



September 13, 2017

Dear Mayor Robertson and Councillors,

Re: Update - RT5 / RT6 Zones - Proposed amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law for Mount Pleasant and Grandview-Woodland Communities

Members of the Grandview Woodland Area Council (GWAC) attended the city's information session last night. It is clear that the zoning is still being drafted and likely will be amended again prior to the public hearing agenda being posted on the website later this week. Some of this is positive and some more troubling. But one thing is certain, the timeline is too short for the community to be adequately informed or to respond. We continue to call for changes to the zoning to address our concerns and more time to work with staff to achieve this.

GWAC has the following comments and concerns, in addition to our input submitted September 6, 2017 attached below.

Zoning Schedules:

1. It is good news that the size of maximum lot frontage has been reduced down from 100 ft. to 50 ft. for assembly, that means the most that can be assembled is two 25 ft. lots together. This is an improvement, but there shouldn't be any assembly at all. Breaking up a street pattern of 25 ft. frontages by introducing a huge multifamily on an assembled 50 ft. lot destroys the historic streetscape and rhythm.

In RT7/RT8 schedules it says: "The maximum frontage for a site for a multiple dwelling shall be the existing frontage of a single lot which was on record in the Land Title Office for Vancouver prior to ..." This is what RT5/RT6 should say based on this current enactment date, in order to prevent assemblies or subdivisions, to reduce inflationary speculation, and to protect the streetscape character.

2. Staff clarified the new construction options on their presentation charts, and added a few more options as well. They now propose a multiple dwelling of 3 units plus a single family house at the rear on a 50 ft. lot. This is more than they show on the retention side, although in the fine print it says that more units can be in MCDs on larger lots without specifying.

This new chart, which shows 5 options for new development on the presentation boards and 6 options in the proposed design guidelines, confirm our concerns that there are way more options favouring new construction than for retention options. The new second house on one lot option undermines the infill option for retention, both on small lots and on large lots where character houses could likely be considered underutilized.

Current proposals allow new construction to have a duplex with one secondary suite each, four in total on a standard 33 ft. lot. MCDs for character retention should at least have a similar option for a duplex with a secondary suite each unit as well.

3. It appears that the definition for "underutilized" lot to allow demolition of a character house without penalty has not changed from proposed. Underutilized should especially not apply to heritage listed properties at all.
4. The intent of the zoning has been changed to emphasize retention and renovation of existing character homes. This is a move in the right direction.
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7. Staff have added three diagrams for clarity, much less than the original guidelines, but more than the previous draft referred to public hearing; one on how additions should be setback from the original facade, the other two regarding roof pitches and dormers for infill. There still remains to be not near enough clarity in the draft design guidelines , so the original current design guidelines should be instead retained and expanded rather than being reduced overall.
8. There are more guidelines on basic construction as outlined in the schedules. But there continues to be no guidelines regarding finishes and style of any new construction with regard to fit within a compatible character style to suit the streetscape. Even additions and renovations to character houses do not need to match the original house. Only in RT6 do the architectural components of MCDs need to match historic character guidelines. But even in RT6, these guidelines no longer apply to new construction. The original current design guidelines regarding neighbourhood character and architectural components should apply to retention and new-build options in both RT5 and RT6. Both are heritage areas that should be respected.

Conclusion:

Other than these items above, all of the previous GWAC comments attached still apply, especially regarding process. Giving the public less than a week to respond to a final revised draft bylaw, after a short and inadequate consultation process that has had no public input on many of the important details, is entirely unacceptable.

This is no way to plan about half of Grandview and a huge amount of Mt. Pleasant with further city-wide implications in all RS zones. So we continue our call for the public hearing to be postponed until there is substantial changes to the draft as requested by the community.

As the City of Vancouver strives to fulfill its Greenest City and affordability policies, avoiding demolitions through the retention and adaptive reuse of existing character buildings is essential to meet these goals. The RT5/RT6 zoning changes should be amended to ensure that the zoning is better balanced to achieve this.

Respectfully,

Dana Cromie , Chair, Grandview Woodland Area Council

Attachment



September 6, 2017

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Re: RT5 / RT6 Zones - Proposed amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law for Mount Pleasant and Grandview-Woodland Communities

The Grandview Woodland Area Council (GWAC) has many concerns about the proposed changes to zoning that will cover about half of our neighbourhood. Many changes are not consistent with the city's stated goals of character retention, and the public process has not adequately involved the community in many of the important details. This current proposal is not ready for enactment so we oppose it in its current form.

In previous rezoning processes, such as when Kitsilano was rezoned from RT4/RT5 to RT7/RT8, the city had a community advisory committee made up of local residents that worked with the planners on all aspects of the their new zoning.

