



ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: October 13, 2010
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Meeting Date: October 21, 2010

TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets

FROM: Director of Planning in consultation with the Director of Development Services

SUBJECT: Monitoring of Laneway Housing Implementation

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council direct staff to continue monitoring laneway housing (LWH) implementation, focusing on topic areas directed by Council, and report back to Council with an update one month after 150 LWH units have received final inspection.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to report back with minor amendments to the LWH regulations and guidelines for referral to Public Hearing, as described in this report.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to conduct a scoped review of the current regulations and guidelines with a view to improving the neighbourliness and livability of LWH, specifically in relation to the partial upper storey and the overall building size.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

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

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager RECOMMENDS approval of the Recommendations.

COUNCIL POLICY

On June 10, 2008, City Council unanimously approved the EcoDensity Charter which includes a commitment to making environmental sustainability a primary goal in all city-building decisions - in ways that also foster and support affordability and livability. Along with the Charter, Council also identified a report on LWH issues and options as one of the priority actions for further work.

In March 2009, as part of Council's affordable and rental housing strategy, LWH was identified as one opportunity for adding to rental housing supply across the city.

On July 28, 2009 Council approved amendments to a number of by-laws to allow for the development of laneway housing (LWH) in RS-1 and RS-5 single family zones. Council also directed staff to monitor this new land use and report back after 3 years or 100 projects, whichever comes first.

On February 4, 2010 Council unanimously supported the Greenest City Implementation Plan and adopted long-term environmental goals related to Green Economy and Green Jobs, Greener Communities and Human Health. LWH relates to many of the Greenest City Goal Areas including Lighter Footprint, Carbon Leadership, Green Mobility and Green Buildings, and has considered relationships with other goal areas such as urban agriculture.

SUMMARY

LWH has evolved from a concept approved by Council in June 2008 to a new housing type with regulations and guidelines, approved by Council in July 2009. Also in July 2009, Council directed that staff monitor the new use, and report back on a number of topics after 3 years or 100 projects, whichever came first. The 100th LWH was approved in early July 2010, and this report provides the monitoring results and discussion thereof.

Staff recommend continued monitoring with report back after 150 LWH units have received final inspection. In addition, staff recommend amendments to the existing regulations and guidelines as described in Appendix B. These amendments would be brought forward in the short term, and would improve implementation by strengthening the design guidelines to better reflect current practice and clarifying exclusions provisions related to enclosed parking, urban agriculture and bicycle storage.

Staff also recommend a review of the current regulations and guidelines with a view to improving neighbourliness and livability, specifically in relation to the partial upper storey and the overall building size. This review would include the exploration of the following strategies:

- an exploration into making a one storey LWH more viable on 33' lots, possibly through extension of the LWH into backyard open space by several feet.
- decreasing the allowable overall building size of 1½ storey LWH on larger lots, perhaps through a reduction in unit size or enclosed parking/urban agriculture/bicycle storage space;
- the development of detailed sample plans that have achieved neighbourly and livable upper storeys to help expedite applicants through the design review process;

The results of monitoring, by topic areas directed by Council, are summarized below:

1) Location of LWH projects

- Widely distributed across Vancouver, with no areas of concentration.
- Conclusion: The intent of making LWH available city-wide to respond to recognized housing need is being met.

2) Pace of development

- On average, 11 LWH permits issued per month city-wide.
- 100 LWH were developed in the same period as about 500 new single family homes, adding housing units for family members or rental
- Conclusion: This land use is viable, and to date, the numbers are too small and dispersed to have an impact on neighbourhood change.

3) LWH as part of site/lot redevelopment vs. LWH added while keeping the existing main house

- 39 of the first 100 LWH were added onto sites while retaining the existing main house; 61 were part of total site redevelopment (new LWH + new main house).
- Overall, for approximately every 8 new single family homes developed, 1 has included a LWH.
- No ascertainable increase in single family home demolition/replacement.
- Conclusion: LWH is viable and attractive to homeowners; take-up is moderate in relation to single family house development and has had no discernible impact on the rate of single family demolition.

4) Size of LWH, massing and quality of design

- Most LWH are 1 ½ storeys, with a traditional pitched roof.
- Variety of architectural styles, achieving a sense of permanence and residential character.
- Some concerns have been raised related to the partial upper storey: privacy and overlook, shadowing, and perceived height and massing.
- Conclusion: Recommendation C calls for exploration of alternatives to improve neighbourliness and livability, particularly in relation to the size and impact of the partial upper storey and overall building size.

5) Size and Type of Dwelling Unit

- 67% are 1 bedroom units; 28% are 2 bedroom units; 5% are studio units.
- Conclusion: regulations are allowing for units of varying types and sizes.

6) Nature of parking provided

- 59% provided the minimum 1 onsite parking space; 41% provided 2 or more spaces.
- Conclusion: As few LWH are occupied, impacts on lane movement and on-street parking are not yet evident. Monitoring after final inspection of 150 LWH units will provide additional information on parking demand.

7) Green site and building features

- All LWH projects met the Green Homes program and site permeability requirements; some projects exceeded requirements resulting in higher energy efficiencies.
- Conclusion: Green standards are being met or exceeded.

8) Tree loss and retention

- Roughly 1/3 of LWH projects have involved tree removal and replacement.
- More than twice as many trees are being planted in conjunction with LWH than are being removed.
- Conclusion: Regulations and guidelines are working with regard to tree protection.

Staff also received comments on a number of other topics:

- Development processes have improved, but fees remain a concern for some applicants who note impacts on affordability.
- Issues related to BC Hydro and HPO processes and fees have largely been resolved.
- LWH built in conjunction with a new main house is considered by builders to be more efficient and more economical.
- There were no significant changes to demolition/replacement housing rates in the time frame under consideration; the opportunity to build a LWH does not appear to be driving increased demolition of a single family house where demolition was not already contemplated.
- LWH rental rates range between \$1000 - \$2100 for 1 - 2 bedroom units in varying locations, with varying quality of finishes.

PURPOSE

In accordance with Council direction of July 2009, the purpose of this report is to provide the results of monitoring the first 100 laneway housing approvals focussing on specific topic areas as outlined by Council:

- 1) Location of LWH projects (geographic distribution).
- 2) Pace of development.
- 3) LWH as part of site redevelopment vs. LWH added while keeping the existing main house.
- 4) Size of LWH, massing and quality of design.
- 5) Size and type of dwelling unit.
- 6) Nature of parking provided.
- 7) Green site and building features.
- 8) Tree loss and retention.

In addition, a number of other factors are discussed, including:

- a) City's development process and fees.
- b) Other processes and fees.
- c) LWH design and construction costs.
- d) LWH rental rates.
- e) Recommendation for continued monitoring.

