



To: Community Safety Committee

Date: March 20, 2008

From: Phyllis L. Carlyle
 General Manager, Law & Community Safety

File: 12-8060-01/2008-Vol 01

Re: **Responsible Beekeeping in Residential Areas
 Amendment to the Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No 7932**

Staff Recommendation

THAT Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932, Amendment Bylaw No. 8357 (Attachment 1) be introduced and given first, second and third reading.

Phyllis L. Carlyle
 General Manager, Law & Community Safety
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ROUTED TO:		CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Law	Y <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
Policy Planning	Y <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> N <input type="checkbox"/>		
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO	YES <input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>

Staff Report

Origin

At the October 16, 2007 Planning Committee Meeting, staff was given the following referral:

“That staff review Part Six - Beekeeping of Bylaw 7932 (Animal Control Regulations Bylaw, effective June 13, 2005) to explore allowing beekeeping in non-agricultural areas”.

This referral was based on a presentation from Allen Garr on behalf of the Richmond Beekeepers Association, which discussed the benefits of allowing beekeeping in residential areas.

Analysis

The Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No 7932 currently prohibits beehives on parcels containing a one, two or multiple family dwelling, or within 23 metres of a parcel that has a one, two or multiple family dwelling. In addition, the bylaw limits the number of colonies to 4 on parcels which are less than 10,000 square feet. The intent of the restrictions in residential areas was to minimize any potential conflict between bees and humans; however, research has shown that bees and humans can co-exist peacefully under the correct circumstances.

Other municipalities in Metro Vancouver, including Vancouver and New Westminster, have amended their bylaws and policies to allow for beekeeping in residential areas with no reported problems. Representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands and local beekeepers assisted with the proposed bylaw requirements to ensure that the potential for neighbourhood disputes and personal injury is kept to a minimum. The recommended provisions include (but are not limited to):

- beehives be located in rear yards only;
- beehives be at least 8 metres away from neighbouring properties OR, if they are less than that distance they must be a minimum of 2.5 metres above the ground or behind a fence that is 2 metres high (maximum height permitted for fences in residential areas as per the Zoning and Development Bylaw No 5300).
- that beehives be “requeened” if the hive exhibits signs of swarming.
- that a water supply is available on the parcel containing the beehive so that large numbers of bees do not congregate on neighbouring properties containing water.

The height restrictions above are based on the flight paths of bees. Research has shown that bees will fly straight out of their hives and maintain that height until they have to rise up to clear something, or lower themselves to pollinate. The rationale behind keeping beehives a minimum of 2.5 metres above ground, or requiring a 2 metre fence is that they will either exit at a height above most people, or they will have to increase to a height higher than most people.

Currently in Richmond, there are 28 individual beekeepers registered and permitted with the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands. According to the Ministry, in 2005 there were 2,101 bee


farmers in the province of BC and the average bee colony in British Columbia produced 35 to 45 kilograms of honey annually.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Staff recommends the adoption of the proposed changes to the City's Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932 to permit the regulated and responsible location of beehives on residential property in Richmond.



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JS:js



**Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932,
Amendment Bylaw No. 8357**

The Council of the City of Richmond enacts as follows:

1. The **Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932** is amended at Part Six by deleting Sections 6.1 and 6.2 and substituting the following:

6.1 General Requirements

6.1.1 Every person keeping **bees**, and the **owner** of a **parcel** on which **bees** are kept, must ensure that the **bees** are:

- (a) maintained in a condition so as to reasonably prevent undue swarming or aggressive behaviour;
- (b) requeened as soon as possible if such **bees** are subject to undue swarming or show signs of aggressive behaviour; and
- (c) provided with adequate water to prevent the **bees** from seeking water from neighbourhood swimming pools, birdbaths, ponds or other community bodies of water;

6.1.2 Every person keeping **bees**, and the **owner** of a **parcel** on which bees are kept, must ensure that:

- (d) each **beehive** is located in a **rear yard** away from the main street;
- (e) each **beehive** is positioned so that the entrance to the **beehive** faces away from the closest neighbouring property; and
- (f) where a **beehive** is located within 8 metres of the property line of an adjacent **parcel** containing a **one-family dwelling, two-family dwelling or multiple-family dwelling**, the **beehive** is located either:
 - i. a minimum of 2.5 metres above the ground; or
 - ii. behind a solid fence or hedge a minimum of 2.0 metres in height running parallel to any **parcel** line and extending a minimum of 6.0 metres horizontally beyond the **beehives** in both directions.

6.2 Prohibitions

6.2.1 A person must not:

- (a) locate a **beehive** on any **parcel** containing a **multiple family dwelling**;
- (b) keep more than two (2) **beehives** on a **parcel** of less than 1,000 square metres in area;
- (c) keep more than four (4) **beehives** on a **parcel** that is between 1,000 and 2,000 square metres in area; or
- (d) keep more than six (6) **beehives** on a **parcel** that is between 2,000 and 4,000 square metres in area.

2. The **Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932** is amended at Part Nine by adding the following to Section 9.1:

BEEHIVE means an enclosed, man-made **structure** in which **bees** live and raise their young.

REAR YARD means the portion of a **parcel** located behind the main **dwelling unit** on the parcel.

3. This Bylaw is cited as "**Animal Control Regulation Bylaw No. 7932, Amendment Bylaw No. 8357**".

FIRST READING

SECOND READING

THIRD READING

ADOPTED



MAYOR

CORPORATE OFFICER