GWAC requested a similar process when we met with the Manager of Planning and staff earlier in the year. Unfortunately there instead were only a few open houses that did not adequately allow for the needed community input to address our concerns or to explore options.

Grandview is a heritage area that is generally intact with the original buildings still existing. Most of these character houses have been converted to multiple rental units, some legal and some not. These units are important sources of affordable rentals, especially when we are in a housing crisis.

Retention of existing rentals is dependent on the fate of our character houses. Growing through incremental increases of units of conversions and infill as incentives for character house retention is the sustainable way to create more affordable housing options while not losing what we have and without inflating land values. The current proposal allows too many options for new development that undermines this, including lot assembly.

The new RT5 zone should be given the same neighbourhood character consideration for contextual design and guidelines as the RT6 in west Mt. Pleasant. We strongly disagree with the proposal to delete these guidelines for RT5.

We agree with the city's stated intention to allow densification through incentives to retain character houses. However we do not think this proposal is ready for approval yet and request an extended timeframe to meet with staff and to have the zoning proposal further amended to address the many outstanding issues with this proposed RT5 zoning. A 31% loss of character pre-1940 houses for RT5 is way too much.

Please see the attachment below for more details of some of the many outstanding issues.

Respectfully,

Dana Cromie , Chair, Grandview Woodland Area Council

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Attachment to letter from Grandview Woodland Area Council (GWAC) dated September 6, 2017

GWAC concerns about the proposed RT5 zoning changes

1. Character criteria and "underutilized" sites:

Based on the city's figures, 31% of pre-1940 houses could be demolished. This is way too much.

Grandview was generally built out prior to 1940 and most of the original houses still exist. The character criteria proposed is too onerous if the city expects that only 80% will likely qualify as character houses. Further, by increasing the definition of "underutilized" sites from 0.30 FSR to 0.45 FSR, the city expects another 14% of those considered character will not qualify based on size. So that means only 69% of the existing pre-1940 houses will qualify for character house retention incentives and that 31% will potentially be demolished. That would be a tremendous loss to the character of our neighbourhood and to affordable rental suites.

Most of these pre-1940s houses could be restored and upgraded with multiple units as a sustainable means to accommodating growth. Even small houses are ideal for bigger infill options or additions and should be retained.

- The character house criteria should be revised to ensure most pre-1940 houses qualify as character houses to be retained with incentives.
- The definition of underutilized lots should be left at the current 0.30 FSR, especially for lots with 50 ft. frontage and greater. And "underutilized" site designations should not apply at all to heritage listed properties on the register. They can always be densified through retention infill options.

2. Economics:

We are concerned that there are more development options proposed for demolition and new construction than for character house retention incentives. This may have the unintended consequence of loss of older more affordable rentals in character houses, while increasing inflationary speculation.

It is proposed that a new duplex can have two secondary suites, a total of four units. While a character house can only have three units in a multifamily conversion dwelling (MCD) that requires full code upgrades of the original house. There is not even a retention option to have two secondary rental suites, with a main floor unit, that the Secondary Suite Program could make more affordable and feasible to do through code relaxations.

- Allowing four units for new construction on a small lot is too much. Use dwelling unit density at 74 units per ha. for MCDs and infill for character retention and 64 units per ha. for new construction as per typical RT zones such as current RT6 and RT8.
- Character houses should be allowed to have more suites under the Secondary Suite Program.
- If a character merit house is demolished for a new house, they should not be able to build a laneway house too.
- A new house can also have another small house on the same lot which undermines the retention incentives for infill, so this should not be allowed for new construction.

Mail: GWAC, Britannia Community Centre, 1661 Napier Street, Vancouver, BC, V5L 4X4

Email: info@gwac.ca website: www.gwac.ca

3. Site assembly for multifamily development:

Site assembly for new multifamily development will lead to speculative inflation and should be avoided.

In other character retention zones like RT8, no site assembly is allowed. However, this proposal allows up to two lots assembled for 50 ft. to 100 ft. frontage sites for multifamily. And the amount of new development is increased from 62 units per hectare to 74 units per hectare. Previously the 74 units per hectare was reserved only for character retention options and this should be reversed as per section on economics above.

Grandview already has many areas zoned for new apartment and townhouse development. The RT5 zone should be used primarily for character house retention conversions and infill, not new large site assemblies for multifamily development and demolition that lead to speculative land inflation.

- No assembly should be allowed in RT5. Under 4.2 Frontage, the maximum and minimum lot frontage should be the single lot frontage existing at the time of enactment of this zoning change.

