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Accessory Coach House
Development Permit Guidelines

city of north vancouver

Contents

Part I – General Reglations

1 Introduction 3
- 1.1 Intent and Use of the Guidelines 4
- 1.2 Guiding Principles 4

2 Approval Process 5
- 2.1 Exemptions 5
- 2.2 Pre-Application Requirements 5
- 2.3 Application Requirements 5
- 2.4 Amendments 5

Part II – Environmental Guidelines

3 Energy Conservation 6

4 Rainwater Management 6

5 Waste and Recycling 6

Part III - Form and Character Guidelines

6 Site Requirements 6

7 Building Scale and Massing 7
- 7.1 Maximum Gross Floor Area 7
- 7.2 Height Envelope 7

8 Site Design 8
- 8.1 General 8
- 8.2 Lot coverage 8
- 8.3 Corner Lots 8
- 8.4 Landscape 8

9 Size, Shape and Siting 9
- 9.1 Setbacks 9

10 Building Design 11
- 10.1 Habitable Space at Grade 11
- 10.2 Relationship to Neighbours 11
- 10.3 Sloping Sites 11
- 10.4 Unit Identity 11
- 10.5 Architectural Elements 11
- 10.6 Heritage 12

11 Parking and Access 12
- 11.1 Required Parking Stalls 12
- 11.2 Parking Access and Location 12
- 11.3 Driveways 13

12 Servicing 13

13 Accessory Uses 13

Part I – General Regulations

1 Introduction

Coach Houses are detached non-strata units also known as granny suites, lane way housing, garden suites and carriage houses. Coach houses have been present in the community over the last century. In the early 1900s, a coach house was sometimes the first unit built on a lot to house the owners while the principal residence was constructed. The coach house sometimes survived afterwards at the rear of the lot. Usually they were replaced by a garage. Other times they were built to provide housing for expanding or extended families.

All lots zoned RS or lots with a zoning designation that permits one-unit residential are allowed to have one principal dwelling unit and one accessory secondary suite which is contained within the existing dwelling. Coach houses are similar to secondary suites except they are detached from the principal residence usually located at the rear of the lot.

COACH HOUSE BENEFITS

There are a number of benefits that coach houses can offer to the community including:

- Additional diversity and choice in the housing stock;
- More opportunities for rental housing units;
- Greater privacy and independence for both the owner and the tenant;
- Ground-oriented living with garden access;
- A more livable alternative to basement suites;
- Potential accommodation for extended family or caregivers;
- Rental income for homeowners;
- Opportunities for people to age in place and stay on their properties as their lifestyles change over time;
- Rental housing for young people, seniors and families;
- Improvement to the “streetscape” and character of our existing laneways.

ACCESSORY COACH HOUSE UNITS VS. INFILL UNITS

The City distinguishes between accessory coach houses and infill units. An “infill unit” is a full principal dwelling unit in a duplex or higher density zoning category that is detached, and may be stratified. A “coach house” is detached unit that is subordinate in size to the principal home, and must be non-stratified (both units under common ownership). The owner must reside on the property. In effect, an Accessory Coach House is a detached accessory secondary suite.

1.1 INTENT AND USE OF THE GUIDELINES

These Guidelines apply to Accessory Coach House development applications on Lots with a One-Unit Residential Use as designated in Zoning Bylaw 1995, No. 6700 for the purpose of establishing objectives for the form and character of Intensive Residential Development. Accessory Coach Houses may be up to 1,000 square feet and two storeys (plus an uninhabitable cellar level) / 6.7 metres (22.0 feet) high and may contain a toilet, bathroom, sleeping and living areas and cooking facilities. Coach Houses should be subordinate in size to the one-unit principal residence on the property and may not be stratified. Applications are reviewed against these Guidelines. Applications which are not consistent with the guidelines may require revisions or a Development Variance Permit or Rezoning at Council's discretion.

