

Lynda ter Borg... submission to Public Hearing on September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015

My written submission includes an important memo from Wayne Craig, that was left out of the last Council meeting minutes held July 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015, addressed to the Mayor and Councillors. The Clerk has now added it to these proceedings. **SHOW MEMO(A)** It is also misdated as 2014 rather than 2015. It references the Mayor's amendment which was a last minute change to alter the vertical envelope to 15m rather than accepting the staff recommendation of 12m. This memo also has an addendum showing how ceiling heights are measured for double height calculations. This will help to remove ambiguity from the bylaw.

It is important to remember, the first major "building massing" complaints by residents of Tranquille Place in 2006 resulted in a 5 foot overall increase to building heights for 2 and 2 1/2 storey houses in 2008. A complete opposite of what was expected and requested.

Wayne Craig promised a one year review of the impact of those height changes and that never happened. **SHOW (B)**

Seven years later, this Bylaw restores the overall building height for 2 storey houses to 29 feet but leaves the 2 1/2 storey height at 34.5 feet. This is not suitable. How many 2 1/2 storey houses have been built in the City in the last 12 months? My prediction is this difference in heights will push up the number of 2 1/2 storey houses constructed considerably and that will be an unfortunate but predictable outcome.

In the last 7 years we have ongoing citizens complaints and more formal referrals from council to staff to look into building massing and heights. There have been no substantial changes and the houses got bigger and bigger. Not by increased FAR but by volume. **SHOW (C) clarifies definitions but not for double height**

As you can see in the picture of this house and from the second storey floor plan **SHOW (D and E)**, approximately half of the first floor has nothing above it.... it is void. These voids can be anything from 16 to 22 feet high and are about 800 to 1000 sq. ft. and often more in most of the mega houses we see today. The excessive use of voids has resulted in a compressed second floor area that is only half of the lower floor plate. These are complicated designs most often not drawn by certified professionals. Does the City require these plans and houses to be engineer certified for earthquake preparedness?

If the double heights were counted accurately in this house you would see that it is not a 3,700 sq. ft. home it is equivalent to a 4,500 sq. ft. home. The exterior walls go up to 20 and 22 feet. There is no way you can get a vertical envelope set back to work on a 20 foot single storey side wall.

We are opposed to these 4,500 sq. ft. homes that are too big for the lots, extend to the maximum of every setback, overshadow their neighbours, and are masquerading as if they are 3,700 sq. ft.

If you keep the double height at 16ft 4 inches you keep the main floor stretched out to the maximum setbacks. You keep the voids and you keep the massing problems. Change the double height calculations to meet the Metro standard at 12 feet. The house will reduce in volume and the lot

coverage will naturally decrease. Backyards, privacy and sunshine will return for all. The house will be in balance with their lots and will fit more compatibly with old and new houses. They will still have first floor rooms heights 50 per cent taller than their 8 foot ceiling old timer neighbours .

Since the start of January this year, Vancouver has sold over 300 homes priced over \$4,000,000. Their standard is 12 ft. If we don't build 16 ft., no one else will so there is no danger of losing buyers elsewhere. We are a desirable place to live and always will be. We don't need height tricks to attract buyers. Have confidence in building a good product.

To continue this 16.4 height to mid and small sized lots will break up the community even more. Your job as Councillors is to have the political will to do what is right for the long term for all lots, big and small.

We are at a tipping point for maintaining a sense of community if the LUC's rebuilds continue to produce some of these most outrageous narrow/tall mega houses. The overshadowing is worse than in the big lots. **SHOW (F and G) (Canso and Goldsmith)**. The quality of life on surrounding small and mid-sized lots cannot bear multiple 16.4 ft. double height ceilings and the requisite void spaces to fit them in.

Building full 3 storey grain elevators on LUC lots, most of which are only 100 feet or less in depth, is a pressure this community will be hard pressed to accept.

People fear they will be next to have their world changed when they look out their windows. **(SHOW (H))**.

What is the long term plan for this community? We are showing signs of stress. People are moving out, our school enrollment is dropping, we have vacant new homes.

Our most impartial professionals, trained architects whose knowledge and experience we value to guide this City are on our Design Advisory Panel and they have given their advise:

*Comments from the Panel were as follows: **SHOW (I)***

- (i) Maximum height definition of a storey to remain at 5 metres with the height defined to top plate of wall supporting the roof structure but not allowing drop ceiling, is susceptible to manipulations by the builder,*
- (ii) The proposed maximum ceiling height of 5 metres is too generous even for big houses, and*
- (iii) The proposed 3.7 metre maximum ceiling height is more appropriate.*

If your doctor told you to make changes for the betterment of your health... only a fool would ignore the warnings and just keep on partying with their wild west cowboy friends. It is time to take the bitter pill and clean house once and for all.

