



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** March 19, 2019  
**From:** James Cooper, Architect AIBC **File:** 12-8360-01/2019-Vol  
01  
**Re:** Update on Salvage of Building Materials and Structural Relocation of Houses

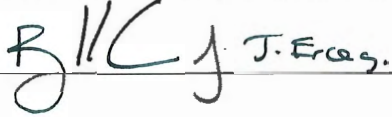

### Staff Recommendations:

1. That Richmond Building Regulation Bylaw 7230, Amendment Bylaw No. 10013, which adds Section 5.4.3 and Section 12.1.2, identified in the report titled "Update on Salvage of Building Materials and Structural Relocation of Houses" dated March 19, 2019 from the Director, Building Approvals, be introduced and given first reading.



James Cooper, Architect AIBC  
 Director, Building Approvals  
 (604) 247-4606

Att.1

| REPORT CONCURRENCE   |                                     |  |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| ROUTED TO:   | CONCURRENCE                         | CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER   |
| Development Applications   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Policy Planning  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Environmental Programs   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Law  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| Corporate Communications   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  |
| <b>REVIEWED BY STAFF REPORT /<br/>AGENDA REVIEW SUBCOMMITTEE</b> | INITIALS:<br><br>CS                 | <b>APPROVED BY CAO</b><br><br> |

## **Staff Report**

### **Origin**

Following Council endorsement of the House Move and Salvage Program at the end of 2017 the following referral was passed:

*That Council endorses measures to encourage the relocation of existing houses and salvage of building materials from sites scheduled for demolition, and for staff to report back on progress and achievements.*

This report is in response to the above referral to provide information on the measures taken to support Council directives to encourage the relocation of existing houses and salvage of building materials prior to building demolition.

### **Background**

Following Council adoption of the House Move and Salvage Program, staff streamlined the regulatory process, carried out consultation with City departments with a role in permitting house moves, and appointed a House Move and Salvage Coordinator to a temporary position to implement the program as advised by Council.

### **Findings of Fact**

To encourage the public to salvage building materials or relocate existing houses that are scheduled for demolition, the following measures were implemented:

1. A streamlined application process was created for applicants to obtain a “Move a Building” Permit.
  - a. The new application process organizes various department approvals within a singular process, parallel to the application review process of a Demolition Permit. Previously, a permit to relocate a house would require an applicant to submit separate applications to multiple departments (i.e. Transportation, Richmond Fire and Rescue, Engineering, Sustainability and Building) and agencies (i.e. Utilities, Telecommunications) who each had separate application review procedures.
2. Informational and promotional materials have been widely distributed to potential applicants.
  - a. An information pamphlet describing Program benefits and process is distributed to all persons inquiring about demolition permits and is available at the front counter and on the City website.
  - b. The Demolition Permit information pamphlet also references the House Move and Salvage Program as an alternative to demolition.
3. A customized webpage for the House Moving and Salvage Program on the City website was launched in February 2018. (Attachment 1).

- a. The webpage provides the following information:
    - Benefits of moving or salvaging a house vs. demolition;
    - Explanation of the House Moving and Salvage Program;
    - Application form for owners to register their house in the program;
    - Photos, taken by staff, of houses currently available to move or salvage;
    - Information on application process for Move a Building Permit;
    - Application form for Move a Building Permit;
    - Potential fees associated with the Move a Building Permit;
    - Frequently Asked Questions; and
    - Contact information for the House Moving and Salvage Coordinator
  - b. The webpage is available at the following link:  
<https://www.richmond.ca/plandev/building/demomoveandsalvage.htm>)
4. Public Outreach and regular communication with public stakeholders.
- a. City staff led public outreach through information sessions to major regional house moving companies, the Urban Development Institute (UDI), and the Richmond Small Builders Group to promote the program and share information on potential houses available for relocation.
  - b. The same information has been made available to building materials salvaging companies such as Habitat for Humanity's ReStore, and Surrey New and Used.
  - c. Staff led discussions with the Chief of the Sts'ailes First Nations Group to encourage them to consider relocating and repurposing houses listed on the webpage in order to support affordable housing options.
  - d. The program also established close coordination with the Development Applications Department to identify potential houses that may be made available through Rezoning and Development Permits providing sufficient lead time for marketing for house move prior to demolition.
  - e. Building Approvals has also established coordination with Corporate Communications to further raise public awareness of the program through media releases, posts on social media and other communications.

