

Schedule 5 to the Minutes of the
Public Hearing meeting of
Richmond City Council held on
Monday, July 17, 2017.

To Public Hearing
Date: JULY 17 2017
Item # 7
Re: BYLAW 9737

Mayor and Councillors

From: Jas Sandhu <jas@freeworldhomes.com>
Sent: Saturday, 15 July 2017 21:28
To: Mayor and Councillors
Cc: Arielle Batist; Raman; Gursheer Randhawa; brad.dore@icloud.com; navtej dhot; samksandhu@shaw.ca; Robert Ethier; info@khalidhasan.com; Clive Alladin; ravbains@remax.net; parmdhinjal@shaw.ca; soheilbiniaz@gmail.com; hollie@balandra.ca; Anne Piche; City Concept; Ajit Thaliwal
Subject: Question about Democratic Process
Attachments: Massing Regulations - Comments and Concerns.pdf
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged



Dear Mayor and Councilors,

I spoke at the Council Meeting on June 26th, 2017 in regards to the Lets Talk Richmond online survey as conducted by Mr. Barry Konkin and his staff. I had expressed concerns about the integrity of the survey, along with a question as to why my own 18 page opposition letter to the proposed changes was not included in the report to council, whereas letters from residents were. A lot of thought and effort went into assembling the report, expressing my opinion and solutions to problems outlined.

At the builders meeting held on Feb. 8th, 2017, I had personally handed the letter in question to Mr. Konkin which was witnessed by at least 20 other builders, he also indicated that it would be passed on to the mayor and council.

Unfortunately, having reviewed the 3234 pages of the report to council on the results of the Open Houses and Online survey, I could not find any mention of my letter. A democratic process needs to be clear and precise, as such, I would like to request the council ask Mr. Konkin as to why the detailed letter was not included for submission for your perusal.

Thank you for your time and understanding.

Jas Sandhu

February 8th, 2017

Barry Konkin
Program Coordinator/Development Applications
City of Richmond
6911 No. 3rd Road
Richmond, BC, V6Y 2C1

RE: SINGLE FAMILY BUILDING MASSING ANALYSIS AND FEEDBACK

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Jas Sandhu and I have been a Richmond resident since 1992. I am speaking from the perspective of a concerned citizen and anyone else hoping to build a home in Richmond without getting overly bogged down with restrictions and regulations as proposed in the new Zoning By-Law amendments. I have always kept my thoughts to myself and it was not until that I read the proposed changes that I felt compelled enough to speak up.

I would like to start by asking the following question. What size of a television set do you currently own? I am quite certain nobody is going to answer a 12" black & white CRT. This was the first set that my family could afford more than 40 years ago. We all can agree that majority of the televisions today are much larger and fancier. With minimal restrictions, TV manufacturers are able to develop technology that pushes the imagination and design. Bigger, better, thinner, sharper and with more features is what most of people want today.

In many ways, a large part of the new regulations debate for residential housing is similar to the TV sizes. I have read many of the petition letters around building size from the concerned neighbours, with many offering valid points. However, there is a large percentage that would like to see only ranchers, split-level, and Vancouver Special style of houses built which would be akin to asking everyone to buy a 12" B&W television again. Unfortunately, we cannot go back into the past, instead must progress forward. Imagine placing a new 55" flat screen next to a 12" CRT TV, which one would you buy? The same is occurring in our city with our homes, an old house is demolished and a larger, modern home of 3000 plus square footage with many features now sits next to an old timer bungalow of 1500 sqft. If you had a choice, which one would you like to live in? I know which one I would take and I am certain almost everyone will too.

Large homes are not necessarily the problem; however, they should have curb appeal, be of good quality and be proportional to the lot size. While there are many valid reasons for changing building regulations to address real loss of sunlight, parking, privacy, safety and so forth, however, I have to disagree with many of the proposed changes as put forth by the development department.

My concerns are detailed below.

Thank you for your time and considerations.

Sincerely,

Jas Sandhu

THIS REPORT REFERENCES ITEMS MENTIONED IN THE NOV. 16TH, 2016 MEETING RTC AND THE PIM BOARDS DOCUMENT AS PUBLISHED ON THE LETSTALK.CA WEBSITE & OPEN MEETINGS.

MAXIMUM DEPTH OF HOUSE: Page #2

City staff is indicating that where a new house is built and has long, uninterrupted wall face adjacent to the side yards between properties, there is a potential lack of sunlight and potential overlook of rear yard privacy.

I have seen many of older homes separated by large, tall hedges. The growth and placement of the hedges and tall trees would also constitute a loss of sunlight, which is not much different than a continuous wall. As well, the loss of sunlight only affects certain houses depending how they are positioned on the lot East/West vs North/South, as the Sun moves across the sky (or rather how the Earth rotates).



Figure 1: Sunlight & Privacy not evident in this Google image of a Richmond neighbourhood

As for rear yard privacy concerns, in my opinion probably a good 98% of new homes have sleeping quarters on the second floor. Generally, the master bedroom would be the only one with a potential deck, current trends in homes design appears to favor less deck in the back and more on the front garage. I don't know which owner would want to sit out on the deck or look through their bedroom window(s) and stare into the neighbour's yard. The bedrooms are really just for sleeping. **Is this really a concern about privacy and loss of sunlight?**

There is a reference to suggest that other cities such as Vancouver and Burnaby have a regulation in place to change the meaning of **Continuous Wall = which does not include an inward articulation of 2.4m or more**. Unfortunately, the staff do not point out that lots in these municipalities are on average about half the typical Richmond width, have lanes and detached garages. I am not sure why this very important piece of information is omitted by the city staff.



Figure 2: Why you cannot compare Richmond to Vancouver. Where is the green space?