The objective is to introduce detached accessory secondary suites into the housing mix in a way that integrates and blends these buildings into existing one unit neighbourhoods as secondary buildings that add value and provide a new form of rental housing. Applicants and designers are asked to consider the appropriate size and massing, and potential impact on adjacent neighbours, in order to achieve this integration into the existing residential fabric.

These Guidelines have been created to guide applicants through the design process for developing Accessory Coach Houses. Related Zoning Bylaw requirements have also been included (in italics and bold) for the convenience of an applicant and designer. Refer to Divisions II - IV of Zoning Bylaw 1995, No. 6700 for all applicable regulations.

1.2 GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Coach houses introduce more detached accessory secondary suites into the housing mix in a way that integrates and blends into existing single family neighbourhoods. A variety of coach house sizes and forms is encouraged to optimize choices for extended families, aging-in-place, and to serve as possible mortgage helpers.

Coach Houses should:

- Be subordinate in size to the principal or future residence on the property;
- Compliment but not replicate the principal residence;
- Respect the scale and built form of neighbouring properties;
- Respect the privacy of adjacent neighbours by trying to minimize overlook and shadowing impacts;
- Animate the lane and/or adjacent streets by locating habitable space at ground level and providing articulation in the facades;
- Respect prominent existing trees and landscape features;
- Incorporate sustainable design elements into site and building design and construction;
- Exhibit design excellence.

2 Approval Process

2.1 EXEMPTIONS

Minor exterior renovations to existing coach houses which do not significantly alter the footprint or character of the building may be exempted from Development Permit requirements at the discretion of the Director of Planning.

2.2 PRE-APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Prior to application submission, a pre-application proposal summary must be provided to the Planning Department for preliminary review. Staff will work with the applicant to submit a formal application.

2.3 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Every application for a Development Permit must be accompanied by relevant development information in the form prescribed by the City. This information includes, but is not limited to:

1) Plans demonstrating:
    a. the proposed location of all buildings and structures;
    b. the proposed siting of parking areas;
    c. the extent and nature of existing and proposed landscaping, including details of trees to be maintained or proposed to be planted;
    d. the proposed exterior finish, materials, and colour of buildings and roofs;
    e. the proposed locations of all exterior lighting.
2) Supporting information demonstrating that neighbours within 40 metres have been notified;
3) A checklist indicating how the proposal complies with the Guidelines. Where some element of the design does not comply with a Guideline, a justification describing the divergence and the reason must be provided.

2.4 AMENDMENTS

A Development Permit amendment may be required for minor amendments to Development Permits already issued and registered on title, at the discretion of the Director of Planning.

Part II – Environmental Guidelines

3 Energy Conservation

Guideline 3.1 Consider incorporating solar energy systems or pre-plumbing for future installation.

> ***"Any portion of a mechanical room containing a Green Building System, up to a maximum of 9.29 square meters (100 square feet) for each building, provided that the system be located in an accessible location within the building, having a minimum headroom clearance of 2.0 meters (6.5 feet);" [Part II: Interpretation Gross Floor Area (Coach House, Accessory)]***

4 Rainwater Management

Guideline 4.1 Natural filtration of rainwater into the site is encouraged.

Guideline 4.2 All uncovered parking areas should be constructed of permeable materials.

Guideline 4.3 For hard surface areas (other than roofs) where discharge to infiltration facilities is not practical, permeable paving materials that allow rainwater to filter into the ground should be used.

5 Waste and Recycling

Guideline 5.1 Waste and recycling bins should be provided for each unit.

Guideline 5.2 Bins should be screened and secured within an enclosed structure that is set back a minimum of 1.5 metres (5.0 feet) from the rear property line.

Waste and recycling bins integrated into the coach house building with no interior access may be excluded from Gross Floor Area calculations to a maximum of 4.6 square metres (50 square feet).