#### Positive Reception of House Move and Salvage Program

The House Move and Salvage Program successfully provides a streamlined regulatory process and supporting infrastructure for the public to consider house moving and/or salvaging of building materials as alternatives to demolition.

The Program has been endorsed by two of the main regional house moving companies, Nickel Brothers and Supreme Structural Transport Ltd., who actively use the Program webpage and engage staff on a regular basis on potential opportunities for house moves. The House Move and Salvage Coordinator receives regular inquiries from builders and home owners interested in considering house move as an alternative to demolition. Applicants for demolition permits for houses are regularly registering their houses with the Program; resulting in photographs and contact information of available houses viewable by the public at any given time.

## Analysis

During this first year of the program's operation, there have been challenges affecting potential house moving. As expected, structural soundness and whether the building is built on crawlspace determines largely whether a house is a candidate for moving. Other factors encountered include proximity to suitable transportation routes, obstructions such as boulevard trees, access to barge sites, marketability and condition of houses, rising costs of moving and renovations, downturn in single family dwelling construction, insufficient lead times to arrange for moves and lack of storage areas in the City. In addition to above factors, the opinion of industry is that current market conditions are not favorable for whole house salvage, although there is a market for interior items such as cabinets, fixtures, furnaces, water heaters, railings, doors and appliances.

In response to these challenges, Building Approvals staff have continuously refined and augmented the initial process in efforts to improve opportunities for move and salvage. These include:

1. Identifying potential houses for moving sufficiently in advance of scheduled demolition through engaging owners at the development approval and building permit application stages.
2. Including interior photographs of houses available for move or salvage to identify potential interior elements that are readily marketable for salvaging purposes.
3. Continuing to engage building groups and the house moving industry through reviewing and addressing current factors challenging the relocation of houses.
  - a. Staff is currently in discussion with Nickel Brothers and the owner to facilitate a potential house move on Sorrel Drive that is otherwise scheduled for future demolition.

### Observable Increased Interest in Relocation of Houses and Salvaging of Building Materials

Staff has observed an attitudinal shift in building culture towards re-use and repurposing as there is growing awareness of alternatives to demolition. Indications include steadily increasing inquiries and interests from builders' groups and the following recent examples.

- Staff mediated a move-onto foundation on a River Road property whereby a house sourced from North Vancouver was moved onto a permanent site. This is indicative of awareness by industry to find an economic solution by reuse of a structurally sound, existing structure to preserve its imbued materials and energy.
- Staff has received a proposal from a builders' group to establish, by their efforts, a depot for storage and free public distribution of building materials sourced from over supply at the end of construction. Although this would be a site that would be administered by the builders' group and not involve City property, staff is in consultation to coordinate efforts with the City's House Move and Salvage Program.

The above noted observations support staff recommendation to continue operation of the House Move and Salvage Program to further encourage the relocation of existing houses and salvaging of building materials. Despite the temporary Coordinator position having expired, the program is now beyond start up and can be administered by current staff.

The increased awareness and attitudinal shift of the building industry toward improved waste management practices is due to Council's foresight in promoting building re-use as well as minimum recycling requirements under the City's Demolition Waste and Recyclable Materials Bylaw 9516. These are measures that support advancement toward a more circular economy whereby resources are used as long as possible in efforts to minimize waste.

### **Recommended Changes to City of Richmond Building Regulation Bylaw 7230**

Staff proposes Richmond Building Regulation Bylaw 7230, Amendment Bylaw 10013 in order to introduce an extended period of time for salvaging of building materials and alternative deconstruction for demolition. Currently, our process requires that a Building Permit is secured within 60 days after notice that it is ready for issuance, with penalties incurred after 30 days of not doing so.

One of the prerequisites for securing the permit for building a house is the removal of the existing structure contributing to an unintended urgency to demolish. In order to promote salvage for material reuse, it is our intention to allow a defined, adequate time period enabling demolition using deconstruction to source reusable materials. It is anticipated that given adequate time, many more opportunities for materials salvage will emerge.

### **Financial Impact**

There is no financial impact.

### **Conclusion**

This report provides information in support of Council's referral to encourage the relocation of existing houses and salvaging of building materials prior to demolition. The relocation of existing houses and salvaging of building materials in lieu of demolition represents the higher levels of recycling of through reuse, making building practices more sustainable.

The House Move and Salvage Program has been in operation for over a year and staff have noted positive changes and increased interest for alternatives to demolition from the public and building community. As program development is complete and operational, the Program has become integrated into the regular function and activities of the Building Approvals Department, requiring less staff time to maintain the web content and respond to inquiries.