Having done some basic design work and reviewed several new home plans as a hobby, I can tell you that this awkward city regulation calling for inward articulation will result in strange looking floor plans. Current design makes it possible to have your family room, main kitchen and a spice kitchen across the back of your house in a straight line. By creating this extra jog (Inward Articulation of 2.4m) for the sake of creating perceived space for sunlight and/or privacy seems not well thought-out, as not much is gained. As well, any potential to accommodate a secondary suite in the new home is greatly reduced, which goes **against any government initiative to increase affordable housing** in

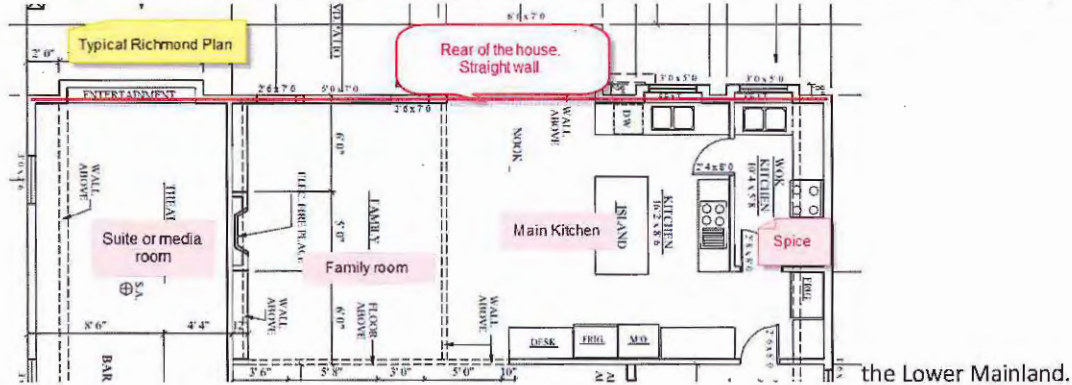


Figure 3: Typical Richmond House plan for rear of house

In my view this is the greatest waste of space and one that will negatively affect the ability to design floor plans that are efficient and well laid out. It is easier to design houses that are rectangular in shape than when working with jogs and other forced articulations in the name of privacy.

A simple solution is to compel, with regulation, all builders to plant hedges or trees such as Aspens that are narrow and tall (i.e. 12ft. min. height) at the rear yard as shown in the diagram below. This would minimize any privacy concerns, as well as, make the city greener. All homes are already built with a 6ft. cedar fence that provides full privacy at ground level. The tall hedges/trees will do the same at the second floor level along with providing a cushioning effect on noise and even smell in some cases. I cannot help but wonder if the complaints are really about the smell as the spice kitchen is always vented to the side. Oddly enough the inward articulation proposed is the exact amount of space occupied by the Spice Kitchen.

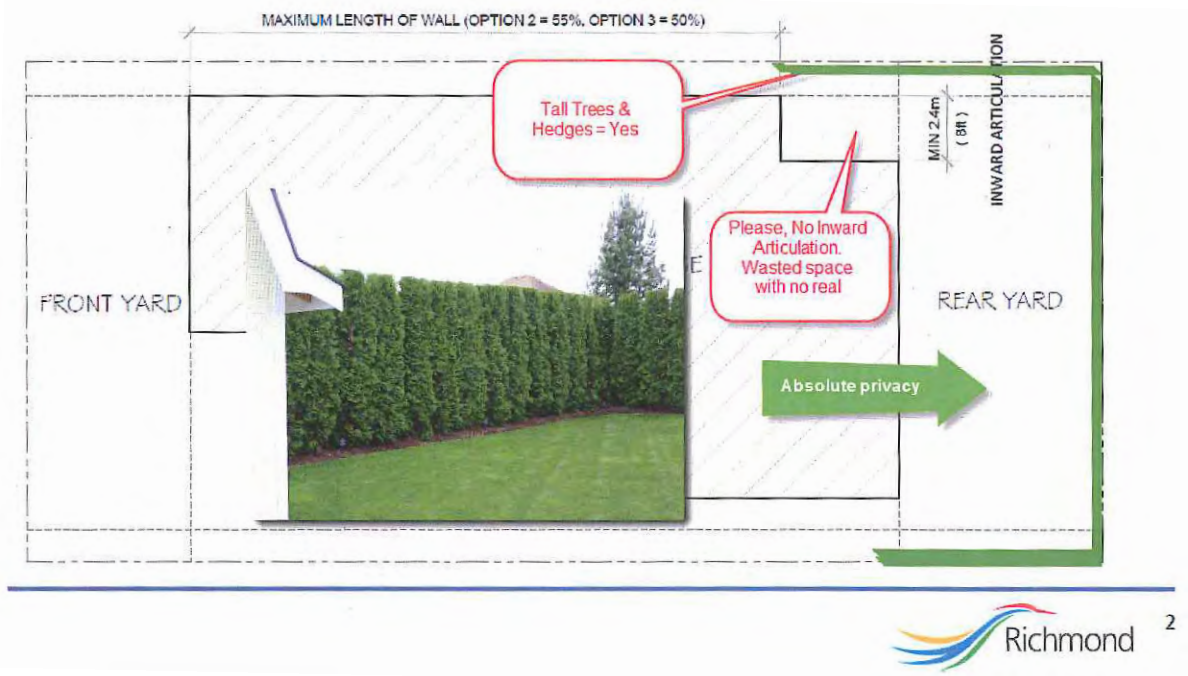


Figure 4: Recommendations to resolve Privacy issues



Figure 5: Real life example of using trees for privacy

Conclusion: I suggest to the council that status quo be kept in terms of the Maximum Depth of House but with a requirement for taller hedges and/or trees and no inward articulation is necessary. The rear of the house being straight is very critical for an efficient floor plan and does not require a hammer to fix, just a simple solution that is easy for the builder, easy for the plan reviewer and good for the neighbor as they get to look at nature while enjoying their privacy. The Inward Articulation has a negative effect on the rest of the floor plan. I would much rather pay several thousand dollars for a tall hedge than have my house design be butchered to achieve some arbitrary by-law requirements.