BACKGROUND

In June 2008, after extensive consultation and engagement city-wide, and considerable public and stakeholder support for LWH as a specific idea, Council approved work on LWH as a priority action item as part of the approval of the EcoDensity initiative. Council instructed staff to report back with an issues and options paper after further analysis and public consultation on specific issues. Staff consulted with Vision Implementation Committee members, conducted 2 well attended open houses, and met with a number of groups that had expressed a strong interest in LWH in previous consultations. Issues and options for the

following topic areas were discussed: affordability, retention of existing houses with homeowner opportunity, livable and neighbourly units, green building and site, where LWH should be permitted, and the role of LWH in lanes.

In October 2008, Council approved the Issues and Options report, directing staff to develop regulations and policies to implement LWH and to provide Council with an estimated timeline for this work. Council also added a direction for further consultation with the public, neighbourhoods, stakeholder groups including Visioning Committees on height, type and parking options.

In March 2009, Council directed that actions relating to building new affordable and rental housing be prioritized as part of the overall housing strategy with LWH being identified as one opportunity for fast-tracking. The intent of the motion was to authorize staff to adjust the work program as required to deliver by-law changes by the end of July 2009. The LWH work program and timeline were duly adjusted, resulting in a number of changes, including reduced testing of the proposed regulations for unintended consequences, a scaled back public process and reduction in scope from five RS zones to two RS zones.

Staff conducted two public open houses to present the proposed regulations and guidelines, and Council heard from over 130 members of the public at Public Hearing. The changes required to implement LWH were approved in July 2009, along with approval for requiring one on-site parking space, an amendment to the guidelines providing relaxations for deeper lots, and details regarding monitoring topics and timing and frequency of reporting back.

This approval furthers Council priorities on Affordable Housing and Sustainability. LWH provides additional housing options and rental housing supply in single family areas, adding greater flexibility and long-term sustainability to the city's housing stock in a manner that maintains streetscape and neighbourhood character.

This report is a follow up to laneway housing monitoring memos to Council and website updates dated November 2009 and March 2010.

DISCUSSION

The following sections of the report are organized by topic area. Each topic is described, including background intent, monitoring results, comments or concerns raised by the public and a discussion.

Monitoring data was collected from three main sources:

- 1) Approved Permit Plans: Data was collected from the first 100 approved permit plans on the topic areas directed by Council (listed above).
- 2) Site visits/photo collection: Staff conducted site visits and collected photos at a variety of LWH which represented a diversity of LWH scenarios.
- 3) Comments: All correspondence regarding LWH from the public and stakeholders has been collected and summarized in our discussions (see Appendix A). Staff note that in addition to comments received about 13 specific LWH addresses, comments have also been received that were more general in nature. In addition to letters, submissions included a resident survey conducted by the Dunbar Residents Association, a photo essay detailing the construction of one LWH, a photo gallery of many LWH projects, a petition objecting to a specific LWH, and a UBC student project on activating laneways.

1) LOCATION OF LWH PROJECTS

Background

Council approved laneway housing for in RS-1 and RS-5 zones which together comprise 94% of the city's single family lots and cover a balanced area across the city. This city-wide approach was intended to address factors such as equity, recognized housing need, economic feasibility and reduced property tax implications.

Monitoring Results

The map below shows the extent of RS-1 and RS-5. The dots show the location of the first 100 laneway houses. 40 of the 100 are located east of Main Street, and the remaining 60 are located west of Main Street. 75 are in RS-1 and 25 are in RS-5, generally reflecting the 80/20 split of lots in RS-1 and RS-5.

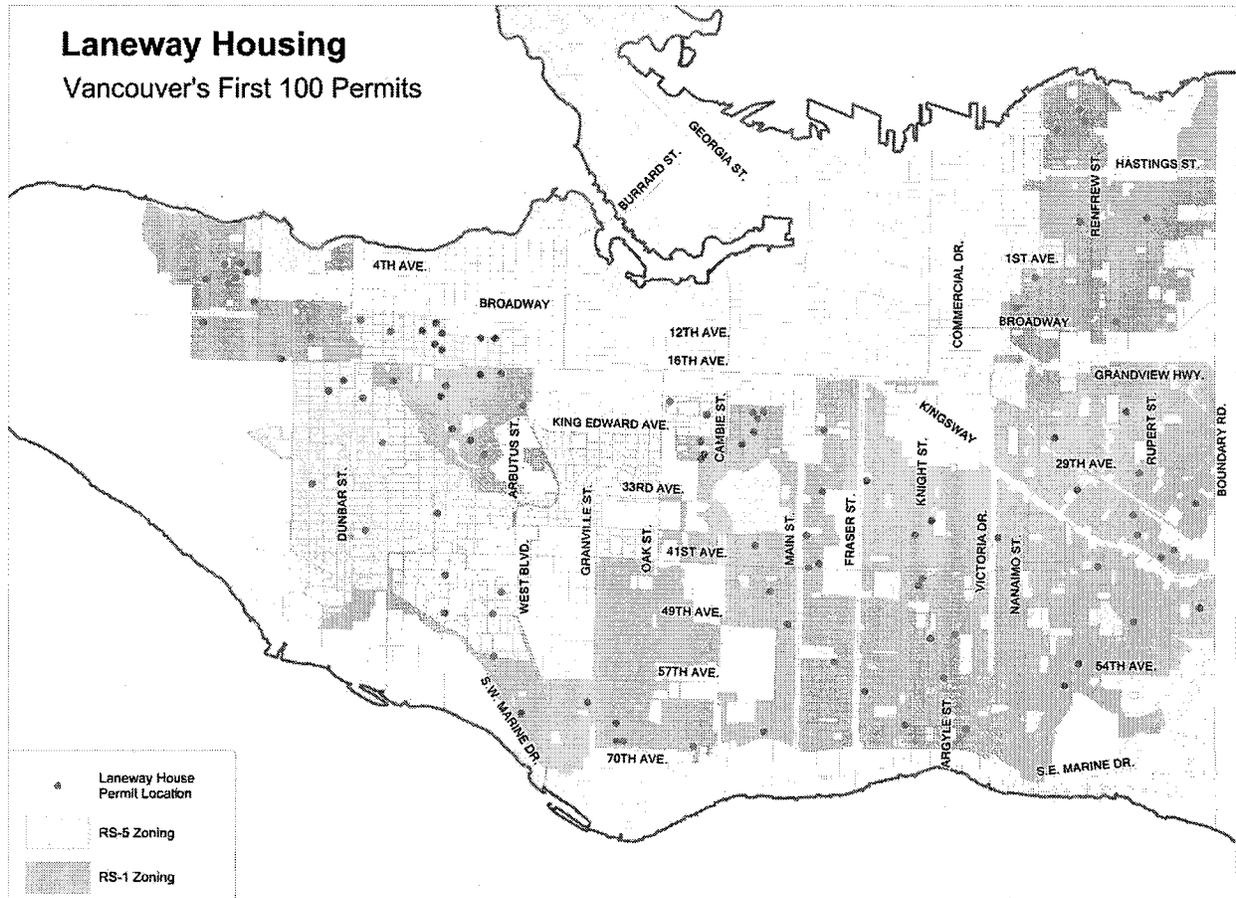
What We Heard

Some concerns were expressed in early consultation regarding potential concentration of LWH, namely, that too many laneway houses on one block could result in negative impacts. We continue to hear from residents of RS-7 and RS-3, asking that the LWH use be made available to these areas as well. We also continue to hear from residents of lots less than 33' wide who would like to see LWH made possible on thinner lots.