The House Move and Salvage Program will continue under the administration of Building Approvals staff along with continued consultation and innovation with stakeholders to encourage house moving and salvage of building materials from existing structures prior to demolition.

Accordingly, staff have identified opportunities within the program to further encourage sustainable building practices. On this basis, staff will recommend the following:

1. That *Richmond Building Regulation Bylaw 7230, Amendment Bylaw 10013* be introduced and given first reading.



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JC:rm

Att. 1: Picture of House Moving and Salvage Program Webpage

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City of Richmond, British Columbia, Canada

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> Home > Planning, Building & Development > Building > Demolition, Moving or Salvage Program

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|--|
| Overview                               |
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## BUILDING

# Demolition, Moving or Salvage Program

*Are you planning to demolish your house? Think again.*

## House Moving and Salvage Program

### About

In an effort to minimize the demolition of livable houses as well as expand on the City's Demolition Waste Recycling initiative, the City of Richmond encourages homeowners to post their houses on the City's House Moving and Salvage List for the purpose of offering to move or salvage their house, prior to applying for a demolition permit.



### Implementation

Homeowners wishing to demolish their house will be able to list their properties on the City website. This information will be viewable by the public for 60 days and will allow house moving and materials salvaging companies to contact homeowners for potential moving or salvaging opportunities.

See: [House Moving and Salvage Program](#) brochure to find out more information.

[Browse the list of houses available to move](#)

For information on a house, email [housemoveandsalvage@richmond.ca](mailto:housemoveandsalvage@richmond.ca).

### Post Your House for Move or Salvage

To post your house for move or salvage, please complete the electronic form and waiver [Consent to Disclosure of Information](#) and email it to [housemoveandsalvage@richmond.ca](mailto:housemoveandsalvage@richmond.ca)

### Privacy of Information

The information posted to the City of Richmond's website is public information, and the City of Richmond cannot control or prevent the further distribution or use of such information by those who access the information. Accordingly, we encourage homeowners to consider the detail of information they choose to display about the property and the provided contact information. Any personal information that is collected on this website will be managed in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Subject to the City's compliance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, the City is not responsible for the use of publicly shared information.

### Popular Topics

- Affordable Housing Strategy
- Official Community Plan

### Related Topics

- City Bylaws
- Planning Committee
- Business & Local Economy

### Related Links

- TransLink
- Canada Line
- Ministry of Transportation
- Agricultural Land Commission
- Metro Vancouver (GVRD)
- BC Building Code
- Before You Dig
- Technical Safety BC



**Building Regulation Bylaw No. 7230,  
Amendment Bylaw No. 10013**

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

1. *Building Regulation Bylaw No. 7230*, as amended, is further amended by:

*a)* adding a new section 5.4.3 as follows:

5.4.3 If a **building permit** for the salvage of building materials has been issued for a property pursuant to subsection 12.1.2, then the time periods set out in section 5.4.1(b) and 5.4.2(b) for a **building permit** application for plan review related to such property may be extended by the **building inspector** for such amount of time as the **building inspector** determines is required to accommodate the salvage activities.

*b)* adding a new section 12.1.2 as follows:

12.1.2 Salvage for **reuse** of building materials from an existing **building** or **structure** that is to be demolished requires a **building permit**. In addition to any other conditions prescribed by this bylaw, the issuance of such a **building permit** will require the applicant to satisfy the same conditions as those required for a **building permit** for demolition, and to submit a certificate, in the form prescribed by the **building inspector**, confirming that all hazardous materials have been removed from the **building** or **structure**. The amount of salvaged material will be considered as contributing to the required recycled content as required by the *Demolition Waste and Recyclable Materials Bylaw 9516*.

*c)* adding the following definition, in alphabetical order, in section 16.1:

**REUSE** means the use of previously used building materials for the types of use referenced in the **building code**.

2. This Bylaw is cited as “*Building Regulation Bylaw No. 7230, Amendment Bylaw 10013*”.



FIRST READING

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SECOND READING

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THIRD READING

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LEGAL REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED

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ADOPTED

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|---|
| CITY OF RICHMOND                          |
| APPROVED for content by originating dept. |
| <i>J.C.</i>                               |
| APPROVED for legality by Solicitor        |
| <i>BRB</i>                                |

\_\_\_\_\_  
MAYOR

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CORPORATE OFFICER