4. Design guidelines:

Grandview is a heritage area since most of the original housing stock still exists. Exterior house and streetscape design are very important and need design guidelines to ensure contextually sympathetic implementation. We agree with the design guidelines being retained in RT6 west Mt. Pleasant, but disagree with guidelines being dropped for the new RT5 in east Mt. Pleasant and Grandview. The existing design guidelines have served us generally well and should be retained for now. A review for improvements, or for adding options for modernist design where appropriate, should involve detailed community input in a much more fulsome future process.

- Keep existing design guidelines for both RT6 and RT5.

5. Front yards:

Front yard setbacks should remain flexible and contextual as per current regulations and guidelines rather than changing to a rigid setback. Director of Planning has discretion to vary setbacks when required. Proposed changes specifies the front yard setback regardless of context.

- Retain current setbacks that are 20% of lot depth or the average of the two adjacent properties, with further guidance on how this should be applied in design guidelines. Specific cases can be varied.

6. Parking relaxations:

Parking relaxations should be made for character retention initiatives, but not for new construction. There is only so much street parking and relaxation priority should only be given to character retention as an incentive.

7. New RT5 zoning boundaries:

We are concerned about the locations of some of the new RT5 zoning boundaries. We would like to go over a detailed review with staff to clarify the rationale that was not part of the consultation process to date.

8. Building code relaxations and streamlined permits for character house retention:

Currently, the city makes it very difficult to renovate character houses. Incentives should include more building code relaxations and streamlined dedicated permit approvals for character house renovation and infill.

Castro, Maria

From: Penny Street "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2017 10:34 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Rezoning Application for Character Home Incentives

Dear Mayor and Council,

I am writing to say that the measures being proposed to protect our quickly disappearing character homes are completely inadequate.

Also, in Grandview-Woodland, where I live, character homes are where you'll find most of the area's affordable rental suites and shared rental housing.

While I support the actual incentives outlined in the report, as the report itself states, "Staff do not expect that incentives alone will result in a significant change to current development trends in single-family zones."

I don't believe that the rezoning proposed for the main character area of Grandview will result in a change in the trends either. There are not enough incentives to keep character houses.

The report goes on to state what WILL make a difference: "Reducing the floor area for new construction, as exists in our RT zones, would have a great impact in retaining character homes but is not recommended as part of this report." I agree. Provide more/adequate incentives to persuade home owners or home buyers to retain their character houses; stiffen up the DISincentives for those who want to tear down character houses and build new.

No reduction in floor area of new buildings and the lack of design guidelines will mean that our neighbourhoods will continue to be redeveloped for the luxury market during an affordable-housing crisis.

You have sufficient public support to pursue an effective solution. In the recent Character Home Zoning Review Questionnaire only 24% disapproved of reducing floor area compared to 59% who approved and strongly approved.

If you are sincere about your Greenest City initiatives and about creating affordable housing, you must act immediately to stop the rampant demolition of liveable homes.

This is a priority issue for me and I will definitely be voting accordingly in the upcoming municipal elections.

Sincerely, Penny Street

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

Castro, Maria

From: warren paley [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2017 4:16 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: pr0posed rt5 zoning changes mt.pleasant

also these claims i heard one of your staff touting at the Croatian meeting of "extra" rental income don't fly either. the cost of a lane way would most likely exceed \$250,000. (even \$150,000 would be a bad investment) which would amount to a small second story apartment 700 sq. ft. or less of usable living space with garage below. is actually more than most likey 20 years of paying off the construction loan. or sell for profit by these builder/profiteers who couldn't care less about the negative consequences. mr. paley [resident trout lake area]
33'x122' lot sizes are very small [bad] as it is.

Castro, Maria

From: warren paley "5.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Friday, September 15, 2017 9:03 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Rt5 " proposed "zoning changes mt-rt-zone-review / mt.pleasant

Does city council and the mayor want to contribute to the mistake made by the railway over 100 years ago. ??
33'x122' lots are very bad in the first place for duplexes(and with laneways next to them forget it). Had
theythe railway decided on 36'x128' standard lots there would be a different story. Thanks Mr. Paley
(resident trout lake/mt. Pleasant)

Isfeld, Lori

From: warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 8:07 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: city rt5 zoning proposed changes

duplexes next to laneways is a very bad idea, the standard vancouver city lots are way to small for this and will only cause more problems. i don't see any solutions with these proposals. i am 1000% percent against duplexes next to laneways.. #please don't make this mistake. mr.paley [east vancouver resident.]