The built landscape in Richmond is filled with a variety of housing styles and sizes from old bylaws days, non-conforming now, to new builds, co-existing with old housing stock. You needn't try to make it

homogeneous. Making the change to 12ft double height, and 29 ft. overall height of building will be a change we can absorb for the long term betterment of all.

These new homes will be as desirable and will garner the best of price. There will be more creativity and less of the stereotypical building that we see today.

**Enforcement is paramount to managing change.**

In Gavin Woo's department, plans leave the City Hall with a stamp on the drawings to indicate ceilings must conform to 16.4 ft (SHOW (J)) "finished floor to underside ceiling/roof framing members." And these stampings were initiated well before the April 20<sup>th</sup> Public Hearing.

Some houses conform to this rule and some don't. Plan checkers say they can't be held responsible for what is permitted to be built on the site. How can this be? Rather than flood the department with violations, I have filed only two formal complaints regarding excessive overheight areas not being counted twice, infill exceeding allowable FAR, or required drop ceilings not being constructed. One complaint regarding a building inspector's own home is 8 weeks old and the other a demonstration house for a builder was filed 6 weeks ago. I asked for an external audit by a neutral party and have not heard back any results.

If a home is older and on a zoning lot you can probably fill in a carport or garage as an entertainment room but you cannot if you have already maximized your FAR.

On another matter, we have been trying to stop attic conversions when the maximum FAR has been reached for over 20 years. (SHOW (K)) *Effective immediately unfinished attic area in a single family dwelling must not incorporate any of the following features in the building design "framing the attic in a manner to allow sufficient headroom, for a future room"*

When do you think we will get it right?

We are having problems understanding why the Bylaws are not being applied fairly to all and what the consequences are if they are not followed.

Please tighten the ambiguity, enforce the bylaws, amend Bylaw 9280 to reduce double height to 3.7 m and overall height to 9m for all homes in Richmond. Anyone wanting a reasonable exception can always go to the Board of Variance.

Do the right thing, we must, by law, follow the OCP.

OCP (SHOW (L))

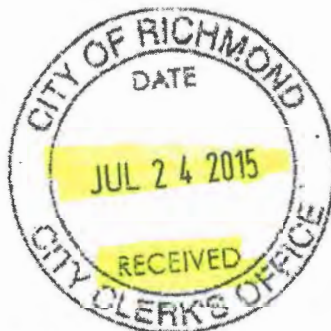
Political platforms

City vision statements





City of  
Richmond



TO: MAYOR & EACH  
COUNCILLOR  
FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

**Memorandum**  
Planning and Development Division  
Development Applications

To: Mayor and Councillors  
From: Wayne Craig  
Director of Development

Date: July 23, 2014  
File: 08-4430-01/2015-Vol 01

Re: **Proposed Zoning Bylaw Amendments to Regulate Building Massing and Accessory Structures in Single-Family and Two-Family Developments**

This memorandum responds to the Planning Committee motions passed at the July 21, 2015 Planning Committee meeting for the proposed Zoning Bylaw 8500 amendments to regulate single-family and two-family dwelling massing. The following motion was passed by Planning Committee:

- (1) *That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 9280 to amend the zoning regulations for building massing, interior ceiling height and floor area calculation, and accessory structure locations within single-family, coach house and two-unit dwelling zones be introduced and given first reading; and*
- (2) *That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 9281 to amend the residential vertical lot width building envelope within single-family, coach house and two-unit dwelling zones:*
  - a) *be updated at section 4.18.2 and 4.18.3 to change the figures "12.5 m" to "15 m"; and*
  - b) *be introduced and given first reading; and*
- (3) *That staff report back to Planning Committee in one (1) year on the implementation of the proposed zoning amendments to regulate building massing and accessory structures in single-family developments.*

Amendment Bylaw 9280

Proposed Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9280, as presented to Planning Committee, would introduce amendments to prohibit dropped ceilings, revise setback and height requirements for detached accessory structures, revise the maximum height regulations for 2 storey houses to limit the maximum height to 9 m and limit interior ceiling height to 5.0 m before an area with a tall ceiling would be counted twice for the purpose of floor area calculations.