Discussion

The following map shows that the first 100 LWH are distributed across the city, with no particular areas of concentration.

Staff note that since the 100 LWH milestone, one block (4600 W. 11th) has had 5 LWH projects approved: 3 of these are in conjunction with the development of new single family houses (one applicant), and 2 are being added while retaining the existing houses (separate applicants). This clustering appears to be random, and the completion of these 5 LWH will allow staff to observe issues or impacts related to clustering.



2) PACE OF DEVELOPMENT

Background

During discussions in 2008, the pace of LWH development and hence neighbourhood change was seen as a possible concern by members of the public in light of LWH being a new housing type. Conversely, it was also questioned as to whether it would be a viable form of development, something which would be reflected in the pace of development.

Monitoring Results

Laneway housing was approved in July 2009, with the first LWH permits issued in November 2009. The following table shows number of permits issued by month.

Month	Total LWH permits issued
November	7
December	11
January	8
February	7
March	10
April	21
May	17
June	17
To July 9, 2010	2
Total	100
July	23
August	15
September	28

What We Heard

There have been no specific comments regarding the pace of development, however there have been comments that if any improvements are to be made, they consider the pace of development.

Discussion

For the first 100 LWH approvals, there were about 11 permits issued per month, for a period of approximately 9 months, indicating that LWH is a viable housing option, yet not occurring at such a pace as to be rapidly changing neighbourhoods. For comparison, in the same time period, the City received 506 permits for new single family homes.

3) LWH AS PART OF SITE REDEVELOPMENT VS. LWH ADDED WHILE KEEPING THE EXISTING MAIN HOUSE

Background

Retention of existing houses, with homeowners adding a LWH to their own property, was a key Council objective when approving the LWH initiative. Retention of the existing main house helps keep neighbourhood character by preserving streetscapes. It also reduces demolition and construction related waste. Concerns were raised during public consultation and the Public Hearing that the approval of LWH would increase incentives to demolish existing main houses, with attendant impacts. Council's decision ultimately did not require retention of existing homes, but sought to ensure that additional incentives to demolish were not created as a result of LWH.

Encouraging the retention of the main house was supported in a number of ways:

- Not permitting strata titling, thereby not requiring upgrades to the existing main house.
- Keeping laneway houses modest in size.
- Adapting requirements for fire/emergency access.
- Assistance to the homeowner in the form of development/design advice from staff
- Minimizing city fees for service connections (i.e. not applying the requirement for water metering and higher sewer and water connection fees that typically apply when there are 3 dwelling units/site).
- Monitoring.

Monitoring Results

The monitoring found that 39 of the first 100 LWH approvals involved adding a LWH while keeping the existing main house. The remaining 61 LWH involved a LWH occurring as part of site redevelopment.

The table below shows the 61 LWH permits issued in relation to new main house permits:

Month	LWH permits issued as part of total site redevelopment (new house + new LWH)	Single family house permits issued *	Proportion of LWH to single family house permits
November	4	46	9%
December	8	42	19%
January	5	52	10%
February	4	37	11%
March	6	65	9%
April	11	48	23%
May	12	95	13%
June	9	97	9%
July 9,2010	2	24(estimate)	8%
Total	61	506	12% overall

** these numbers include all single family house permits in all zones; as some of the single family house permits could be in areas not permitted to have a LWH, the proportion of LWH permits to single family house permits could be somewhat higher.*

What We Heard

There have been one or two suggestions that LWH is being built by developers and not homeowners/lot owners, but no concerns have been expressed regarding retention or demolition.

Discussion

While there are large monthly variations, overall it appears that of every 8 new single family homes developed, 1 includes a LWH.

In regards to concerns that LWH might increase single family house demolition, the average rate of single family house redevelopment has not increased since approval of LWH. The pace of single family house development has been tracked for over 30 years, and while it varies by individual year, in general, single family home replacement happens at a pace of about 1% per year, which is about 650 houses. This is an average of about 55 houses per month. The 506 new houses approved in the 9 month period shown are in keeping with this long term pace of development.

With respect to the suggestion that LWH is being developed by developers, staff note that 39 of the first 100 were added to the lot by homeowners wishing to provide for family members or a rental unit. Of the remaining 61, it would be difficult to determine which are being built by builders for eventual sale and which are homeowner driven projects. However, staff experience suggests that most are homeowner driven projects.

4) SIZE OF LWH, MASSING AND QUALITY OF DESIGN

Background

There are a number of regulations in place to control the height and massing of LWH, location on the lot, backyard separation, excluded space and architectural expression. These regulations are complemented by guidelines that focus on the relationship of the LWH to neighbouring houses and the lane.

The monitoring found that most LWH are 1 ½ storeys in height with a traditional pitched roof.

These regulations and guidelines and monitoring results are described in detail in Appendix D.

While LWH regulations and guidelines are generally delivering what was envisioned for LWH in terms of massing and quality of design, both staff analysis and comments received from the public have noted that improvements should be explored, particularly reducing the impact of the upper storey massing, as detailed in Recommendations B and C.

Recommendation B provides for minor amendments, including amendments to strengthen the design guidelines with regard to lane entries/lanescape and upper storey massing, and clarify

exclusion provisions related to enclosed parking, urban agriculture and bicycle storage. These amendments are achievable in the short term and are fully described in Appendix B.

Recommendation C provides for a scoped review of the current regulations and guidelines with a view to improving the neighbourliness and livability of laneway housing, specifically in relation to the size and impact of the partial upper storey and overall building size. This review would include the exploration of the following strategies (discussed further along in this section):

- making a one storey LWH option more viable, particularly on 33' lots, likely through an extension into backyard space by a number of feet;
- decreasing overall building size of 1½ storey LWH on larger lots, perhaps through a reduction in unit size or enclosed parking/accessory space exclusions;
- development of detailed sample plans to serve as examples of neighbourly and livable upper storeys to help expedite applicants through the design review process.