FYI: I attended the Open House held at the Steveston Community Center on January 24th. While speaking to a city staff member, Ernie Nishi, and offering the solution of tall hedges to reduce privacy loss. Mr. Nishi wholeheartedly agreed that this was a great solution as it is what he currently has in his backyard. He mentioned that I should forward this feedback to the city.

REAR YARD SETBACK: Page 3

“During the 2015 consultation and subsequent meeting... **several residents** mentioned negative impacts on rear yard interface between new construction and older homes”. I am amazed that just because *several* residents expressed their views on a particular point such as the loss of privacy in their backyard and which the city defines as *perceived*, the city staff wants to jump in head first and propose new bylaw changes without first considering all of the ramifications. If I can convince 10, 20 or even 1000 people to petition the city about our property taxes being too high, or permit fees being unreasonable and would like them to be reduced, I don't believe it will illicit this type of a response.

The rear yard setback as proposed sounds overly confusing and unnecessary. Not only will this introduce more delays within the planning department, plan designers will need to pullout a reference chart each time they design a house to see corresponding length of the yard and what setback to apply. As already mentioned with respect to Maximum Depth of House, majority of the new homes only have bedrooms on the second floor, thus number of residents actually looking into the neighbor's backyard are going to be next to none. So this can't really be a privacy issue. Who is to say that someone in an older home, standing in the second floor rear bedroom, is not also looking into the yard of the new home? From that height it is certainly possible. It is hard to fix *perceived* loss of privacy and the city staff should focus on actual complaints and make recommendations accordingly. Again, planting of taller, slender trees and hedges will address any privacy concerns.



Figure 6: Old Richmond homes with upper story windows. Why are these neighbours not complaining about privacy?

Also, many people are looking at reducing the amount of yard with grass these days. I, for example, don't enjoy pulling out the old lawn mower like I used to as I get older. My son doesn't have the time as he is too busy, plus he is somewhat allergic to the grass. I am not saying we need to get rid of the landscaping, in fact, there should be more. Question is what are people going to do with all the extra space in the backyard with the proposed increase? Another question arises, what about setback for multi-story construction such as town houses? Leave this as an option, if a builder wants to leave more in the rear setback then maybe compensate them in another area of the plan. We need for the city to keep the building requirements straightforward and simple so that anyone can understand them regardless of their background. Less regulation and more efficiency should be every government's goal. Overly complex regulations will result in less compliance as they are too difficult to understand and result in confusion.

There are several more important negative factors that the city has not considered or mentioned with respect to the Zoning Bylaw 8500 & 9280 implementation. In particular, the vertical envelope and now the rear yard setback proposal.

1. The **latest BC Building Code addendum** is heavily focused on seismic strengthening. I am in no way an expert and have only done some limited reading. However, I spoke with one local engineer and asked what provides better seismic strength?
 - a. **Floor walls that are stacked on top of each other** (i.e. second exterior wall on top of the first floor exterior wall).
 - b. **Vs.**
 - c. Second floor exterior walls that are offset by 4ft or so inward when compared to the main floor, as is the case with the current City's Vertical Envelope requirement. **Whereby, the second floor walls do not align at all with the first floor.**
 - d. His response was, where you take the weight of the second floor and distribute evenly across the load bearing walls directly below it, results in the best seismic capable design.
 - e. http://www.google.ca/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=ria&uact=8&sqi=2&ved=0ahUKEwi74-ijpOTRAhVC4GMKHeAXCaQQFggbMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.bccodes.ca%2Fillustrated-Guide-For-Seismic-Design-of-Houses.pdf&usq=AFOiCNF1pG_ZOkY4X70yNDxscStvaHly_A&bvm=bv.145822982,d.cGc
 - f. See Figure 7 & 8, from BCBC 2012 guide on the following pages.
2. With the current regulation you cannot align any of the side walls and now the city staff is proposing to move rear, second floor exterior wall inward too by 5ft in the name of privacy. That means you might be lucky to have one side of the house (front) where the two floor walls are vertically aligned. You don't need to be a rocket scientist to figure out the negative effect this will have on the overall strength of the house. Honestly, I am quite surprised, as it is so obvious, that given our geographic location and the constant warnings of the Westcoast being due for a big earthquake, that **the city of Richmond is introducing regulations to build homes that are potentially compromising their seismic ability to reduce risk.** Whereas, we should be designing homes that are strong and in accordance to latest BCBC code to meet any natural forces that might get inflicted upon this region one day. Unfortunately, the current focus is placed upon perceived loss of privacy and sunlight - driven by a limited number of resident complaints.
3. The other negative effect is a financial one, there is a much greater cost in lumber and other materials used to build according to the original Zoning By-Law 8500 and the now the addendums.
4. Lastly, where floors cannot align exterior walls, the new regulations are creating more low roofs designs, particularly when they are over living quarters, which inevitably increases the risk of water penetration. Home Protection Office was born because of water penetration issues that plagued the Lower Mainland in the past.
5. Option #2 references a 1 - Storey House, when was the last time a single storey house was built in Richmond?
6. Below are a couple excerpts from the BCBC 2012 Seismic guidelines.