> ***"Gross Floor Area (Coach House, Accessory) means the total areas of all of the floors… excluding… floor areas with no access from the interior of the Building up to a maximum 4.6 square metres (50 square feet) for the purpose of storing recycling and waste bins;"[Part II: Interpretation Gross Floor Area (Coach House, Accessory)]***

Part III - Form and Character Guidelines

6 Site Requirements

MINIMUM LOT AREA - Accessory Coach Houses are permitted on lots that are a minimum 10 metres (32.81 feet) in width. Lane access is not required.

An Accessory Coach House "shall not be permitted on a Lot with a width of less than 10 metres (32.81 feet);"[S.509(6)(a)]

MAXIMUM NUMBER OF UNITS - A property may have both a secondary unit as part of the principal residence (Accessory Secondary Suite) and a detached Accessory Coach House.

OWNER OCCUPANCY - The owner must reside on the lot, either in the Accessory Coach House or in the Principal Building.

"An Accessory Coach House Use shall be permitted where the One-Unit Residential building or the Accessory Coach building is Owner-occupied;" [S.507(12)(b)]

MAXIMUM SITE LOT COVERAGE - Maximum of 40% for all buildings on the lot of which the coach house should not exceed 15%.

Lot Coverage (Principal Building plus Accessory Coach House Building) "shall not exceed a maximum total combined Lot Coverage of 40% of which the Principal Building shall not exceed 30%;" [S.509(3)]

7 Building Scale and Massing

7.1 MAXIMUM GROSS FLOOR AREA

Accessory Coach House Gross Floor Area is limited by both (a) the total Gross Floor Area permitted on a Lot with a One-Unit Residential Use AND (b) by the maximum allowable Gross Floor Area for an Accessory Coach House building. Please note that the GFA of the Principal Building and Lot Coverage may limit the potential size of the Accessory Coach House.

MAXIMUM SITE GROSS FLOOR AREA - The total density on a Lot with an Accessory Coach House may not exceed 0.5 x lot area.

"...on a Lot with Accessory Coach House Use, Gross Floor Area (One-Unit and Two-Unit Residential), combined and in total, may be increased to, but shall not exceed, 0.5 times the Lot Area;" [S. 509(2)]

AND

MAXIMUM GROSS FLOOR AREA (COACH HOUSE, ACCESSORY) - The total Gross Floor Area of an Accessory Coach House is limited to 92.9 square metres (1,000 square feet);

"...the maximum Gross Floor Area (One-Unit and Two-Unit Residential) for Accessory Coach House Use shall not exceed 92.9 square metres (1,000 sq. ft.)" [S. 509(2)]

7.1 HEIGHT ENVELOPE

Height shall not exceed a maximum overall Building Height of 6.71 metres (22 feet) as measured from the average Building Grades on the Rear Lot Line.

"shall not exceed a maximum overall Building Height of 6.7 metres (22 feet) as measured from the average Building Grades on the Rear Lot Line;" [S. 509(6)(b)]

Guideline 7.2.1 Height shall not exceed one storey and a partial second storey. The second storey shall not exceed 60% of the total area of the floor beneath it. For example, the maximum coach house floor area of 92.9 sq. m. (1,000 sq. ft.) could be divided between a 58 sq. m. ground floor (625 sq. ft.) and a 35 sq. m (375 sq. ft.) upper floor.

Guideline 7.2.2 Coach houses with a one-storey form must be built lower, generally to a maximum of 4.57 m (15 feet).

8 Site Design

8.1 GENERAL

Guideline 8.1.1 Identify and maximize usable and private outdoor space associated with both the Accessory Coach House and the Principal Building.

Guideline 8.1.2 Coach houses should be located in the rear 25% of the lot.

Guideline 8.1.3 Coach houses should be visible from the street if site conditions allow. Clear address unit identity signage and/or directional signage should be incorporated.

