indicating support. In the case of this area rezoning, ten of the twenty-five property owners supported the proposal, representing forty percent of the total properties affected by the proposed area rezoning. As well, of those who responded (20 responses), ten or 50 percent of the total responses indicated support. Further, as indicated through the discussion at the Open House and comments on the questionnaires and comment sheets that were submitted, many of those who opposed the area rezoning had strong views. In the case of the proposed area rezoning, it is clear that a majority opinion in support does not exist.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The purpose of this report is to review the results of the public consultation process regarding a proposed area rezoning of the 8800-8900 blocks of Monroe Avenue and Armstrong Avenue to the R4 District. This report describes the consultation process, summarizes and analyzes the results of the Open House and the results of the mail-back questionnaire and comment sheets.

Of the 25 properties in the area, only 10 indicated support for the area rezoning, and 10 indicated opposition. Therefore, the benchmark figure of fifty percent of all properties in support of the area rezoning was not reached, and it can be concluded that a majority opinion in support of the area rezoning is not present. As well, many of the comments submitted in opposition to the area rezoning indicated strong negative opinion regarding the area rezoning. Because of the lack of demonstrated support, it is recommended that the Community Planning and Housing Committee recommend to Council that this area rezoning not be pursued.

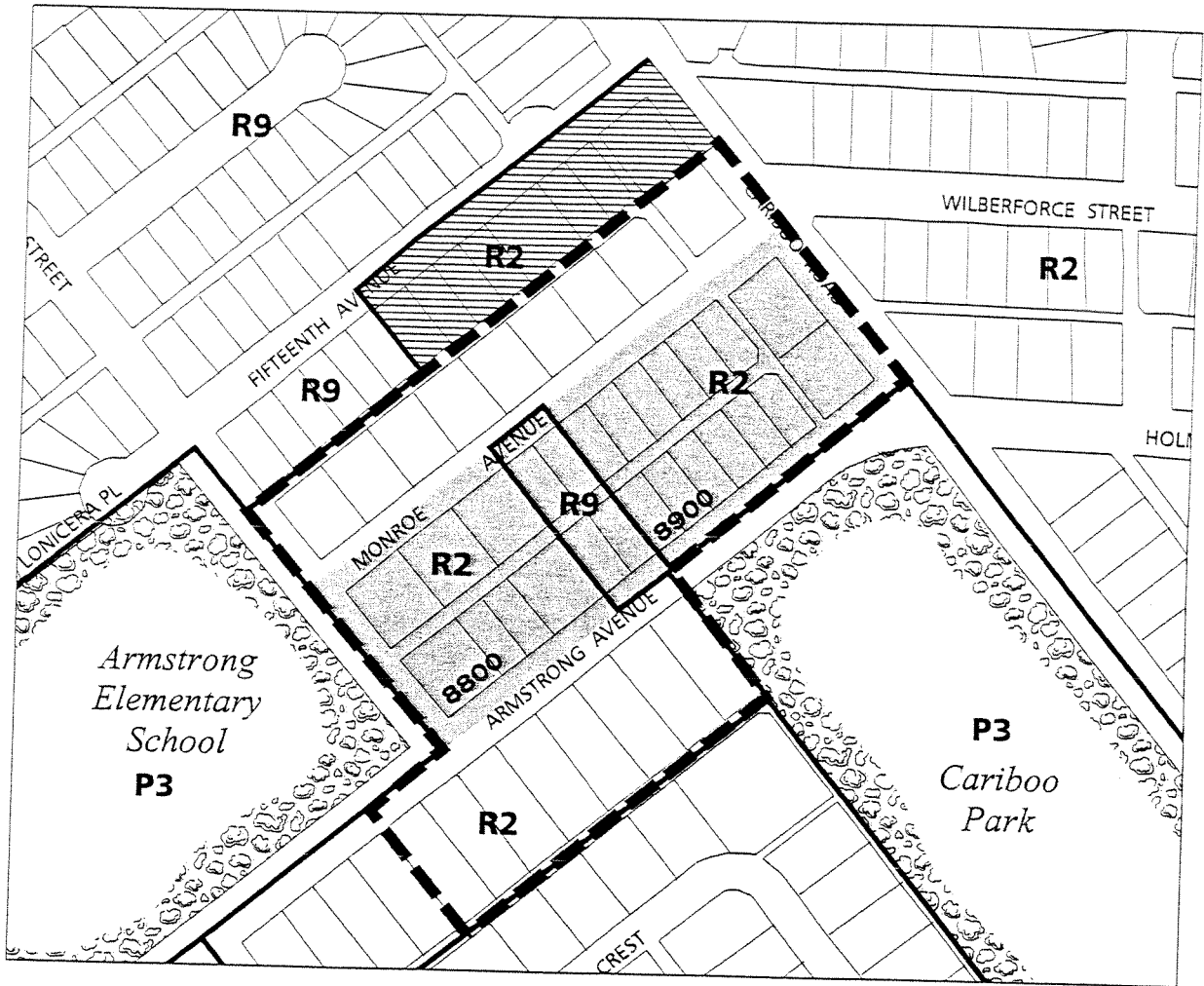
B. Belhouse
for J.S. Belhouse, Director
PLANNING & BUILDING

BG/mw

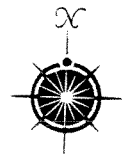
Attachment

cc: City Manager
City Clerk
Director Engineering

R:\Long Range Clerical\DOCS\BEV\Reports\Armstrong and Monroe Avenue Area Rezoning.wpd



**Proposed zoning boundary adjustment
R2/R9 to R4 District**






- 
 Proposed area rezoning R2/R9 to R4 District
 8800-8900 blocks Monroe Avenue and Armstrong Avenue
- 
 Consultation Area
- 
 8884-8964 15th Avenue, 7634 Cariboo Road
 subject to separate zoning boundary adjustment process

Figure1