Main Requirements

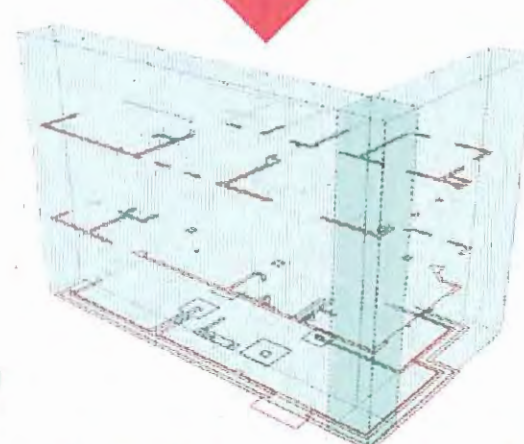
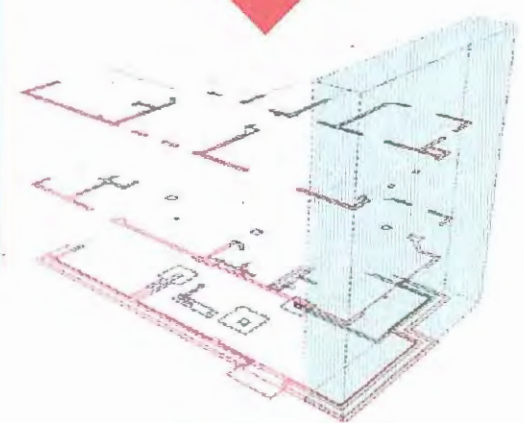
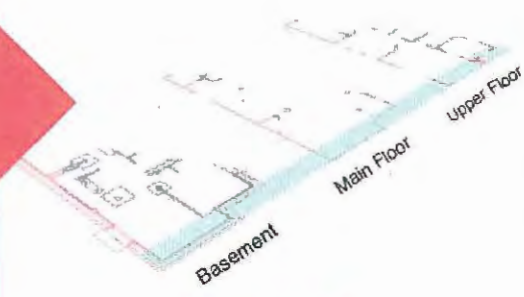
The Braced Wall Band

The braced wall band is an imaginary continuous straight band extending vertically and horizontally through a building (or part of a building) in which braced wall panels are constructed.

The first figure (top right) shows the three floor plans aligned on a drawing and the up to 1.2 m wide braced wall band shown enclosing all of the walls of the front elevation of the house.

The second figure (middle right) shows the band applied to the floor plans as they would stack in construction. Note that the walls on the front elevation are located within the 1.2 m wide band.

The third figure (bottom right) shows the band applied to the second elevation. Bands need to be identified on the remaining elevations and any required interior regions.



Step 1

Braced Wall Band

The braced wall band is an imaginary continuous straight band extending vertically and horizontally through a building (or part of a building) in which braced wall panels are constructed. The first step is to ensure that each perimeter wall and certain interior walls align within an imaginary braced wall band, which extends from the foundation to the roof. These walls must be located within the up to 1.2 m wide braced wall band from the foundation to the roof.¹

Braced wall bands must be located around the perimeter of the building, and additional braced wall bands may be required at interior wall locations.

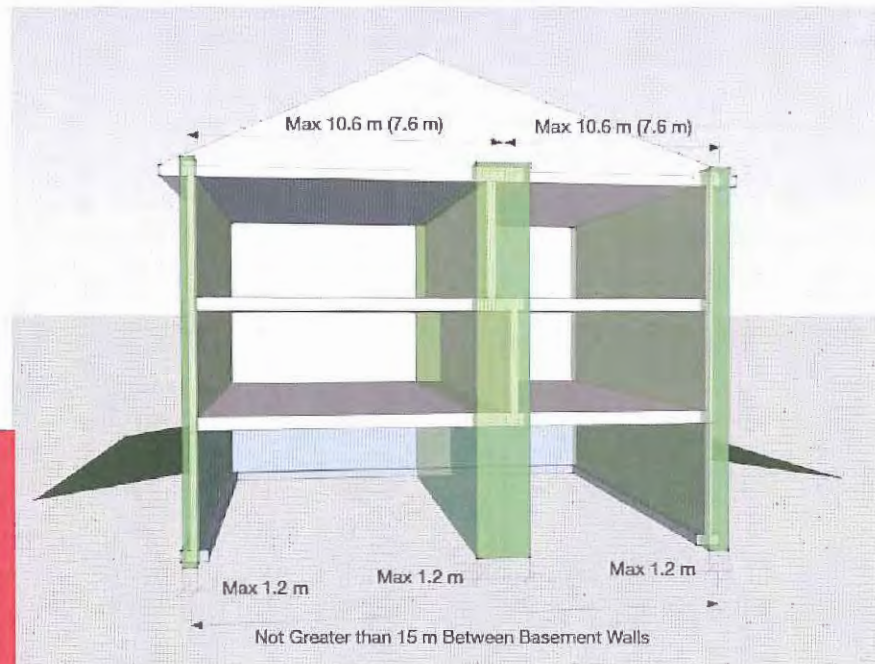
¹ 9.23.13.4.(1)(a), (b) and (e), 9.23.13.4.(2) (999 Appendix)

Figure 7: BC Building Code 2012 - Seismic Requirements. Note exterior walls are vertically aligned.

Braced Wall Bands

Example Building Sections

Braced wall bands can be up to 1.2 m wide. They must be full storey height and be aligned with braced wall bands on the storeys above and below. The maximum space between bands depends on whether they are in the basement or crawl space (where it can be up to 15 m)ⁱ or above (where it can be 10.6 m or 7.6 m depending on the specific $S_a(0.2)$).ⁱⁱⁱ Exceptions and trade offs are examined in Sections 2 and 3 of this guide.

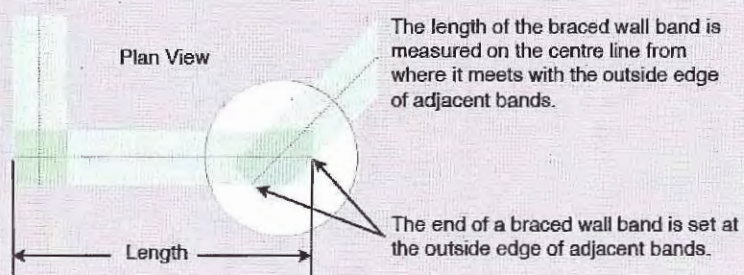


Braced Wall Band

The braced wall band must lap with adjacent braced wall bands at both ends. The centre line of each braced wall band extends to the outer edge of the connected braced wall bands.