8.2 LOT COVERAGE

Lot Coverage - should not exceed a Lot Coverage of 15%, or 92.9 square metres (1,000.0 square feet) whichever is less. The total combined Lot Coverage (Principal Building plus Accessory Coach House Building) shall not exceed a maximum of 40%.

> ***"Lot Coverage (Principal Building plus Accessory Coach House Building) shall not exceed a maximum total combined Lot Coverage of 40% of which the Principal Building shall not exceed 30%;"[S.509(3)]***

8.3 CORNER LOTS

Guideline 8.3.1 Accessory Coach Houses at the rear of corner lots should front the flanking street;

Guideline 8.3.2 Living space should front the flanking street and parking uses should be located off the lane towards the interior side yard;

Guideline 8.3.3 Create transition in the massing by increasing the scale from the interior side property line to the flanking street.

8.4 LANDSCAPE

Guideline 8.4.1 Prominent existing trees and landscape features outside of the coach house footprint should be retained unless proven to be diseased by a certified arborist or in conflict with utilities and services.

Guideline 8.4.2 Tree protection fencing should be installed before land clearing, demolition or construction phases are commenced.

Guideline 8.4.3 Conserve existing significant vegetation through flexible and innovative design and siting of the coach house.

Guideline 8.4.4 Private outdoor spaces with direct connection to habitable space should be provided for each unit.

Guideline 8.4.5 Define and screen outdoor spaces through the use of landscaping: plantings, architectural elements such as trellises, low fencing or planters; and changes in grade or elevation.

Guideline 8.4.6 Rear space between a coach house and the rear property line should be enhanced by incorporating, low maintenance soft landscaping and/or high quality permeable paving materials.

Guideline 8.4.7 Side yards should be attractively landscaped and integrated with usable outdoor spaces. Narrow side yard spaces should be landscaped using permeable surfaces and drought resistant plant materials.

Guideline 8.4.8 Exterior side yards on corner lots should be designed and treated as the front yard to the coach house development using high quality soft and hard surface treatments. Screening and landscaping between the street and the outdoor space should be incorporated to define the transition between public and private spaces.

9 Size, Shape and Siting

9.1 SETBACKS

Guideline 9.1.1 Accessory Coach Houses should be sited not less than:

(a) 1.52 metres (5 feet) from the Rear Lot Line;

(b) 1.22 metres (4 feet) from the Interior Side Lot Line;

(c) 3.05 metres (10 feet) or 0.2 times the Lot width; whichever is less, from the Exterior Side Lot Line. On corner lots with a lot width of 10.0 metres (33 feet) or less, a setback of 1.5 metres (5.0 feet) from the Exterior Lot Side Lot Line may be considered;

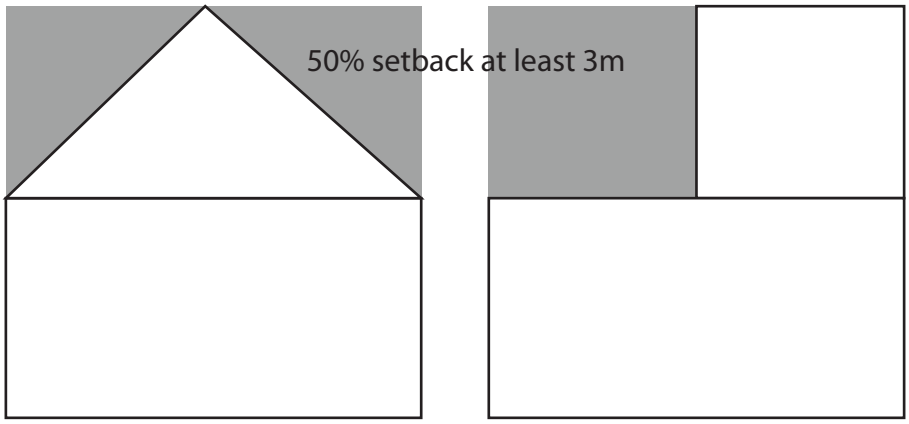
(d) 3.05 metres (10 feet) from a Principal Building including porches and balconies;

(e) 7.62 metres (25 feet) from the intersection of the Lot lines along two Streets;

(f) 4.52 metres (15 feet) from the intersection from the point of intersection of two lanes, or of a Street and a Lane.