During the Committee meeting, Planning Committee requested clarification regarding the measurement of interior ceiling height as proposed in Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9280, and how it would apply to various architectural details that could be constructed. In response to the questions, staff have reviewed the proposed definition of ceiling height in proposed Bylaw 9280,

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July 23, 2015

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and have amended the Bylaw 9280 (attached to this memorandum) as follows, for consideration of 1<sup>st</sup> reading:

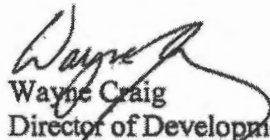
**"Height, ceiling** means the vertical distance from top of the finished floor of a storey to:

- a) the underside of the floor joist;
- b) the underside of the roof joist;
- c) the underside of the bottom chord of a structural truss; or
- d) the underside of a structural deck above that storey, whichever is the greatest distance from the finished floor."

Please refer to the cross-section sketches for various forms of construction provided in Attachment 1 for information on how interior ceiling height would be measured. Should Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9280 proceed to adoption, staff will prepare an information bulletin on interior ceiling height measurements to ensure that property owners, home designers and builders are aware of the new regulations.

Amendment Bylaw 9281

Planning Committee passed a motion to amend proposed Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9281 to retain the existing residential vertical lot width building envelope provisions for lots with a lot width of less than or equal to 15.0 m. Staff have revised Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9281 to reflect this change. The revised Zoning Bylaw 8500 Amendment Bylaw 9281 is provided with this memorandum for Council's consideration.

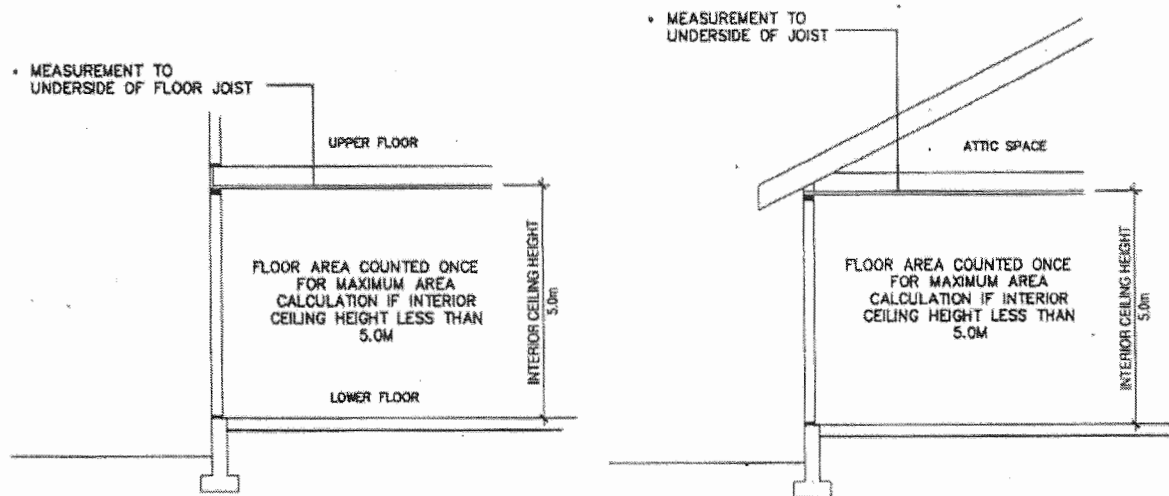
  
Wayne Craig  
Director of Development

BK:rg

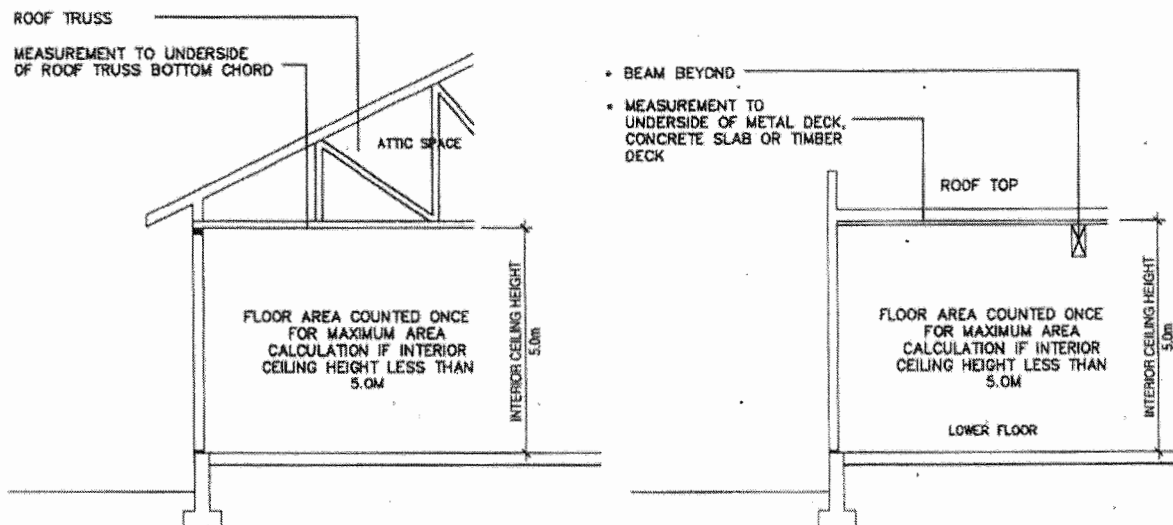
Attachment 1: Potential Ceiling Construction and Height Measurement