Designer Note



ⁱ

9.23.13.5.(2)(a), (b) and (c); ⁱⁱⁱ Table 9.23.13.5, (see Appendix)

Figure 8: BC Building Code 2012 - Seismic Requirements. Note vertically aligned exterior walls.

It is also stated that city would exempt lots less than 28m deep. From my limited knowledge but someone who spends a lot of time on the Richmond's GIS website, I would venture to say that majority (95% is my guess) of the lots in Richmond are greater than 28m. Thus, this bylaw would apply to virtually every single property. The typical Richmond lot is 116 – 120ft. in depth, this would mean on average (9m) 30ft. rear setback as proposed. **With the loss of over 500sft from the main floor, will the city allow a third floor in the building to compensate?**

Conclusion: The current rear setback of 6m, more than adequately addresses any loss of privacy or sunlight claims, however, **to address perceived privacy losses**, it is recommended that all builders must plant trees and hedges of height deemed suitable by the city.

However, I would like to propose that the city changes the current building envelope, one that allows exterior walls to be stacked on top of each other for maximum seismic strength. This could be accomplished by increasing the side yard setback from 4ft to say 5ft. or some alternate solution such as removing the envelope all together. The city needs to rethink the building envelope and should consult with residents, builders, designers, etc. **I don't think it would be in the best interest of the city to knowingly contribute to a building design that goes against what the BC Building Code is recommending, particularly when it comes to seismic preparation and design.**

REAR YARD AND SIDE YARD SETBACKS FOR DETACHED ACCESSORY BUILDING GREATER THAN 10M2: Page 8

Overall I don't have an issue with the proposed options; however, if residents are complaining about privacy, the placement of an accessory building nearer to the fence will provide even greater privacy. See sample below.



Figure 9: Garden shed provides extra privacy

As for the Side Yard Projection, Option #2 with a reduced maximum of 1ft. instead of 2ft. would allow more space between houses. As well, still allow movement of people and machinery around the home. Another important consideration should be how easily can firefighters maneuver their equipment in and around a home in an emergency.

Conclusion: As noted above.

BUILDING MASSING IMPROVEMENTS SINCE ADOPTION OF VERTICAL ENVELOPE: Page 10

I am sorry to say but the new regulations have done nothing but stifle innovation and design. While the diagram below shows the old vs the new, I would immediately pick the homes on the left (the old regulation). The designs feature elegant and stunning sight lines on all elevations and most particularly the roof. The only thing I can see is the height could be a tad lower. On the other hand, **the new designs look as if Godzilla sat on the roof and turned it into a pancake.** In order to comply with the Zoning By-Law 8500, designers are having to switch to hip or “flatter” roof. As I drive around Richmond I can see that most of the new construction has taken on the same personality. What will the Richmond look like in 2, 5, 10 years? I apologize in advance if one of these is your home.

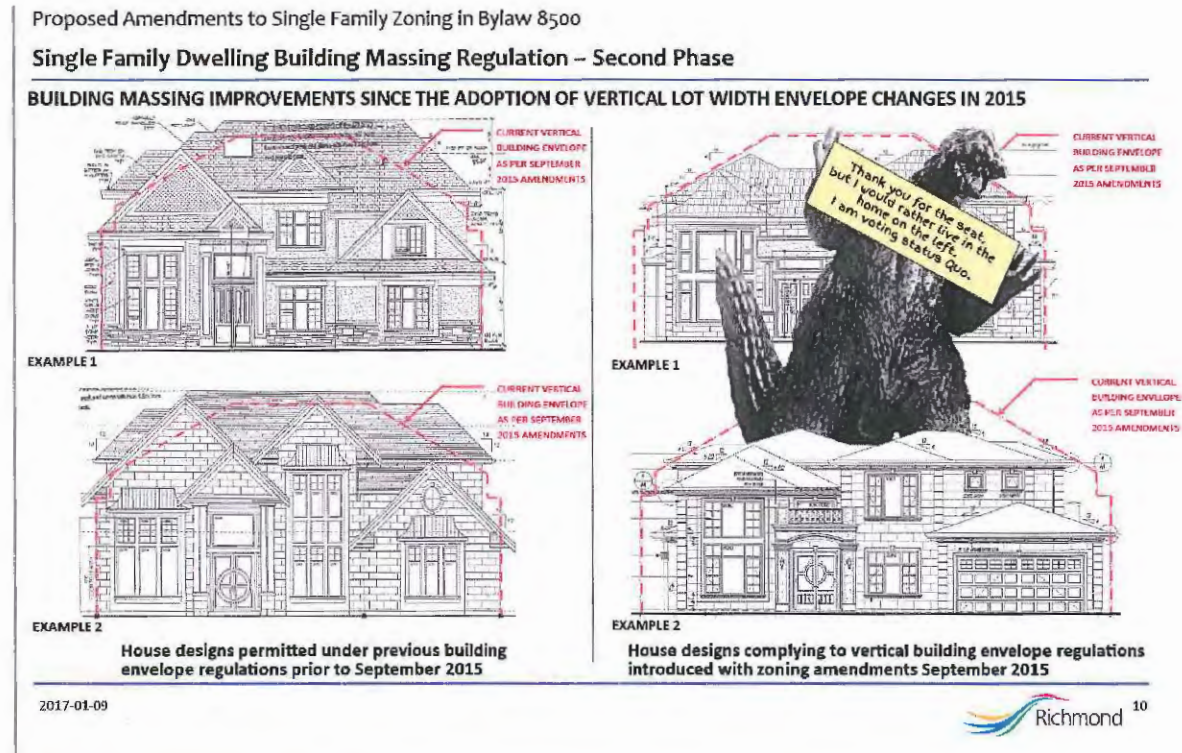


Figure 10: Even Godzilla is voting for Status Quo. My sincerest apologies if the image has offended anyone.