"All driveway crossings providing ingress and egress to a Parking or Loading area shall be located at a minimum distance of 7.62 metres (25 feet) from the point of intersection of two streets, or 4.52 metres (15 feet) from the point of intersection of two lanes, or of a Street and a lane, when such road allowances intersect at an interior angle of 135 degrees or less;"[S. 906(4)(h)]

Guideline 9.1.2 For upper storey: at least 50% of the rear façade fronting the lane should be set back a minimum of 3.0 metres (10 feet) from the rear property line.



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Guideline 9.1.3 Allowable projections into the recommended setbacks include eaves, cornices, leaders, gutters, canopies or sunlight control projections, which may project beyond the face of the Accessory Coach House Building; the minimum distance to an abutting Lot Line as recommend elsewhere in the Guidelines may be reduced by:

(a) 0.91 metres (3.0 feet) from an abutting Rear Lot Line;

(b) 0.61 metres (2.0 feet) from an abutting Interior Side Lot Line;

(c) 1.52 metres (5.0 feet) from an abutting Exterior Lot Line;

(d) 1.22 metres (4 feet) from a Principal Building.

Guideline 9.1.4 Where Unenclosed balconies, Unenclosed porches or steps project beyond the face of the Accessory Coach House Building, the minimum distance to an abutting Lot Line as permitted elsewhere in the Guidelines may be reduced by:

(a) 0.76 metres (2.5 feet) from an abutting Rear Lot Line;

(b) 0.46 metres (1.5 feet) from an abutting Interior Side Lot Line;

(c) 1.52 metres (5.0 feet) from an abutting Exterior Lot Line;

(d) 1.22 metres (4 feet) from a Principal Building.

10 Building Design

10.1 HABITABLE SPACE AT GRADE

Guideline 10.1.1 A minimum of 30% of the total habitable floor area of an Accessory Coach House should be located on the ground floor, with habitable space fronting the rear lot line.

Guideline 10.1.2 A minimum of 30% of the width of the façade facing the rear lot line should be designed to communicate the residential use behind it, which can be achieved by placing windows and doors facing the lane.

Guideline 10.1.3 Articulation of all facades including the lane façade are encouraged. Direct connections between indoor living spaces and usable outdoor landscaped spaces are also encouraged.

10.2 RELATIONSHIP TO NEIGHBOURS

Guideline 10.2.1 Create visual interest by providing variations in height and massing within the design.

Guideline 10.2.2 Incorporate living areas within the volume of sloped roofs and eliminate enclosed parking to reduce massing.

10.3 SLOPING SITES

Guideline 10.3.1 On steeply sloping sites, the views from adjacent properties should be respected by adapting the scale, massing and location of the coach house development to follow the topography and natural features of the site.

10.4 UNIT IDENTITY

Guideline 10.4.1 Accessory Coach Houses must have an individual address or a unit identity number clearly visible from the street and illuminated at night.

Guideline 10.4.2 The primary entrance should be accessible directly from the street.

Guideline 10.4.3 For all lots, a minimum 1.0 metre (3.28 feet) clearance for emergency pedestrian access must be provided from the street to the coach house unit and be illuminated at night.

10.5 ARCHITECTURAL ELEMENTS

Guideline 10.5.1 Accessory Coach House elevations should be articulated to create depth and architectural interest.

Guideline 10.5.2 Garage doors should be designed to minimize the visual impact to the lane through careful detailing and sensitive design.

Guideline 10.5.3 Design and locate windows to maximize light penetration into the coach house interior while mitigating overlook into other units.

