

From: "Johnston, Sadhu" <Sadhu.Johnston@vancouver.ca>

To: "Direct to Mayor and Council - DL"

CC: "City Manager's Correspondence Group - DL"

"Kelley, Gil" <Gil.Kelley@vancouver.ca>

"Adcock, Jessie" <Jessie.Adcock@vancouver.ca>

Date: 4/28/2020 11:18:06 AM

Subject: Memo - Questions raised regarding VBBL changes effects on character and Heritage homes - RTS 13606

Attachments: Memo to Mayor and Council 2020 RTS 13606 on impacts to heritage and character homes (3).pdf

Dear Mayor and Council,

Please find attached a memo from Gil Kelley, in response to correspondence received expressing concern about potential impacts to Character and Heritage homes with regard to the Climate Emergency Requirements for New Housing 3-Storeys and Under (RTS 13606). As noted in the memo:

- The proposed changes to the Vancouver Building Bylaw (VBBL) do not introduce any new requirements for homes undergoing simple renovations, including those to Heritage and Character homes;
- The proposed updates only apply to new construction, additions and reconstruction;
- There are no changes to the current way the VBBL evaluates additions and reconstruction; and
- Requirements for renovations are not getting more stringent with the 2022 updates.

Should you have any questions, please contact Gil Kelley at Gil.Kelley@vancouver.ca.

Best,
Sadhu

Sadhu Aufochs Johnston | City Manager
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Pronouns: he, him, his



The City of Vancouver acknowledges that it is situated on the unceded traditional territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh peoples.

MEMORANDUM

April 27, 2020

TO: Mayor and Council

CC: Sadhu Johnston, City Manager
Paul Mochrie, Deputy City Manager
Karen Levitt, Deputy City Manager
Lynda Graves, Administration Services Manager, City Manager's Office
Rena Kendall-Craden, Civic Engagement and Communications Director
Katrina Leckovic, City Clerk
Anita Zaenker, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Neil Monckton, Chief of Staff, Mayor's Office
Alvin Singh, Communications Director, Mayor's Office
Jessie Adcock, General Manager Development, Building, and Licencing
Susan Haid, Deputy Director, Long-Range and Strategic Planning
Brad Badelt, Acting Director Sustainability
Sean Pander, Green Building Program Manager
Pat Ryan, Chief Building Official

FROM: Gil Kelley
General Manager, Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability

SUBJECT: Responding to Character House Network Concerns with Climate Emergency Requirements for New Housing RTS13606

This memo responds to a letter to Council concerned about the preservation of Character and Heritage homes and asking how the changes proposed in the report for Council consideration on April 29, 2020, "Climate Emergency Requirements for New Housing 3-Storeys and Under" may affect these homes.

The proposed changes do not introduce any new requirements for existing homes undergoing simple renovations, including Heritage and Character homes. The proposed 2022 updates to the Vancouver Building By-Law (VBBL) only apply to new construction, additions and reconstruction; the costs on new construction have been outlined in the report. Further, there is no change to the current way the Vancouver Building By-Law (VBBL) evaluates additions and reconstruction.

Renovations

The proposed changes to the VBBL do not modify the requirements for renovations. Currently, when an existing property owner chooses to renovate their home they are required to modernize the elements of the house that are being renovated but those requirements of the

VBBL are unchanged with the recommended updates. Further, for an owner choosing to replace their gas fired furnace or hot water tank, they would be allowed to replace it with a similar appliance.

That said, for Heritage and Character houses, the VBBL has and will continue to provide a range of relaxations so these homes can maintain 2x4 stud walls and reuse their single glazed windows, doors, heating systems, hot water systems, along with additional other relaxations.

Additions

When a property owner chooses to retain an existing house but build a new addition, the addition often imitates the look of the older part of the home. Only the new addition is currently, and will continue to be, required to meet the VBBL in force at the time. For example, new windows and walls must meet the performance and insulation requirements of new construction.

For registered Heritage homes, “additions” typically involve keeping the existing house intact as a single family dwelling and constructing a new standalone infill building. In these cases, no upgrades to the existing Heritage house are required unless the owner is strata titling (where upgrades are required by the *Strata Act*), but the new infill building will be expected to meet the requirements for new construction in the VBBL.

Reconstruction

New requirements can be generated by reconstruction of retained existing buildings where the existing services or features are no longer able to cope with the new demands or conditions created and must therefore be replaced with new construction. A reconstruction project often sees a significant increase in floor area, where all character or heritage elements are removed, and is often called a “full gut”. Under current practice, and under the proposed changes, the VBBL treats this as new construction because very little of the original house is retained. Therefore the proposed Bylaw amendments will add nominal costs to a reconstruction project, but as these changes would also be required for new construction, this should not impact the decision to retain or build new.

Summary

The changes proposed in the report, “Climate Emergency Requirements for New Housing 3-Storeys and Under” do not require anything of existing homes (including Character or Heritage homes) not undergoing new construction. There is no change to the current way the VBBL evaluates additions and reconstruction. Requirements for renovations on existing homes are not getting more stringent with the proposed 2022 updates.



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