Isfeld, Lori

From: warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 9:29 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: city rt5 proposed zoning changes

Finally in case i don't make the teus . sept 19th meeting or get to speak. i say go pick on the people in west vancouver who are truly rich . don't pick on the working class people in east van.on small lots, who are very basically some what land rich and cash poor., to erroneously"erroneously" try to solve the housing crisis. i'd say double the taxes on all propertys over 3 million dollars. and spend the money on co ops and affordable housing/townhouses/condos in the city etc.... very basically again no laneways at the very least in duplex zoned areas on standard lot areas they are to way to small. please if you do it will be a huge mistake. thanks mr. paley {i am more than well acquainted with 33'x122' lots,as i was stuck in design and development for over 5 years on one of these lots here.}

Isfeld, Lori

From: warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 9:38 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: rt5 zoning proposed changes

any property under 4800 sq.ft. is not good for laneways exponentially the smaller the worse they would get. i cant emphasize this enough. mr. paley

Isfeld, Lori

From: warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 9:46 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: rt5 proposed changes

laneways on at even 4800 to 5300 sq.ft. lots wouldn't be all that good. mr. paley

Isfeld, Lori

From: warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 10:27 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Re: rt5 proposed changes

. again i am totally against duplexes and laneways in the same zoning. 1000% to put lightly . thanks mr. paley

On Sun, Sep 17, 2017 at 9:45 PM, warren paley "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential" wrote:
laneways on at even 4800 to 5300 sq.ft. lots wouldn't be all that good. mr. paley

Isfeld, Lori

From: Larry Bengé "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 11:02 PM
To: Deal, Heather; Meggs, Geoff; Carr, Adriane; Affleck, George; Ball, Elizabeth; De Genova, Melissa; Jang, Kerry; Louie, Raymond; Reimer, Andrea; Stevenson, Tim; Robertson, Gregor; Public Hearing
Cc: Johnston, Sadhu; Quinlan, Kevin; Kelley, Gil; Munro, Kent; D'Agostini, Marco; Anita Molero; Pecarski, Randy; Huber, Paula; Alison.Dunnet@vancouver.ca; Hiebert, Karis; Cho, Edna
Subject: Proposed RT-5, RT-6 Zoning Changes for Grandview and Mt. Pleasant
Attachments: CVN Letter to Council -RT5-RT6-Sept 17-2017.pdf

Please see attached letter.
Thank you,

Larry A. Bengé, Co-Chair
Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods



COALITION OF VANCOUVER NEIGHBOURHOODS

<http://coalitionvan.org>

September 16, 2017

City of Vancouver Council

Dear Mayor Gregor Robertson and Councillors,

Re: RT5-RT6 zoning changes for Grandview and Mt. Pleasant

The Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods (CVN) concurs with the Grandview Woodland Area Council (GWAC) who state, in the attached letters, their opposition to the changes to zoning as currently proposed in the staff report referred to public hearing and the revised draft zoning bylaw.

We note that the community consultation process was inadequate for a major rezoning that covers almost half of Grandview and a large part of Mount Pleasant. The staff report recommendations are not ready to be approved as submitted.

Please provide a more extended process to address the many concerns outlined in the GWAC letters attached, and to further amend the zoning changes to rectify the issues mentioned.

Sincerely,

Larry Benge, Co-Chair

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

Dorothy Barkley, Co-Chair

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"

On behalf of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods
Member Groups of the Coalition of Vancouver Neighbourhoods

Arbutus Ridge Community Association
Arbutus Ridge/ Kerrisdale/ Shaughnessy Visions
Cedar Cottage Area Neighbours
Chinatown Action Group
Citygate Intertower Group
Community Association of New Yaletown
Crosstown Residents Association
Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood Council
Dunbar Residents Association
False Creek Residents Association
Grandview Woodland Area Council
Granville Burrard Residents & Business Association
Joyce Area Residents
Kitsilano-Arbutus Residents Association

Kits Point Residents Association
Marpole Oakridge Community Association
Norquay Residents
NW Point Grey Home Owners Association
Oakridge Langara Area Residents
Raycam
Residents Association Mount Pleasant
Riley Park/South Cambie Visions
Shaughnessy Heights Property Owners Association
Strathcona Residents Association
Upper Kitsilano Residents Association
West End Neighbours Society
West Kitsilano Residents Association
West Point Grey Residents Association

Reference: Report: <http://council.vancouver.ca/20170725/documents/p3.pdf>

Draft Bylaw for Public Hearing:

<http://council.vancouver.ca/20170919/documents/phea9draftbylawZD.pdf>



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- No assembly should be allowed in RT5. Under 4.2 Frontage, the maximum and minimum lot frontage should be the single lot frontage existing at the time of enactment of this zoning change.