What We Heard

We heard a variety of comments surrounding LWH massing and upper storey design. While several applicants have complained about regulations and guidelines being too restrictive on massing, another group of comments focuses on how the size and massing of the 1½ storey structure adversely affects neighbours. On this latter topic we received specific comments on 13 of the first 100 approved LWH's as well as general comments about LWH size and massing (all of these comments are detailed in a table in Appendix A, which also includes a map of the location of the 13 LWH which received specific comments). Comments are related to:

- 1) Privacy and overlook: concerns relating to LWH upper storey windows and balconies;
- 2) Shadowing: concerns that the height and massing of a 1½ storey structure casts more shadow than existing garages;
- 3) Perceived height and massing: concerns that the perceived massing adversely affects neighbours and is not consistent with single family neighbourhood character;
- 4) Concerns regarding backyard open space, lanes and the loss of private views.

Comments regarding quality of design were much fewer in number and conveyed a diversity of opinions, ranging from a specific LWH being too ornate, to another LWH not having enough architectural detail, to the quality and design of LWH's being a positive contribution to the lane and the neighbourhood. We also heard comments that the impact of upper storey designs necessitates a discretionary review process.

Discussion

Privacy and Overlook

Concerns related to privacy and overlook have focussed on window placement and upper storey balconies. The guidelines currently focus windows and balconies to the lane, limiting the extent of windows on sideyard walls and the garden face, as these are the windows that would have the closest proximity to neighbouring backyards. Staff believe that focusing windows and balconies to the lane is a reasonable direction, as the lane acts as a buffer between the LWH and neighbours across the lane, and windows and balconies contribute 'eyes on the lane' and a more residential feeling to laneways. However Recommendation C includes an exploration of improvements to decrease overlook caused by balconies and upper storey windows.

Shadowing

Some people have expressed concerns regarding the loss of light and solar access due to the new LWH. Staff studied the effect of massing on the shadowing of neighbouring yards, both in the development of the LWH regulations, as well as for the 100 LWH being monitored. There is an increase in shadowing with a 1½ storey LWH as compared to a garage; this increase is minimized by regulations and guidelines that require the upper storey to be stepped back by 5' on the garden face, and restrict eave heights to a maximum of 12'. In addition, the requirement to locate the LWH in the garage footprint helps to ensure that a sun corridor is preserved during the summer months.

Further, the perceived shadowing impact of a LWH will depend on a number of factors that are unique to each site:

- presence of a garage or other structure on the neighbour's lot
- presence of a former garage or other structure where the LWH is now
- amount of planting in both the LWH yard and the neighbouring yard.

The perceived shadowing impact will be greatest where a new LWH has been developed on a formerly vacant backyard without planting, adjacent to a vacant backyard.

It should be noted that shadowing impacts are less for neighbours of LWH's built on the north part of the lot, as the LWH shadow falls largely on the lane to the north. Nevertheless, of the 13 LWH receiving comments, 6 are on the north part of the lot. While staff acknowledge an increase in shadowing in some cases, on balance, staff feel that this increase is reasonable, given the achievement of the additional dwelling unit.

Perceived Height and Massing

The most common concern raised regarding LWH is that the new units look too large and too tall when viewed from neighbouring yards and the lane. This concern has been raised about LWH in a variety of circumstances: varying lot sizes, roof forms, orientation (fully described in Appendix D).

It is recognized that a 1½ storey LWH will indeed be a change for neighbours. A 1½ LWH is 1.5m-1.8m (5'-6') above existing maximum garage heights, and many existing garages are under this maximum. In some cases, a LWH is being developed in a backyard that was previously open space.

The question remains surrounding what might be a reasonable change. While comments regarding the size and massing of 1½ storey LWH's should be taken in context with a wide variety of comments that staff receive (including comments regarding the construction of established uses such as single family houses), staff have concluded that a number of strategies could be explored to further minimize perceived height and upper storey massing:

A) 33' Lots: It is apparent from monitoring results that upper storeys are vital to the creation of livable unit sizes on 33' lots (of the 100 LWH units monitored, 34 of 38 LWH on 33' lots are 1½ storey). It is also apparent that upper storey massing of a LWH on a 33' lot can have more impacts on neighbours than upper storey massing on larger lots. Further reduction of the current allowable size of the partial upper storey would be difficult, as the current allowable size of upper storeys already pose significant design challenges, especially when circulation

and stair space are taken into account. Strategies for improving upper storey massing for 33' lots would therefore likely involve:

- making a one storey LWH more viable, likely through an extension into backyard space by a number of feet. Preliminary investigation in this area shows that this might be possible while maintaining average backyard open spaces of 20' or more (Recommendation C).
- providing upper storey sample designs that better achieve a balance between a livable unit and neighbourliness (Recommendation C).
- strengthening guidelines to reflect current practices surrounding achieving better upper storey design (short term action, Recommendation B, described in Appendix B).

B) Larger Lots: Strategies for reducing upper storey massing on larger lots would also involve strengthening guidelines to achieve better upper storey design and providing upper storey sample designs that better achieve a balance between a livable unit and neighbourliness. However upper storey challenges on larger lots have less to do with shadowing and overlook and more to do with ensuring that the overall bulk of the building is consistent with the vision of LWH as a secondary structure. Strategies might therefore include an exploration of whether unit size or enclosed parking/accessory space exclusions could be decreased on larger lots. This would have to be balanced with comments from people building LWH's, who are asking for larger unit sizes (See Section 5 Size and Type of Dwelling Unit) and many of whom seem to be in favour of the enclosed parking/accessory space provision.

Backyard Open space, Lanes and the Loss of private views

With respect to maintaining backyard open space, the regulations requiring 16' of separation between the main house and the LWH are being met and exceeded in most cases (with an average separation of 29'). With respect to changing the character of the lane, comments have been made that are both in favor and opposed to the role LWH plays in lanescape - from comments that housing is inappropriate in the lane to comments LWH contributes positively to safety and residential feeling of lanes. Staff feel that LWH is generally contributing positively to lanescapes. Lastly, staff acknowledge that the development of LWH may result in some loss of private views.

Quality of Design

We received far fewer comments on quality of design, and conclude that all projects have achieved a sense of permanence and residential character. As intended, the quality of architectural character, roof forms and materiality has varied greatly (see Appendix C - photo gallery). There have also been a wide variety of proponents involved in designing and building the first 100 LWH, from builder-contractors to architects. Interestingly, a number of small businesses dedicated solely to LWH have been created, such as businesses manufacturing modular or pre-constructed elements.

With respect to outright vs. discretionary process, staff believe that the current process of outright regulations combined with guidelines and design review achieves the desired attention to the issues of neighbourliness and livability. It is thought that a classic discretionary process, which would include neighbourhood notification, would add to complexity and processing times, and would be inconsistent with the RS-1 zoning (which is outright) and RS-5 zoning (which offers a choice of outright or conditional process).

5) SIZE AND TYPE OF DWELLING UNIT

The regulations provide for a variety of unit types, ranging from studios to 2 bedroom units; the monitoring found that an average unit size of 580 sq.ft., and that the majority of units are one bedroom units. The regulations and guidelines and monitoring results are described in detail in Appendix D.