# Interior Ceiling Height Definition

## Measurement for flat ceiling situations



### ■ ceiling measurement at joist conditions

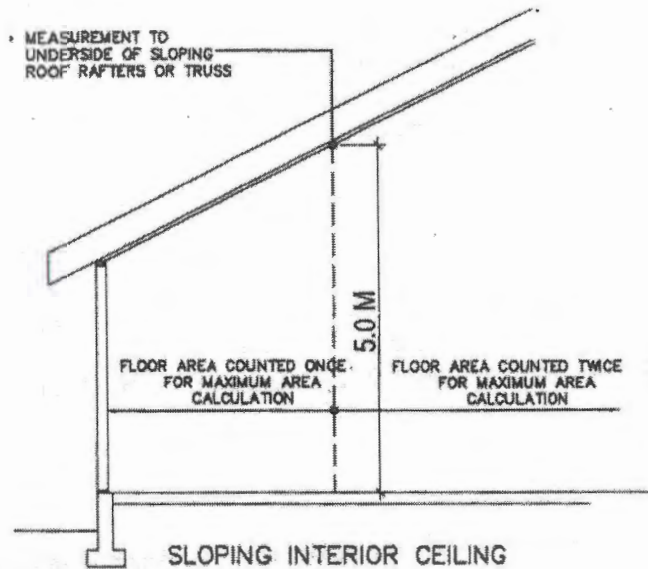


### ■ ceiling measurement at truss conditions

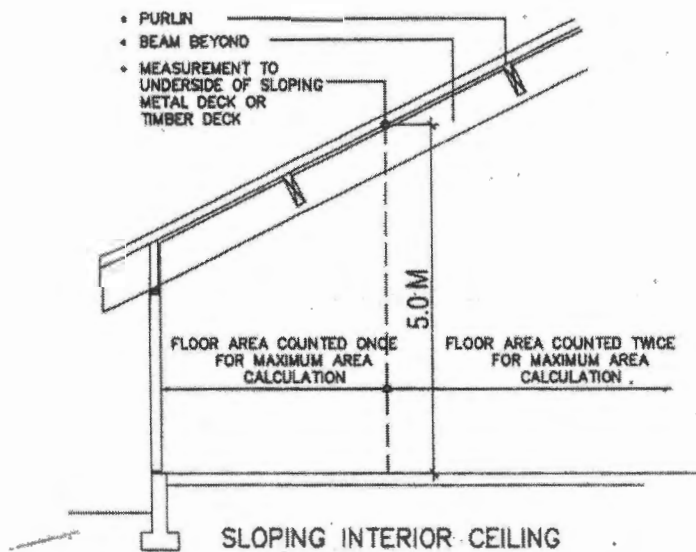
### ■ ceiling measurement at roof slab, and spanning deck conditions

# Interior Ceiling Height Definition

## Measurement for sloped ceiling situations



### ■ ceiling measurement at roof rafter condition



### ■ ceiling measurement at sloping roof deck conditions



# 2008 – Zoning Amendment Bylaw 8319

## Height Increase in Response to Concerns

### Conclusion

Planning Committee and Council have asked staff to examine the issue of single-family dwelling height specifically as it relates to 2½-storey single-family dwellings. Staff have reviewed the zoning provisions related to Building Height and Half-Storey, and have identified that some definitions in the Zoning Bylaw should be amended or added.


The proposed amendment to Zoning Bylaw No. 5300 will also address the potential building height issue resulting from the increase of minimum habitable elevations as proposed in the Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw No. 8204.

Staff will monitor the implementations of the proposed changes to the Zoning and Development Bylaw and determine if any further revisions are required.