4. Design guidelines:

Grandview is a heritage area since most of the original housing stock still exists. Exterior house and streetscape design are very important and need design guidelines to ensure contextually sympathetic implementation. We agree with the design guidelines being retained in RT6 west Mt. Pleasant, but disagree with guidelines being dropped for the new RT5 in east Mt. Pleasant and Grandview. The existing design guidelines have served us generally well and should be retained for now. A review for improvements, or for adding options for modernist design where appropriate, should involve detailed community input in a much more fulsome future process.

- Keep existing design guidelines for both RT6 and RT5.

5. Front yards:

Front yard setbacks should remain flexible and contextual as per current regulations and guidelines rather than changing to a rigid setback. Director of Planning has discretion to vary setbacks when required. Proposed changes specifies the front yard setback regardless of context.

- Retain current setbacks that are 20% of lot depth or the average of the two adjacent properties, with further guidance on how this should be applied in design guidelines. Specific cases can be varied.

6. Parking relaxations:

Parking relaxations should be made for character retention initiatives, but not for new construction. There is only so much street parking and relaxation priority should only be given to character retention as an incentive.

7. New RT5 zoning boundaries:

We are concerned about the locations of some of the new RT5 zoning boundaries. We would like to go over a detailed review with staff to clarify the rationale that was not part of the consultation process to date.

8. Building code relaxations and streamlined permits for character house retention:

Currently, the city makes it very difficult to renovate character houses. Incentives should include more building code relaxations and streamlined dedicated permit approvals for character house renovation and infill.

Isfeld, Lori

From: Irmela Topf "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Sunday, September 17, 2017 9:22 PM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Save Vancouver's Character Houses

To the Mayor and City Council of Vancouver:

I have lived since 50 years in a character house built in 1927 and raised 3 children in the west side of this wonderful city. While I am concerned that every day, perfectly livable and charming older homes of sensible and manageable size are being pushed into the landfill, I seriously protest the proposed plans to amend RS (single-family) district schedules to

- Allow an owner who retains a character home to increase its floor area
- Convert it into a multi-unit residences and/or add infill housing.

To me, this will promote development and densification under the guise of "protecting character houses".

Just have a look at the proposed development on 6825 West Boulevard: currently this is a large (quite ugly) character house on a very large lot. The developer has submitted an application to rezone the property from RS-5 (Single Family) to a CD-1 (Comprehensive Development) under the City's Heritage Policies and Guidelines, including the Heritage Action Plan.

The proposal is for "heritage protection" and conversion of the existing building into two residential units. In addition, one two-storey coach house and three 2.5-storey two-family houses are proposed. This will transform the property **from a single family home into a total of nine dwelling units.**

This is the tip of the iceberg of densification which ultimately will reduce the current quality of life in our RS(single-family) areas, i.e create more road traffic accompanied by noise and pollution and

the crowding of existing playgrounds, parks, sports fields, community centers, pools and libraries.

Of course there will be a huge profit reaped by the developer - Shannon Mews is an example of a development which was approved by the City against the overwhelming opposition of the citizens in the area. Ask Peter Wall how much money he made on that project!

We voted for you and we believe that you would lead our city responsibly, so please keep our city livable for our citizens.

As a tax paying citizen I do not want to be forced to sell out to speculators.

Your concerned Irmela Johanna Topf

Isfeld, Lori

From: Kelly Mo "s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"
Sent: Monday, September 18, 2017 9:56 AM
To: Public Hearing
Subject: Sept 19/2017 Hearing: Must *define* ROOM SIZES in RS Zoning!

Dear Mayor, Council & Planning Dept,

I've recently read that development applications are being submitted in Grandview-Woodlands for so-called 3-bedroom family units that call for bedroom sizes as small as 8' x 7'.

THIS IS A BAD JOKE for Vancouver as a whole as we seek to retain young families in our community. These tiny bedrooms might serve for a crib for a year or two -- but kids grow up, right???

Our own aging single-family home in Vancouver was tastelessly "renovated" before we purchased it five years ago. One of our rooms -- marketed as a "bedroom" -- measures 8' x 9' and it is ****ALMOST TOTALLY USELESS**** except as an informal home office. As a retired couple, we had hoped to have a room to accommodate our visiting children and houseguests -- but the room accommodates only a single bed and **EITHER** a small chair or mini-dresser. Hence, our visiting relatives sleep in the time-honoured tradition of a double-duty bed/sofa in the living room.

The city ****MUST**** define suitable room sizes for these new types of housing -- or we risk becoming a **LAUGHING-STOCK**. Worse than that, we will be doing a grave disservice to the next generation.

Kelly Talayco

"s.22(1) Personal and Confidential"