

**TO:** CITY MANAGER 2003 August 06  
**FROM:** DIRECTOR PLANNING AND BUILDING OUR FILE: 17.902.1  
**SUBJECT:** ZONING BYLAW AMENDMENT REGULATING SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR SENIORS  
**PURPOSE:** To provide a clarification of the calculation method to determine the amount of exempt amenity floor area for supportive housing developments.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. **THAT** Council authorize the Burnaby Zoning Bylaw to be amended to incorporate the changes to the regulations pertaining to supportive housing outlined in Section 3.0 of this report; and
2. **THAT** the text amendment bylaw on supportive housing for seniors appearing elsewhere on this Agenda be advanced to First Reading and be placed on the Agenda for the Public Hearing scheduled for 2003 August 26.

**REPORT**

**1.0 BACKGROUND**

At its "Open" meeting of 2003 June 16, Council adopted the recommendations contained in a report from the Housing Committee that would change regulations pertaining to "Category B" supportive housing for seniors developments. Specifically, the recommended amendments include:

1. Changes to minimum unit sizes for studio, one-bedroom units and the addition of a new category of unit, known as a "junior one-bedroom".
2. Exclusion from the allowable maximum Floor Area Ratio, of amenity space, not to exceed 12% of the total gross floor area, to encourage the inclusion of generous amounts of common and amenity space in supportive housing development.
3. Outright increase in density of 0.2 FAR for supportive housing development in key high density Town Centre locations to act as an incentive to the development of supportive housing in higher density locations in the City.

Council also requested that the report be distributed to community groups and developers involved with seniors supportive housing. Staff, at the same time, commenced detailed discussions with a developer on a specific “Category B” supportive housing project.

Through practical application of the proposed method of calculating the amenity floor area exemption on an actual project, it has become evident that there are some technical difficulties with certain aspects of the proposed zoning bylaw text amendment as it relates to calculation of the allowable amenity area. In order to rectify this situation, this report proposes an alternative method to calculate the exempt floor area that results in an amount of floor area being exempted that better meets the intent of the 12% of total floor area that had been proposed.

The proposed alternative method of calculating the exempt amenity floor area is contained in the text amendment bylaw pertaining to “Category B” supportive housing that appears elsewhere on tonight’s agenda for consideration of First Reading.

**2.0 FLOOR AREA EXEMPTION FOR AMENITY FLOOR AREA**

Supportive seniors housing projects must include an array of services for the residents, including dining rooms, social areas, concierge services, recreation space and health services. Compared to typical multi-family housing, supportive housing for seniors require that a much higher percentage of the floor area be devoted to amenity space rather than more marketable residential space.

Recognizing this, Council adopted a recommendation that authorized a text amendment to the Zoning Bylaw that would include an exemption for amenity floor area that does not exceed 12% of the gross floor area located in a supportive housing development. The 12% exemption for amenity space reflects a balance between the need to provide an incentive to encourage amenity space that are adequate to foster social interaction and activities, and the need to ensure that the extra density does not negatively impact neighbourhood compatibility.

In calculating the allowable building area for supportive seniors developments, it became apparent that developers were experiencing uncertainty in determining whether the bonus amenity space was calculated on the basis of 12% of the residential floor area only, or on the total floor area included in the floor area ratio, or on the total gross floor area (the intention as specified in the original report).

**Table 1:** Comparison of Calculation Methods for Exempt Amenity Floor Area

Method of Calculation	Site Area (sq. ft.)	FAR (sq. ft.)	Max. Floor area included in countable FAR (sq. ft.)	Calculation of Exempt Amenity Floor Area		Total Floor Area (Floor Area included in FAR and amenity (sq. ft.))	Exempted amenity as a % of Total Floor Area
				12% of floor area included in countable FAR (sq. ft.)	13.6 % of floor area included in countable FAR (sq. ft.)		
Method 1 (common interpretation by developers)	43560	2.4	104544	12545		117089	10.7%
Method 2 (proposed simplified method)	43560	2.4	104544		14218	118762	12%

Table 1 illustrates the difficulty in interpretation. Method 1 indicates the calculation method that was being commonly understood by developers. In this case, the developers were calculating the bonus amenity space as a simple 12% of the floor area included in the maximum FAR. The result is that the exempt amenity space is equivalent to 10.7% of the total floor area, which is short of the 12% specified in the original report.

Method 2 provides a simplified, alternative method of calculation the exempt amenity space based on 13.6% of the floor area included in the FAR. The net floor areas that result from the calculation based on 13.6% of the gross floor area included in the countable FAR is equivalent to 12% of total gross floor, which was the original intent of the proposed change to the bylaw. This method is viewed as adding a significant degree of clarity to the calculation of the amenity provision for “Category B” supportive housing, and meets the intent of the proposal that was previously adopted by Council.

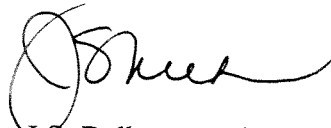
### 3.0 CONCLUSION

It is recommended that Council authorize the Zoning Bylaw to be amended to incorporate changes to the regulations pertaining to supportive housing for seniors, as previously outlined in the report that was considered by Council on 2003 June 26, including:

- changes to minimum unit sizes for studio, one-bedroom units and the addition of a new category of unit, known as “junior one-bedroom”;
- outright increase in density of 0.2 FAR for supportive housing developments in key Town Centre locations.

Further, in order to simplify and clarify the calculation of exempt amenity space, it is recommended that a new definition of “amenity space, Category B supportive housing” be added to the Zoning Bylaw. As well, the text of the Zoning Bylaw would include an exemption for floor area used for amenity purposes that does not exceed 13.6% of the countable floor area included in the floor area ratio.

Appearing elsewhere on the agenda for tonight’s Council meeting is the text amendment bylaw pertaining to “Category B” supportive seniors housing that includes the proposed method of calculating the floor area exemption for amenity floor area. It is recommended that this bylaw be advanced to First Reading and be placed on the agenda of the Public Hearing scheduled for 2003 August 26.



J.S. Belhouse, Director  
PLANNING AND BUILDING

BG/sla

cc: City Clerk  
City Solicitor  
Chief Building Inspector