What We Heard

We have heard from builders and designers that a variety of unit sizes have been desired and made possible on various sized lots. Some have commented that units could be larger, especially on 33' wide lots, to accommodate people downsizing from main houses. To this point, some applicants noted that in the overall laneway house building (dwelling unit and enclosed parking/accessory space), enclosed parking/accessory space should not take priority over living space, and that this entire space should be available for the dwelling unit. This would allow for a larger dwelling unit, which would appeal to a broader range of users, including those wishing to downsize from a main house. There would be no additional impact from building massing as the building size would remain constant; only the uses would change.

Discussion

After analyzing monitoring results, visiting built LWH, hearing from several builders and potential occupants, staff conclude that the size and massing regulations are allowing for livable space in a variety of unit types. This variety of unit types was intended to appeal to a variety of user groups including family members, renters and in the case of the 2 bedroom, possibly 2 unrelated renters such as 2 students.

With regard to the comments that parking/accessory area be allowed as living space, in approving the one parking space per unit requirement, Council struck a balance between the achievement of a number of key objectives:

- the importance of ground floor living space and retention of backyard open space; and
- impacts on neighbours from both the overall size of the LWH building and on-street parking demands.

While allowing the entire building space to be used for the dwelling unit would not impact the building massing, there could be other impacts. These could include increased demand for on-street parking, and/or impacts on homeowners wanting to build a LWH and wanting enclosed parking. The current provision for excluded parking/accessory space is seen to strike a reasonable balance.

6) PARKING

Background

A lot with a laneway house must have a minimum of 1 onsite parking space, for use by any unit on the lot. This requirement was intended to allow for onsite parking while also allowing for backyard open space and groundfloor LWH living space. This is a minimum requirement only, more parking may be provided if desired. Parking may be provided as enclosed in

conjunction with the LWH structure, covered or open/surface space. Any open/surface parking is required to use permeable surface treatment.

Monitoring Results

- 59% of approved permits are providing the minimum 1 onsite parking space;
 - Most of these are providing an enclosed space (inside the LWH structure);
 - Most LWH on 33' wide lots are providing one space
- 30% of approved permits are providing 2 onsite parking spaces;
 - Most of these provide 1 enclosed space and 1 outdoor permeable space;
 - Most of the LWH's providing 2 spaces are on lots averaging a width of 44' or greater;
- 11% of approved permits are providing more than 2 enclosed spaces; these are on lots averaging a width of 59'.

What We Heard

During public consultation in the fall of 2008, a great diversity of opinion was expressed regarding parking. Staff heard strong support for a parking requirement that would not result in significant impacts on street parking. Staff also heard strong support for decreasing parking requirements in order to allow for LWH ground floor living space, backyard retention and a recognition of the environmental impacts of automobile use and ownership.

These opinions have been echoed since the approval of LWH. In sum, people felt the one space was not enough, just right, or too much. We heard concerns that street parking will be impacted by the LWH parking requirement of one parking space per lot, and that lane movement will be more difficult with people parking in conjunction with LWH's. We also heard that the one space per lot requirement is a bold, green direction given that many lots will have three dwelling units, and that it should not be lowered any further. Finally, we heard that the parking requirement of one space per lot is too high, and that in recognition of sustainability objectives, current environmental realities and the value of groundfloor living space (especially for some user groups), no parking should be required.

Discussion

The one parking space minimum requirement was decided upon by Council and seen to balance several key objectives - the provision of some parking to ameliorate on-street parking impacts; the retention of backyard open space and the allowance of some ground floor living space.

To date, the effect of LWH parking requirements on street capacity and lane movement are not evident. With few LWH's currently occupied, the impacts of LWH parking on street capacity and lane movement are not evident and no complaints have been received. Ongoing monitoring will provide updated information on parking capacity and demand.

Given the current pace of LWH development, staff anticipate that few on-street parking demand issues will arise in the short term. In the longer term, there is uncertainty regarding future transportation choices and preferences, as well as the role LWH might play. Updated monitoring would provide more information on this.

Staff note that a proposed minor zoning amendment (Appendix B) has been added to clarify that the floor area exclusion for off-street parking is intended primarily for parking, with some space for accessory uses such as bicycle storage and uses that support urban agriculture. The total exclusion is not available for only bicycle storage or urban agriculture.

7) GREEN SITE AND BUILDING FEATURES

Background

During public consultation people expressed a desire for LWH to be a green housing type, both in building and site. A number of elements were incorporated into approved regulations and guidelines to ensure LWH would be a positive contribution to the sustainability of our city:

- LWH is required to meet the high standards of the Green Homes Program, with some adaptations where appropriate to accommodate the small size of LWH
- The approval of LWH did not change the required amount of permeable area per lot
- Manoeuvring space and surface parking is required to be permeable
- Landscape guidelines encourage sustainable planting practices, permeable construction materials and the use of Waterwise Landscape guidelines

Monitoring Results

All 100 applications have met the Green Homes Program standards and site permeability requirements, and have incorporated green site elements as detailed in the guidelines. A number of proponents have also incorporated newly developed green building elements, such as wall and roof assemblies made of sustainable materials and resulting in higher energy efficiencies.

What We Heard

Applicants seemed to be generally satisfied with requirements and did not seem to suggest that they were unduly costly. There were, however, suggestions that more incentives should be provided for further green innovation.

Discussion

While all builders are meeting the Green Homes Program requirements, a small number are incorporating additional green building elements, and working towards net zero homes. In one case, floor space relaxations were granted to allow for thicker wall assemblies which are achieving very high insulation levels.

Green building technology and take-up is evolving, and offers benefits to all housing types, including LWH. In addition, the City is currently developing regulations aimed at improved environmental performance of small housing types, which would include LWH. Staff maintain that LWH should not be singled out for more stringent green requirements, nor that any incentives developed be limited to LWH.

8) TREE LOSS/RETENTION

Background

Vancouver's existing Protection of Trees By-law outlines requirements with respect to tree removal and replacement on private property. The Zoning and Development By-law also contains a relaxation provision regarding the siting of a building to assist in retention of existing trees. In addition to these provisions, a number of guidelines were created to protect existing trees and encourage the planting of additional trees in conjunction with LWH, especially shade trees that would enhance passive solar design. As part of the design review process, LWH applications are reviewed for landscape treatment and tree retention and replacement.

Monitoring Results

Roughly 1/3 of projects include tree removal and required tree replacement; the other 2/3 do not. Most lots with LWH are adding trees, with over twice as many trees being planted in conjunction with laneway houses as are being removed.

What We Heard

During earlier consultation, concerns were expressed that LWH would result in significant tree removal. Since LWH approval, we have received one concern that the building of a LWH resulted in damage to a neighbouring tree, something which also happens occasionally with main house construction. We also heard satisfaction that LWH seems to be resulting in the planting of new trees in backyards.