A few samples of the resultant home designs since the implementation of the Zoning By-Law 8500.



Figure 11: Current design due to current regulations



Figure 12: Unnecessary forcing of upper floor for privacy & sunlight

LOCATION OF SECOND STOREY DECKS FACING REAR & SIDE YARDS: Page #11

This proposed regulation **bothers me dearly** as I have a vision for my dream home and it involves a deck in the backyard. I should be able to have a deck that overlooks a green space such as a school yard, golf course or ocean view. I wonder what would happen throughout the world if all seaside homes or any with a rear view, were forced to hide their decks to one side of the house. Sorry, one size does not fit all. Quite frankly, one would want to **not have** the deck over living quarters to minimize any chance of water penetration. Most decks today are usually built over a garage or an open porch. Also, this design introduces additional unnecessary nooks and crannies in the exterior walls.

I can recall that when my neighbours used to have a barbeque or a gathering they would most often take place on the deck. We would often share stories while standing on our decks; it was a great way to communicate and get to know the neighbours.

Another question, would the side facing portion not be looking directly at the neighbours house or window? Again, most upper floors are used for sleeping, as well; older homes have large open decks in the back anyway.

TUS QUO):

You would still be able to look into your side neighbours house, which is even closer the rear one.

deck located on the family dwelling must additional 1.5 m (5 ft) rear yard setback,

1.5 m (5 ft) setback setback is also

to be wider than 50% width against.

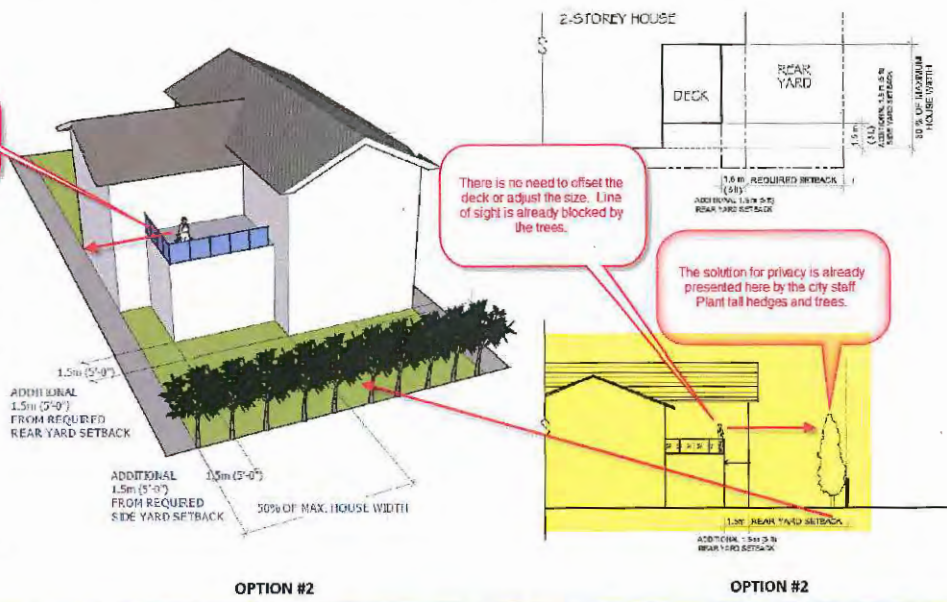


Figure 13: Hard proof that new deck regulation does not solve the issue of privacy, only tall trees do.

Conclusion: Everything points to **a simple solution that even the city staff is aware off and is used in the presentation and informational meetings - see above diagram.** Privacy concerns are perceived and not factual, yet, the solution, if one is required, is to enforce new construction to **implement the planting of taller trees and hedges in the rear yard as shown in the city's own presentation in Figure 13 as highlighted.**

Interestingly, the staff shows low lying trees in one diagram to convey good viewing angle from the deck and then different species which are much taller when trying to convey privacy.

Logical solution = Status quo

SITE COVERAGE AND LANDSCAPING: Page #12

The current site coverage of 70% adequately covers sufficient amount of landscaping. This already exceeds what other municipalities require. A Google satellite 3D map already shows that the city of Richmond is a green city.

Option #1 – Status Quo.