Edwin Lee  
Planning Technician – Design  
(Local 4121)

EL/WC:rg



Wayne Craig  
Program Coordinator – Development  
(Local 4625)

Attachment 1: Building Height and Half-Storey Building Area dated April 8, 2008

 <b>City of Richmond</b> Planning and Development Department		<b>Report to Committee</b> To: <b>Committee</b> - July 23, 2008 Date: June 20, 2008
To:	Planning Committee	
From:	Brian J. Jackson Director of Development	File: 13-0460-20-0-019
Re:	Building Height and Half-Storey Building Area	
<b>Staff Recommendation</b> That the Zoning Amendment Bylaw No. 8319 be passed as amended to the Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw No. 5300 be amended and given final reading.		
 Brian J. Jackson Director of Development BJS		
<b>FOR ORIGINATING DEPARTMENT USE ONLY</b>		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Building Approval:	Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>	
REVIEWED BY TAG:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REMOVED <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>





**Zoning Bylaw 8500**

**No.: PERMITS-46**

**Date: 2010-09-14**

**Purpose:**

- To inform builders/owners and designers of the Zoning Bylaw 8500, that contains the following definitions.

**Background:**

- Some previous definitions have left these terms open to various interpretations, resulting in building designs not anticipated, and in some instances greatly impacting adjacent properties.
- The bylaw includes some of the following:
  - **"Crawl Space"** means an interior **building** space at or below **finished site grade**, between the underside of the floor system next above and the top of the floor slab on the ground surface below, having a vertical clear height less than 1.2 m (4.0 ft.).
  - **"Flood Plain Construction Level"** means the minimum elevation level identified in *Flood Plain Designation and Protection Bylaw No 8204*, as amended.
  - **"Finished Site Grade"** means:
    - i) in Area 'A' indicated on Schedule 'A' to Division 100 attached to and forming part of this Bylaw the average ground elevation identified on a **lot** grading plan approved by the City. The average ground elevation must not exceed 0.6 m (2 ft.) above the highest elevation of the crown of any **public road** abutting the **lot**;
    - ii) in Area 'B' indicated on Schedule 'A' to Division 100 attached to and forming part of this Bylaw the average ground elevation identified on a **lot** grading plan approved by the City. The average ground elevation must not exceed:
      - a) 0.6 m (2 ft.) above the highest elevation of the crown of any **public road** abutting the **lot**; or
      - b) where the average ground elevation calculated pursuant to ii) a) above is more than 1.2 m (4 ft.) below the required **Flood Plain Construction Level** the average ground elevation may be increased to 1.2 m (4 ft.) below the required **Flood Plain Construction Level**.

(see Diagram A)

  - **"Building Height"** means the vertical distance between **finished site grade** and:
    - i) the highest point of a **building** having a flat roof;
    - ii) the mid-point between the eaves line and ridge of a roof having a roof pitch greater than 4-to-12 and not exceeding a roof pitch of 12-to-12, provided that, the ridge of the roof is not more than 1.5 m (5 ft.) above the mid-point;

See over →

- iii) the highest point of a **building** having a roof pitch other than those identified in ii) above;
- iv) the greater of the measurements referred to in i), ii) and iii) above in the case of a **building** with more than one type of roof.

(see Diagram B)

- **"Half-Storey"** means the uppermost **storey** of a **building** meeting the following criteria:
  - i) the **habitable space** is situated wholly under the framing of the roof;
  - ii) the **habitable space** does not exceed 50% of the **storey** situated immediately below;
  - iii) the top of the exterior wall plates is not greater than 0.6 m (2 ft.) above the floor of such **storey** on any two adjacent exterior walls;
  - iv) a maximum of two opposite exterior walls may have a dimension greater than 0.6 m (2 ft.) between the top of the exterior wall plate and the floor of such **storey**.