Discussion

The current regulations and guidelines appear to be working with regard to tree protection and replacement. Continued monitoring will provide more information on this topic.

OTHER FACTORS

While not part of Council direction, staff heard many other comments related to the development of LWH.

1) CITY'S DEVELOPMENT PROCESS AND FEES

Background

The development process leading to an approval to build a LWH is similar to the process for a single family house, with a few exceptions. While many single family home approvals are "outright", LWH is a conditional use, and includes a pre-application design and landscape review. This review provides assistance to applicants in the design of the LWH especially in relation to upper storey massing, and in interpreting guidelines which are intended to address neighbourliness and livability. This advice is available at no cost to the applicant and results in improved neighbourhood compatibility.

Processing times have varied since LWH was approved last summer, and reflect permit volumes. The current processing time for LWH is approx. 4 - 5 weeks from intake to permit issuance. For LWH, intake can commence after the completion of Engineering pre-clearance and the pre-application design and landscape review.

City fees are based on recovering the cost of staff services. Fees charged related to LWH development are in keeping with fees for developments of a similar size and complexity. Key City fees include:

- Development related fees - the development fee of \$935 is for “other use - conditional” and is less than an outright one family dwelling outright (\$1370). Another related fee is the development cost levy (DCL) which is currently \$2.43/sq/ft - about \$1200 per 500 sq.ft. LWH.
- Sewer connection fee - there is a requirement for all new dwelling units to have a separated sewer system. The fee ranges from approx. \$1750 - \$7850, with the lower fee applying when the laneway house is added onto a lot with an existing house built after 1985. The higher fee applies when a LWH is added to a property with an older home, or when a new house and LWH are constructed at the same time. In this latter instance, the \$7850 fee covers the one connection that would be used for both the new house and new LWH. In addition, if the homeowner requires a deeper connection there would be additional fees.
- Water connection fee - this fee is approximately \$4200; it is only applied where a LWH is added to a property with an existing house built before 1985, when a new house and LWH are constructed at the same time or when it is determined the fire suppression system for the LWH requires a fire upgrade. The \$4200 fee covers the one connection that would be used for both the new main house and new LWH.

What We Heard

In the first few months after LWH was approved as a use, some applicants expressed concerns regarding the pre-application process, specifically in terms of design guideline interpretation and the amount of time required for the review process. In contrast, others have expressed a desire for a more rigorous design review process, especially for a 1½ storey LWH.

With regard to fees, some builders have noted that the impact of fees associated with building a LWH is the largest barrier to the program being able to expand. More specifically, the requirement to provide a separated storm and sanitary sewer system for a LWH, and attendant fees (and site costs) are seen to impact affordability of these units. There has been a suggestion that, in cases where the main sewer is not separated, only the on-site work be completed as part of the LWH development, with a covenant given to pay the sewer connection fee at the future time when the main sewer in the street is separated. Alternative payment systems have also been suggested (e.g. cost amortized with annual payments included in the property tax bill).

Discussion

The concerns related to guideline interpretation and amount of time required for the review process are related to LWH being a new land use with new regulations and guidelines, as well as, in some cases, applicants (homeowners and builder/developers) who are new to Vancouver’s development process.

While the size of a LWH is modest, it includes all the features of a single family house, with the added challenge of achieving the allowable square footage in a restricted building envelope, while considering neighbourliness. As the development process, regulations and guidelines have become more familiar to both staff and applicants, interpretation and processing time have become less of a concern for applicants.

With respect to sewer and water connection fees, staff acknowledge that these fees are a significant fixed cost, particularly in cases where the main house is retained and only a LWH is added, as was the case for 39 of the first 100 approvals. These fees have been minimized by not applying the requirement for water metering and the higher sewer and water connection fees that typically apply when there are three dwelling units/site. The effect of these fees on adding a LWH while retaining the main house are difficult to ascertain, as they are one cost among many development related costs.

With respect to the development fee of \$935, staff will review this fee during 2011 and will include the results of this review in the "Year 2012 Zoning, Building and Trade Permit Fee Increases" report. With the experience of having reviewed over 100 applications, it has become apparent that more staff time is required for design and landscape review than was originally anticipated, particularly in cases where relaxations (e.g. for tree retention, for deeper lots) are considered.

B) OTHER PROCESSES AND FEES

Background

Construction of LWH requires an electrical service connection with BC Hydro and registration with the Homeowner Protection Office (HPO).

What We Heard

In the fall of 2009, we heard concerns from some applicants regarding a BC Hydro requirement to provide underground service to many LWH, and the accompanying higher cost.

We also heard from homeowner/builders that securing an HPO registration for both a new main house and LWH was difficult, as a homeowner/builder can only secure one registration at a time.

Discussion

Since LWH was approved in July 2009, staff have worked with BC Hydro as well as the Homeowner Protection Office (HPO) to improve processes and moderate fees to the extent possible.

BC Hydro reports that most LWH connections are overhead connections, with a lower fee than underground connections. City and Hydro staff are also working together on producing informational materials for the public to better explain clearance requirements, and to encourage early contact with Hydro as in some cases, design choices made early in the process can save considerable costs later.

Staff also met with representatives of HPO to resolve difficulties related to achieving HPO registration for homeowner/builders.

C) LWH DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION COSTS

Background

Project design and construction costs form the bulk of the cost to develop a LWH. Similar to developing a new house, there are variable fees related to, for example, interior and exterior finishes. There are also fixed fees, which, because of the small size of a LWH, can comprise a significant part of the total cost.

What We Heard

Some concern has been expressed that the cost to develop LWH is too high to be economically feasible.

Discussion

In an earlier report to Council, staff acknowledged that financial returns would be limited, particularly in cases where a LWH is added while retaining the main house, as the fixed costs can only be spread over a small building. However, the approval of 100 LWH in an approximately 9 month period indicates that this use is financially viable.

Staff called a limited sample of builders who have developed LWH in different parts of the city. Those builders with experience doing both total site redevelopment and adding a LWH while retaining the main house noted that developing a LWH as part of total site redevelopment is the more efficient and less costly option. Estimates vary but costs seem to be between \$50,000 to \$70,000 less when both the house and LWH are built at the same time (500 sq.ft. LWH example). Economies mentioned include having materials delivered, and machinery and trades on site, all at the same time. Total project cost for adding a 500 sq.ft. LWH while retaining the main house is reported to cost approximately \$180,000 and up, and the cost to add a LWH when redeveloping the site is approximately \$125,000 and up.

D) LWH RENTAL RATES

Background

Affordable rental housing is a key priority of Council and LWH can contribute to the rental housing mix and housing choice by providing small rental units in established neighbourhoods. LWH is a cost effective way to co-locate with family members, and like a secondary suite, it can be used to meet a variety of housing needs over time and different stages in a family cycle.