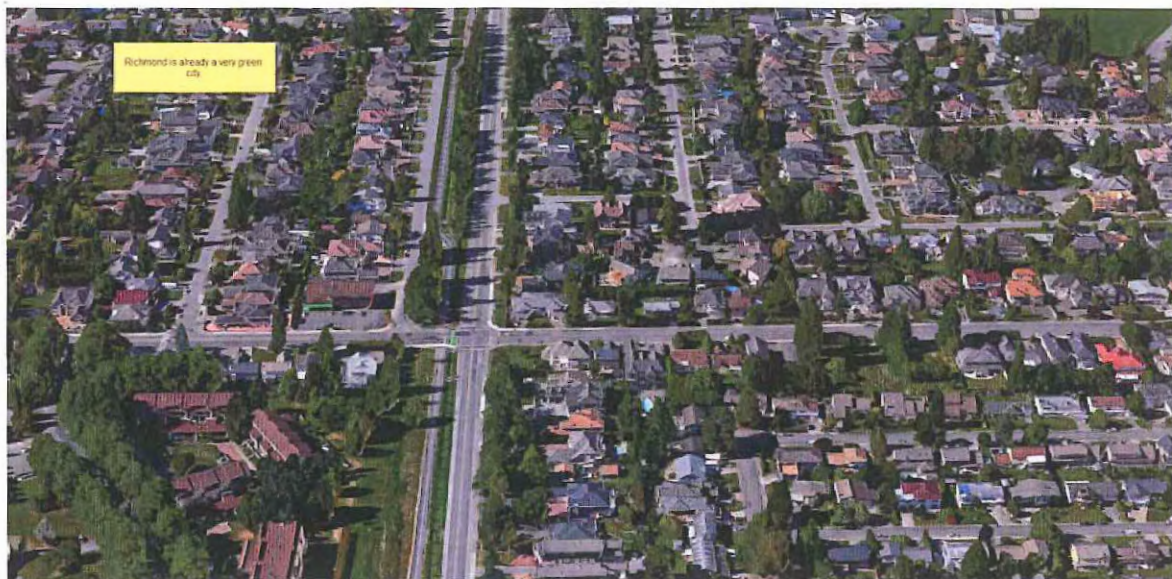


Figure 14: Richmond, a very green city

TREE PLANTING FOR NEW SINGLE BUILDING PERMIT WITH LESS THAN TWO EXISTING TREES: Page #14

As mentioned previously, all new construction should have to plant enough, high trees and hedge to completely close off the rear yard for maximum privacy.

MINIMUM FRONT YARD LANDSCAPING REQUIREMENT: Page #15

This has already been met with the recommendations as listed above.

Option #1 – Status Quo

ENTRY GATES: Page #16

This recommendation clearly exhibits the fact that not much thought was given in proposing such an unworkable and dangerous requirement.

1. As per the city staff diagram, the sliding gate cannot open against the garage wall.
2. How would you get to the sidewalk in front of the garage when the gate is in the fully open position?
3. What if there is a child or a pet standing at the edge of the garage wall when the sliding gate is opened.
 - a. There is a potential for a person/pet to be crushed/pinned against the wall by the gate as it slides open.
4. There is not enough turning radius available for most regular vehicles to turn or back out safely and easily. One would have to reverse all the way to the road.
5. What if one desires to install a **double swing gate**, how would that open inward and not hit any vehicles parked outside in front of the main entrance.
6. The concern raised by the city is that traffic is being held up by people waiting for the gate to open before turning into their driveway.
 - a. All new gates are fully programmable, the opening speed and distance are easily setup. On average most gates require about 10 seconds to open/close. This duration can be mandated when obtaining Occupancy Permit.
 - b. The wait time is no different that if a person is trying to turn into their driveway and there happens to be a pedestrian or an animal crossing. The wait time will be the same and the traffic behind you would still have to wait until you can proceed safely.
 - c. Same can be said when you are leaving the driveway, if you have moved ahead to look at condition of the passing traffic, any pedestrians and bicyclist are required to stop, while you are waiting to make your turn.
 - d. Having to now fence the additional 20ft inward and the portion to support the gate slider will alone result in about \$3000 - \$4000 additional cost. A stone fence across a typical 60 feet wide lot can cost around \$10,000 to build depending on the material used.
 - e. The new fenced area will look closed, cramped and will result in loss of that portion of the owner's front yard. The gate must stay at the front along the current fence and not be brought inward.
 - f. The only place that it would any sense would be on the main, busy roads where the yard has greater depth; otherwise, this is a no-brainer.
 - g. Please keep as Status Quo.
 - h. **Please see diagrams below.**

GARAGE PROJECTIONS: Page #17

Just like the Entry Gate proposal, this one doesn't work either.

1. For one, did anyone not consider that the front main porch is going to have a protrusion and possibly two posts or columns? This would make the garage space next to the house completely unusable.
2. If you ever drive around on the weekend on a sunny day you will see many people that leave their garage doors open. The first thing you noticed is the amount of things people collect and have stored in the garage. There will often be several shelves all filled to the top with barely any room to park a car.
3. A three car garage is essential today. Typically, one car will park on the shorter side and the wide door bay will be half used by the second family car. The rest is used for storage or in some cases another car.

4. Several bicycles, sporting equipment bags, hockey nets, gardening equipment, shoe racks, etc. all require literally half of your garage nearest to house interior wall.
5. The number and size of the garage doors should be decided by the owner and not dictated by the city development staff.
6. The only thing I would like to see done differently is the overall height of the garage roof should never be allowed to be same as the house. There should be cap on the height such as 5m. In certain lot sizes, living areas above the garage should be disallowed.
7. Recommendation = Status Quo, however, the height of the metal gate should not exceed height of 5 ft.
8. **Please see below.**