### Implementation:

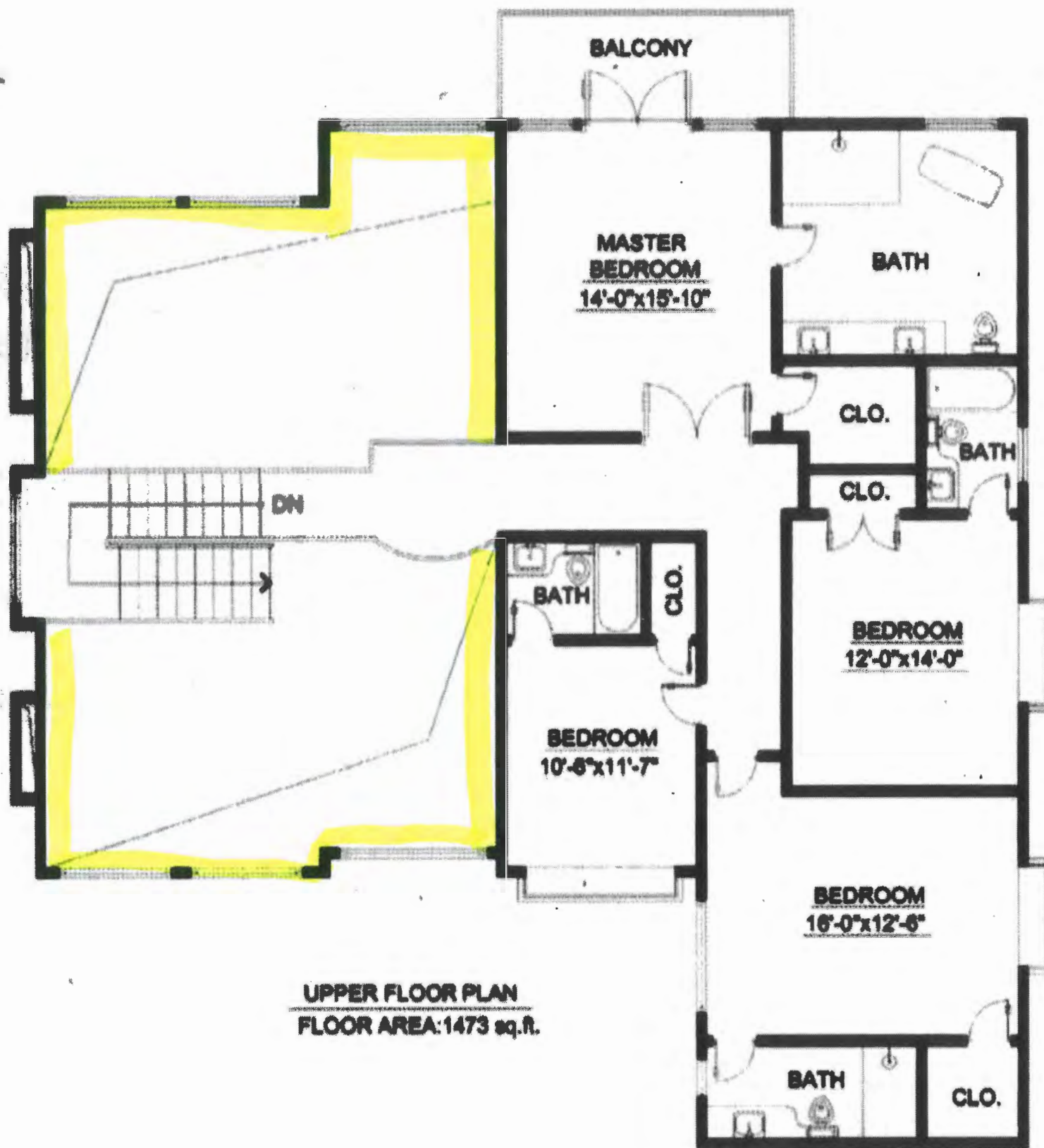
- Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions concerning this bulletin, please contact the Zoning Division at 604-276-4017 or Building Approvals Division at 604-276-4285.

See attached









**UPPER FLOOR PLAN**  
**FLOOR AREA: 1473 sq.ft.**





04/28/2015 12:51







## Advisory Design Panel

### Thursday, May 21, 2015

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Mr. Cooper added that the above proposals are intended to lower the height of single-family building and transfer the mass away from the neighbours to the middle of the buildable volume.

Also, Mr. Cooper presented (i) three options on maximum height definition of a storey to address concerns on building bulk due to high floor to floor heights, (ii) proposed changes to attached garage construction to control height and massing, (iii) proposed changes to limit the massing and required setbacks of detached accessory buildings with an area of 10 square metres or less, and (iv) massing and setback requirements for detached accessory building greater than 10 m<sup>2</sup> in area, limited to a maximum of 40% of the rear yard, and a maximum size limit of 70 square metres.