Guideline 10.5.4 All outdoor private spaces, including decks, porches and balconies, should be strategically located to mitigate privacy concerns. Roof decks should not be included as part of a coach house design.

Guideline 10.5.5 Balconies and decks should be screened and located to provide privacy for both the coach house unit and to minimize overlook on to adjacent units or properties.

Guideline 10.5.6 Building products should demonstrate sustainable principles with high quality design and detailing.

Guideline 10.5.7 Architectural style should not imitate the style of the principal residence but should respect its character;

Guideline 10.5.8 One storey Accessory Coach Houses are encouraged to be designed to meet Level 2 of the City of North Vancouver Adaptable Design Guidelines.

10.6 HERITAGE

Guideline 10.6.1 Accessory Coach House development proposed for a property that is listed on the Heritage Register should be designed to respect the architectural character of the heritage listed home without replicating the original house;

Guideline 10.6.2 Legally protecting heritage homes listed on the City's Heritage Registry is encouraged as part of the application process.

11 Parking and Access

11.1 REQUIRED PARKING STALLS

Two on-site parking spaces are required (one parking space for each unit);

Two off-street parking stalls are required. [S.908(8) Figure 9-3]

A maximum of one enclosed stall in the Accessory Coach House is permitted.

Accessory Coach Houses "shall be permitted a maximum of one enclosed or covered parking stall;" [S.509(6)(e)]

11.2 PARKING ACCESS AND LOCATION

Guideline 11.2.1 All parking is encourage to be provided in open stalls.

Guideline 11.2.2 Parking should be located in the rear 25% of the lot, with direct access from the lane, where a lane exists.

Guideline 11.2.3 Parking should be accessed from a lane, and existing driveways providing access from a

street should be removed.

"For a Lot abutting on both an opened Street and an opened lane, vehicular access shall be from the lane. No access will be permitted from the Street..." [S.906(4)(c)(i)]

Guideline 11.2.4 For corner lots with no lane access, parking should be located in the rear yard with access via a driveway from the flanking street.

11.3 DRIVEWAYS

Guideline 11.3.1 Should be minimized in width and surface area and shared between units with a maximum width of 3.0 metres (9.8 feet);

Guideline 11.3.2 Permeable surfaces such as grasscrete or narrow wheel lanes with planting in the middle are encouraged;

Driveways should be accessed off the lane and minimum 4.57 metres (15 feet) from the intersection of the lane and street.

"Driveways shall provide an unobstructed view of pedestrians and traffic where such driveways intersect a street. Not withstanding Principal Buildings, Accessory Buildings, or Accessory Coach House Buildings otherwise permitted in this Bylaw, no Structure or landscaping except high-branched trees shall exceed 0.914 metres (3 feet) in Height within the area Bounded By the driveway, the Lot line, and a line joining points along said lines 4.572 metres (15 feet) from their point of intersection;" [S.906(4)(h)]

12 Servicing

Servicing and off-site improvements will be determined through the Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw No. 6200, 1991.

Guideline 12.1.1 Sanitary, storm and water connection servicing requirements will be evaluated according to their ability to serve the entire site and not only the coach house unit;

Guideline 12.1.1 Undergrounding of hydro and communication service lines is preferred.

Site conditions may require additional works to conform to the Subdivision and Development Control Bylaw 6200.

13 Accessory Uses

ACCESSORY HOME OCCUPATIONS USE

The number of Accessory Home Occupation Uses on a Lot is limited to one.

"On a Lot containing an approved Accessory Secondary Suite Use or an Accessory Coach House Use both the principal Dwelling Unit and the Accessory Secondary Suite/Accessory Coach House may independently contain only one Accessory Home Occupation Use..."[S.507(6)(b)]

ACCESSORY HOME OFFICE USE

An Accessory Home Office Use is permitted in both the Principal Building and Accessory Coach House Building.

> ***"...Accessory Home Office Uses are allowed in both Dwelling Units;"[S.507(6)(b)]***

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