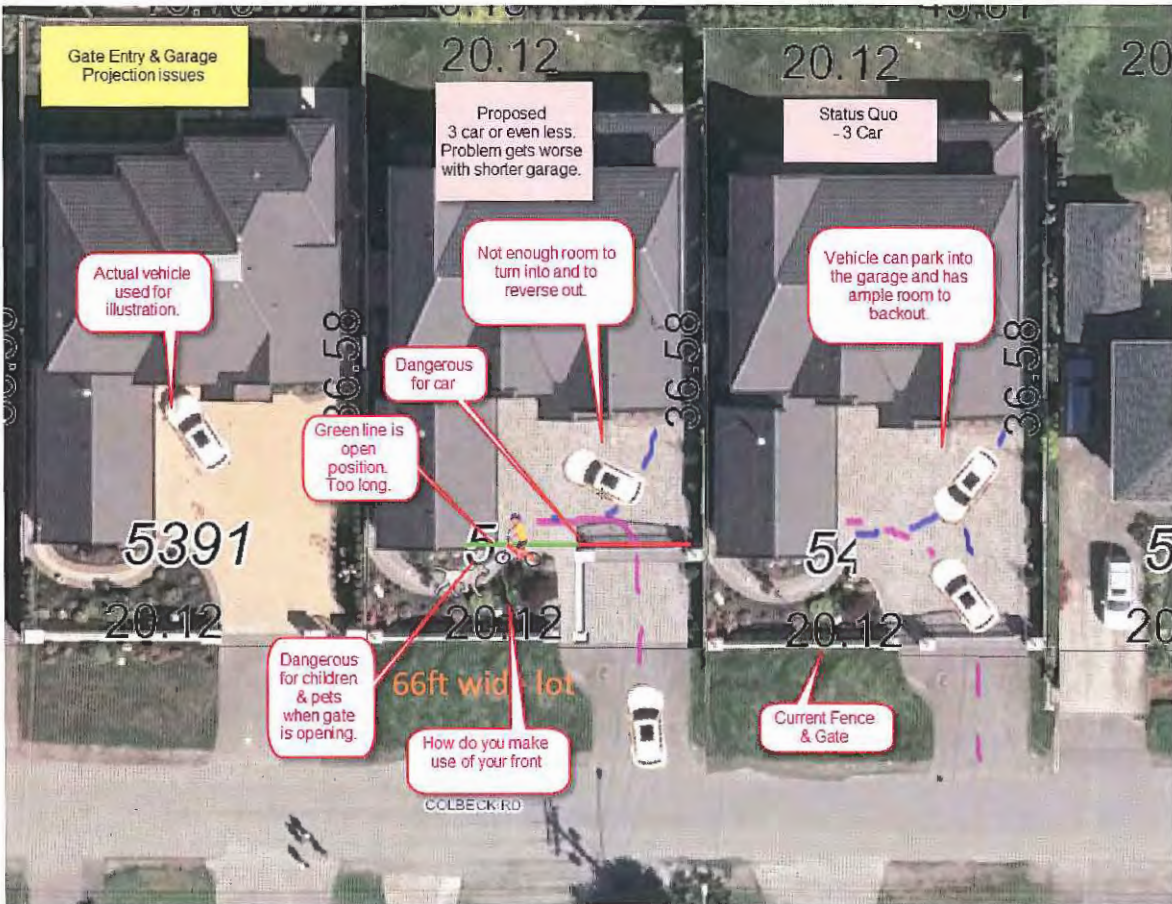


Figure 15: Current and Proposed Gate Entry & Garage Projections, why proposed solution does not work

THE FORGOTTEN ECONOMIC BENEFIT

One very important impact the city does not mention is the loss of the Economic Benefit to the municipal and provincial government, as well, to the people. Just like the food chain, where everything is linked, the economics of new construction follows are very similar path.

For example, a builder or a homeowner who decides to invest money to build a new home in Richmond will affect the people and economy in many different ways.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS OF NEW CONSTRUCTION			
	ITEM	BENEFICIARY	AMOUNT
	Resident or builder invests money into construction		\$2,000,000 (Example only)
	Amount of Property Transfer Tax	Province of BC	\$38,000
	Real-Estate Transaction	Realtors	\$54,501
	GST	Federal Government	\$2725
	Property Tax	City of Richmond	\$4500 (old) - \$10,000 (new home) / year
	Longtime Richmond resident sells home	Seller	\$1,942,775 (Can now retire or re-invest)
	Legal Fees	Notary/Lawyer	\$800 - \$1200
	Financial charges	Loans/Interest/Mortgage	\$\$\$ Varies with mortgage needed
	Surveyors, Plan Designer, etc.		\$6000 - \$10,000
	Deconstruction Fee & deposit	City of Richmond	\$250 + \$4000 - \$5000 deposit
	Demolition/Plan Permit Fees	City of Richmond	\$20,000 - \$40,000 (depending of services)
	(Throw in sub-division & rezoning)	City of Richmond	\$120,000 - \$175,000 plus legal (+2 years)
	Tree removal on city property	City of Richmond	\$600 – \$10,000
	Sub-Trades & Cost of construction	Various (50 – 75 trades)	\$700,000 - \$900,000 depends on build
	Other economic reach	Restaurants, Home Depot, Rona, etc.	\$\$\$

This is only a partial breakdown of the Economic Benefits of new construction. With so much positive and measured financial impact for all levels of government, local businesses and people it is a surprise that the City of Richmond treats its' "customers" in such an unappreciated manner. If this was a private business, the customers would have long moved on to another competitor for better service. There are numerous news reports written every day and people from all different backgrounds are saying that the buyers of new homes have been scared away to markets such as Toronto and Seattle. With the implementation of the Foreign Tax & Vacant Home Tax and other negative press, there is a reason for people to take their money elsewhere.

Implementing changes that significantly alter the shape, design and the style of the house will have the same net effect. Why would one build in Richmond with all of these constraints and restrictions when you can build the same or better across the Massey Tunnel?

Final Conclusion:

Majority of the regulations within Bylaw 8500 & 9280 were first proposed by the group spearheading the Westwind neighbourhood campaign. Some of their concerns were warranted, however, it should be kept in perspective that many of the properties in this area were primarily LUC that allowed for unusually large density. This was not the fault of the owners or the builders; it was a legal failure of the city to seal the technical loophole. The city should have acted sooner and much of the concerns by the citizens would have been addressed. However, the part that is most troubling is how this small group's demands are being adopted by the city as a defacto standard by which the rest of the residential construction throughout the City of Richmond will be governed. Our city has many unique neighbourhoods, each with the unique style, lots sizes and even demographics.

As you can see there are many concerns with the new proposed Building Mass Regulations. I am not an expert in this field, however, the lack of research and consideration are quite obvious. I propose that individuals with more experience and expertise assess the value of the points made in this report and stay the course of status quo. Having said that they are number of options that should be looked at in making changes that positively affect all stakeholders. This should not only involve the city and residents, but groups such the Richmond Builders, any individual looking to build a dream home, suppliers, real-estate agents, trades people, and so forth. The changes currently proposed will not result in peace and harmony if the city decides to hedge forward.