What We Heard

Some people expressed concern that new LWH units would not result in affordable rental rates.

Discussion

While there are few units completed to date, rental housing listings (Craigslist) indicate that 1 - 2 bedroom LWH units are being offered for \$1000 - \$2100/month. This range reflects location, quality of finishes, and yard and landscaping features, as well as LWH's access to ground floor open space, and the privacy afforded by a detached structure.

E) RECOMMENDATION FOR CONTINUED MONITORING

To better understand the impacts of the new zoning, Recommendation A calls for continued monitoring of the same topic areas as previously directed by Council. For some of these topic areas, the 9 month monitoring time period has not been long enough to allow for a full assessment of impacts. For example, pace of development could vary as familiarity with the use increases, and as more built examples are available for the public and designer/builders to see. Impacts on the rate of single family house demolition and replacement are also difficult to judge in this short time frame. Parking impacts will not be seen until after occupancy. With regard to features such as unit size and massing, additional time would allow for site cleanup, landscaping and neighbourhood adjustment to the new use.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Financial implications relate to staff resourcing issues in the following section.

PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

Development Services staff, in both the development application review and landscape review groups report that LWH is now comprising about 20 - 25% of their time. This is affecting both other services and staff ability to handle other applications and respond to enquiries. Staff will monitor resourcing as part of ongoing LWH monitoring.

CONCLUSION

LWH has been an approved use since July 2009, and the 100th permit was issued in July 2010. LWH is providing an additional housing option and rental housing supply in established single family areas, adding greater flexibility and sustainability to the city's housing stock, in a manner that maintains streetscape and neighbourhood character.

In many ways, LWH is performing as anticipated:

- LWH projects are distributed across the City, both as part of total site redevelopment as well as being added while keeping the existing main house.
- The pace of LWH development indicates that LWH is a viable option, but is not occurring at such a pace as to be rapidly changing neighbourhoods.
- While most LWH are being built along with a new house, there is no discernible change in the rate of single family home demolition.
- Parking and green building and site requirements are being met and sometimes exceeded.
- LWH regulations and guidelines are generally delivering what was envisioned for LWH in terms of massing and quality of design.

However, both staff and the public have noted that improvements should be explored, particularly surrounding upper storey massing and overall building size to address impacts related to privacy and overlook, shadowing, and other related impacts. These improvements are the basis for Recommendation C.

Staff also recommend continued monitoring to be able to assess and report back on impacts that would be realized with occupancy, and a report back on minor amendments to clarify zoning and strengthen guidelines to reflect current practice.

* * * * *

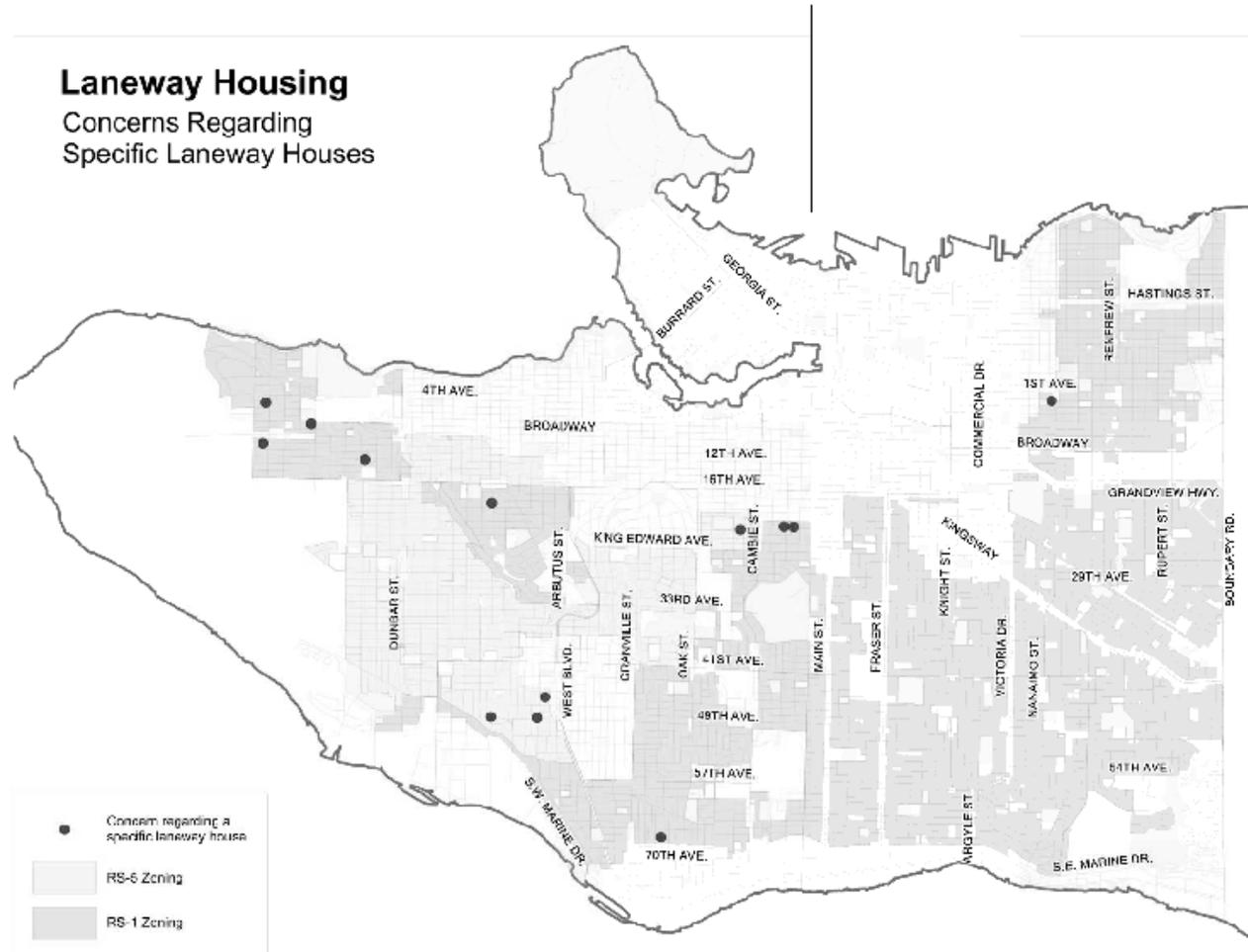
Public Concerns regarding specific Laneway Houses