*(Jubin Jalili left the meeting at 6:15 p.m. and did not return)*

#### Panel Discussion

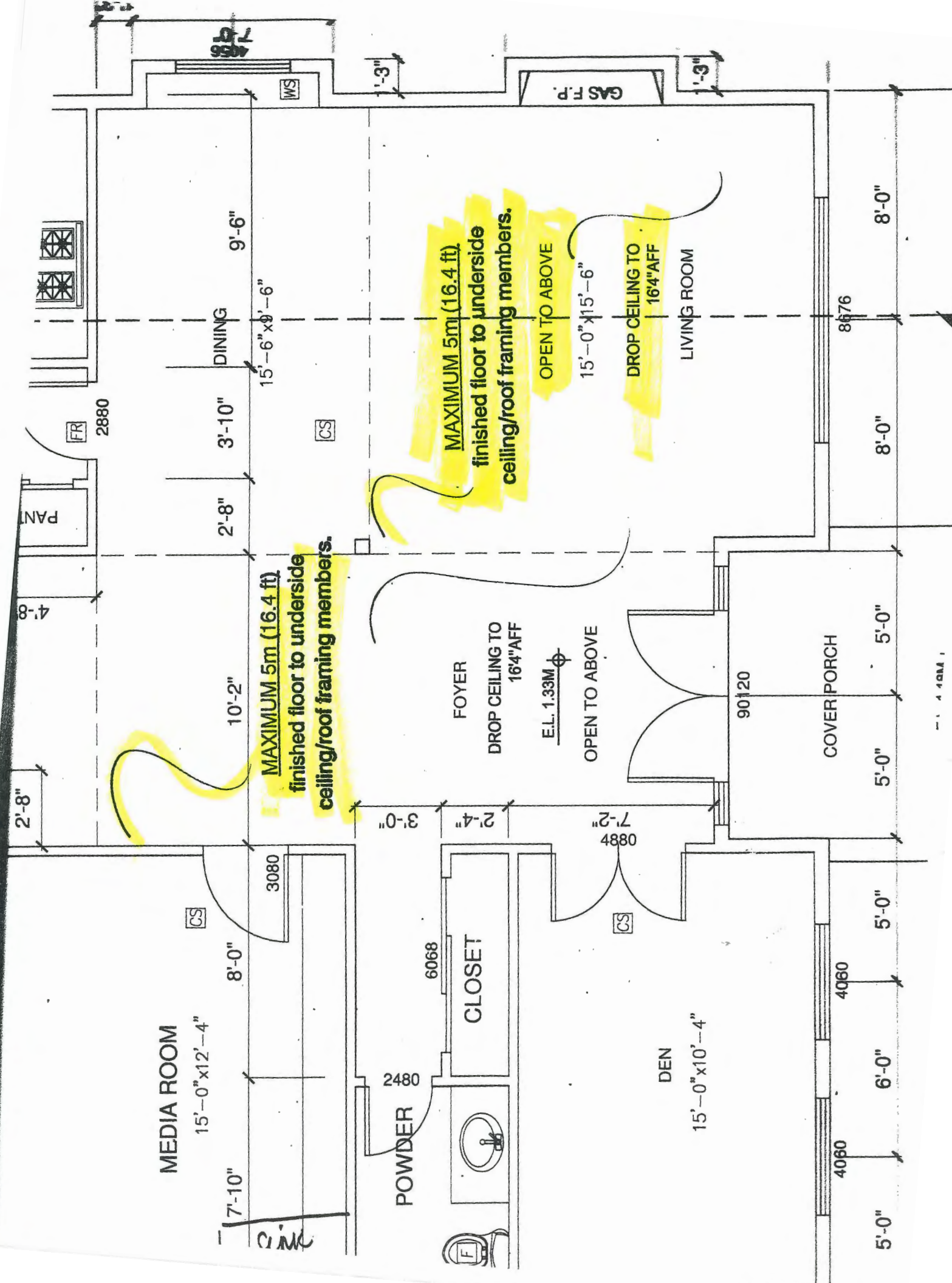
*Comments from the Panel were as follows:*

With regard to the three options presented by staff regarding proposed changes to the current Zoning Bylaw 8500 height definition of a storey, a Panel member commented that (i) Option 1, which allows the maximum height definition of a storey to remain at 5 metres with the height defined to top plate of wall supporting the roof structure but not allowing drop ceiling, is susceptible to manipulations by the builder, (ii) the proposed maximum ceiling height of 5 metres is too generous even for big houses, and (iii) the proposed 3.7 metre maximum ceiling height is more appropriate.

With regard to the proposed amendments to the current Zoning Bylaw 8500 to control the massing of single-family homes, a Panel member noted that the goal can be achieved through a simpler formula which provides flexibility, not stifle creativity, and not cause uniformity of design of single-family homes.

A Panel member noted that staff is going in the right direction and expressed appreciation for their efforts to investigate the design implications of proposed amendments to current Zoning Bylaw 8500. Also, support was expressed for the staff proposal for a maximum building depth of 50 percent of the lot depth. In addition, it was noted that the staff proposals for the secondary vertical building envelope and wall plane articulation to control massing may result in homogeneity of house design.

Panel commented that more time is needed to study and provide their comments regarding the proposed amendments to Zoning Bylaw 8500. In response to the comment of Panel, Mr. Konkin advised that Panel members are welcome to submit their written comments to staff.







