



CITY OF VANCOUVER

POLICY REPORT DEVELOPMENT AND BUILDING

Date: October 30, 2003
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Phone No.: 6198/7207
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Meeting Date: November 18, 2003

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of the Housing Centre in consultation with the Director of Legal Services

SUBJECT: Amendment to By-law No. 6788 which Facilitates Demolition for Social Housing

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Director of Legal Services be instructed to amend By-law (No. 6788) which Facilitates Demolition for Social Housing generally in accordance with the draft amendment attached as Appendix A.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Manager of Community Services RECOMMENDS approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

The City requires that all permits be in place for new development before the demolition of existing housing can proceed. The only exception is for the development of new social housing.

Council approval is required for the conversion or demolition of Single Room Accommodation.

PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval to amend By-law (No. 6788) that Facilitates Demolition for Social Housing so that Council approval is required for the development of new social housing that involves the loss of single room accommodation.

BACKGROUND

February 1991: In order to expedite the demolition to make way for the development of social housing and cooperative housing projects which have received unit and funding allocations, Council enacted a By-law that Facilitates Demolition for Social Housing.

October 2003: Council enacted the Single Room Accommodation By-law to regulate the conversion and demolition of single room accommodation. The By-law requires Council approval for the conversion or demolition of single room accommodation.

DISCUSSION

Through its Zoning and Development By-law, Council has historically been involved in regulating land use in general and managing the loss of the city's housing stock in particular. Council has achieved this by requiring that all permits be in place prior to the demolition of the housing stock. One exception to this policy is the demolition of a building for the creation of social housing. Council enacted the By-law to Facilitate Demolition for Social Housing to expedite the process for social housing being developed by non-profit social housing sponsors.

The objective of the By-law to Facilitate the Demolition of Social Housing is to reduce the hardship and red tape for non-profit agencies that have received unit allocations by expediting the process for the demolition of buildings to make way for social housing. The By-law supports Council's policy of facilitating the creation of new affordable housing to replace the aging stock of existing affordable housing.

However, in the case where new affordable housing is replacing buildings with designated SRA rooms, staff are recommending that a Single Room Accommodation permit must first be obtained. The majority of buildings with SRA rooms provide low-cost accommodation for singles. The SRA stock is important in the continuum of housing offered to our citizens in that it provides accommodation to many of the city's poorest residents and is often the last step before homelessness. Typically, new affordable or non-market housing contains units for a diversity of demographics including families, couples, and singles. By requiring that a Single Room Accommodation Permit be in place prior to the demolition of buildings with designated SRA rooms, Council will have the ability to decide whether or not to grant approval, as well as attach possible conditions to the permit. Conditions could include requiring a \$5,000 fee per room to be deposited into a reserve fund for the creation of replacement housing (in this case, Council may decide to invest in replacement singles units); and/or to ensuring that replacement housing is found for displaced tenants.

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DEPARTMENTAL APPROVAL AND REPORT CONCURRENCES

General Mgr./Dept. Head:

Report Dated: October 30, 2003

Author: Celine Mauboules and
Cameron Gray

Date:

Phone No.: 6198/7207

This report has been prepared in consultation with the departments listed to the right, and they concur with its contents.

Concurring Departments:
Legal Services (Francie Connell)