**Attic Spaces in a Single  
Family Dwelling**

**No.: PERMITS-20**

**Date: 1999-05-10**

**Revised: 2011-08-16**

**Purpose:**

- To inform owners and contractors that constructing an accessible unfinished attic in a single family dwelling, for future conversion into a liveable space when the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) has been reached, is not permitted.

**Background:**

- It has come to our attention that a number of single family dwellings are being designed and built to facilitate conversion of an accessible unfinished attic space into a liveable area including storage space. The area of the liveable area would be included as part of the FAR and if the single family dwelling has already reached the maximum permitted FAR, converting such areas contravenes the Zoning Bylaw.

**Implementation:**

- **Effective immediately unfinished attic areas in a single family dwelling must not incorporate any of the following features in the building design:**
  - Attic ceiling joists, when permitted, and the bottom cord of roof trusses sized to support more than a ceiling load as prescribed by the BC Building Code.
  - Installing sub-flooring over the bottom cord of roof trusses or when permitted, attic ceiling joists.
  - Storing or applying interior finishing material for walls or ceilings of the attic.
  - Insulating the attic space from the exterior space.
  - Roughing-in electrical wiring or heating system.
  - Providing truss designs to permit the future removal of the central web members.
  - Framing the attic in a manner to allow sufficient headroom, for a future room.
  - Framing a floor/ceiling or wall assembly to facilitate a future stair or doorway opening other than a required attic access in compliance with the BC Building Code.
- **Effective immediately framing material used for unfinished attic areas in a single family dwelling is limited to the following:**
  - Conventional roof rafter and ceiling joist assembly when the clear height from the underside of the ceiling joist to the highest point within the attic area is less than 1.5 m.
  - Conventional web trusses (Fink or Howe) are permissible for all attic areas.

Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions concerning this bulletin, please contact the Supervisor, Permits at 604-276-4278.

















## 3.2 Neighbourhood Character and Sense of Place

### OVERVIEW:

Some say that communities happen on foot, so enhancing the character and accessibility of neighbourhoods is important.

### OBJECTIVE 1:

Continue to protect single family neighbourhoods outside the City Centre.

### POLICIES:

#### Single Family Land Uses

- promote single family uses within residential quarter sections;
- explore incentives and other mechanisms to encourage the retention of existing housing stock in established single family neighbourhoods (e.g., secondary suites);

#### Neighbourliness and Character Retention

- recognize that the physical elements of neighbourhoods such as housing styles, existing building setbacks, exterior finishes, building height and massing, existing trees and landscaping, attractive and appealing streets, street trees are just some of the factors that create the character of established single family neighbourhoods;
- work to ensure that new single family housing complements established single-family neighbourhoods using zoning or other appropriate regulations;
- continue to implement the Single Family Lot Size Policies to ensure that changes to the physical character of single family neighbourhoods occurs in a fair, complementary manner with community consultation;
- actively explore alternatives to Land Use Contracts (LUCs) (e.g., seek Provincial legislative changes, replace LUC with appropriate zones, apply development permit guidelines) to achieve better land use management over time;



- to encourage single family housing compatibility when requested by neighbourhoods, consider amending policies and bylaws (e.g., zoning), for example, to modify yard and building height requirements.

#### **Densification in Residential Areas**

- carefully manage coach houses and granny flats in residential areas as approved by Council (e.g., Edgemere; Burkeville; along arterial roads);
- coach houses and granny flats are not anticipated to be allowed in other areas except in Neighbourhood Centres. If such requests are made from owners and other neighbourhoods, they may be considered on a case by case rezoning basis;
- limit arterial road town houses to along certain arterial roads;
- carefully manage the densification of shopping centres outside the City Centre.

#### **OBJECTIVE 2:**

**Enhance neighbourhood character and sense of place by considering community values.**

#### **POLICIES:**

- a) when enhancing neighbourhoods, consider the following community values, for example:
  - sustainability objectives;
  - the compatibility of new housing types;
  - local employment opportunities;
  - traffic impacts and improving transit, walking, bicycling and rolling opportunities;
  - existing and future infrastructure;
  - the provision of community amenities;
  - other as necessary;
- b) encourage local commercial uses such as corner grocery stores, and new commercial and mixed uses where appropriate;
- c) applications to re-designate from "Community Institutional" to other OCP designations and to rezone Assembly zoned land for the purpose of redevelopment will be considered on a case by case basis:
  - without the need to retain assembly uses;
  - subject to typical development requirements (e.g., access; parking; layout; tree preservation; child care; public art; Affordable Housing Strategy requirements; servicing upgrades; etc.).