Address	Lot size	Retain or new?	Zone	Location, Orientation	Roof	Local Area	Issues raised
100 block W. 21 st	33 X 115	New house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, north facing LWH	Traditional	Riley Park	Height and scale, lack of green space, privacy, visual intrusion, out of character, property value impacts
200 block W. 21 st	33 X 115	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, north facing LWH	Asymmetrical slope	Riley Park	Height and scale, privacy/visual intrusion; broader concerns about densification
4300 block W. 8 th	46 X 115	New house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, south facing LWH	Contemporary	West Point Grey	Height and scale, privacy; little backyard space; looks like an infill or 2 houses squashed on one lot
2300 block E. 2 nd	33 X 122	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, south facing LWH	Traditional	Grandview Woodland	Height and scale, slope makes this unit really stick out, privacy; loss of light and view; 3 units possibly all rental on one site is too many; property values; input from neighbours should be part of process; increased garbage and traffic; densification
2100 block W. 46 th	40 X 135	New house + new LWH	RS-5	Mid-block, north facing LWH	Traditional	Kerrisdale	Too tall, parking concerns, developer built/not homeowner
2800 block W. 49 th	56 X 180	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-5	Corner to lane, north facing LWH	Traditional	Kerrisdale	Too big and too tall
6400 block Yew	40 X 120	New house + new LWH	RS-5	Corner, north facing LWH	Traditional	Kerrisdale	Looks squished in, lack of space between main house and LWH, need more green space between buildings, changes look and feel of neighbourhood
600 block W. 22 nd	33 X 122	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-5	Mid-block, north facing LWH	Traditional	South Cambie	Privacy, loss of views, property value impacts

4600 block W. 11th	46 X 122	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-5	Mid-block, south facing LWH	Traditional	West Point Grey	Tree damage
4600 block W. 5 th	50 X 113	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, south facing LWH	Monoslope	West Point Grey	Privacy; densification not for single family areas; scale not compatible; more consultation; keep neighbours informed; new main house not in keeping with character of area and seems too tall
3900 block W.13 th	55 X 122	Retain main house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, south facing LWH	Traditional	West Point Grey	Obtrusive and intrusive; LWH seems too tall; perceived scale too large, impacts privacy, solar access and outdoor enjoyment;
3500 block MacDonald	49 X 122	New house + new LWH	RS-1	Corner, south facing LWH	Flat	Arbutus Ridge	Massing is too large and bulky; appearance is of a full upper storey
8100 block Hudson	33 X 122	New house + new LWH	RS-1	Mid-block, west facing LWH	Traditional	Marpole	Lack of notification, 1 parking space inadequate, LWH looks too big, allowing LWH is not in keeping with "single" family area, no change should happen until area planning has been done

Public Concerns regarding LWH in General

Writer	Concerns
Individual	Scale and massing too big; visual and acoustic privacy; shadowing; parking; impact on property values; ecological impact of small building; insufficient public process
Individual	1 parking space per unit is inadequate; it would be better to allow semi-detached houses with basement suites on all 50' + lots and require 1 parking space per dwelling unit; or allow LWH only on commercial or already high density lanes
Individual	Staff misled Council on 2 key points: 1) actual size of LWH - how big LWH would be if exclusions were included; there should be no exclusions available; size limits stated (e.g. 500 sq.ft. LWH on a 33 X 122 lot) should be respected 2) that there would be a moratorium after the first 100 and a canvass of public opinion; now it seems no moratorium and only an internal review; consultation has been poor; also notes that LWH in his area appears too tall and too big; wants to live in an area that is lower density and looks like it
Dunbar Residents Association	Surveyed 90 people living adjacent to or across from 13 LWH; 41% response rate; found that the majority of respondents were unhappy when asked about their overall impression of the LWH; found that the majority of respondents felt that LWH impact is intrusive; respondents also noted concerns about parking, privacy, 2 nd storey, unwanted density, inadequate consultation, obstructed views and light, traffic/noise
Frances Bula's blog	Responses (9 respondents) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LWH an improvement over current old garages and lanescape - should be greater flexibility to achieve single storey LWH; current 1 ½ storey has privacy and shadowing impacts; cost to construct is high but worth it - overall, the program is working; concerned that a bigger single storey unit will take up permeable backyard space; affordability is a concern -LWH needs to be able to have a partial upper storey to make it feasible; should there be a size restriction based on size of the main house and the size of the lot - single storey units not encouraged; many builders are preferring to build two parking spaces - ongoing fine tuning of regulations and guidelines is required; roof slopes should be specified; to ensure backyard open space with sun exposure exterior space should also be carefully designed - don't want to see two parking spaces with full second storey above - impacts on neighbours would be too great - 2 parking spaces with second storey suite seems acceptable



Proposed Minor Amendments

In Recommendation B, staff propose the following amendments to the Zoning and Development By-law:

1) Amendment to Accessory use Exclusions

Current regulations allow a certain amount of floor area (not counted in unit size) for off-street parking or loading, bicycle storage or accessory uses that support urban agriculture; this floor area must not exceed:

- 21m² (226 sq.ft. or one parking space) on a site of 740m² or less (a 740m² lot is typically 66'X122') or;
- 42m² (452 sq.ft. or two spaces) on a site larger than 740m².

It is intended that the 21m² or 42m² provide adequate space for on-site parking as well as some space for other accessory uses, such as bicycle storage and urban agriculture. It is not intended that this total space be available for accessory uses typically requiring less space, such as bicycle storage and uses that support urban agriculture.

The proposed amendment would provide clarification regarding accessory use exclusions, specifically that the total amount is not available for only bicycle storage or urban agriculture.

2) Amendment to Allowable Site Width

Current regulations allow LWH on lots 10.0m (32.81 ft.) wide and wider. The proposed amendment would allow for minimum site widths of 9.8m (32 ft.), which would increase LWH eligibility to a large number of lots which are slightly less than 10m wide due to legal survey plans. This would be in keeping with RS-1 and RS-5 regulations.

Staff also propose the following additions to LWH Guidelines:

The following guideline additions are intended to formalize and explicitly articulate advice already being given by Development Planners during the design review process:

- require more than minimum setback and architectural articulation at the lane where possible
- provide a well designed landing where entry is provided off the lane
- utility placement that enhances lanescape
- upper storey massing should not have a 2 storey expression
- clarify (by adding numerical limits) roof slope categories:
 - flat roof -- less than 3 : 12
 - shed roof -- 3 : 12 to 7 : 12
 - sloped roof -- more than 7 : 12
- miscellaneous minor change





Background Information for Report Sections 4 and 5

4) SIZE OF LWH, MASSING AND QUALITY OF DESIGN

Regulations:

- **height:** maximum 1 ½ storeys with maximum heights of 18'-20' permitted (5'-6' above existing maximum garage heights), with the intention of allowing for a variety of unit designs, particularly on standard 33' wide lots;
- **upper storey:** limited to 60% of the main floor area in order to reduce perceived massing for neighbours;
- **lot width:** minimum of 33' wide
- **backyard separation:** 16' minimum separation required between the LWH and the main house to maintain a reasonable amount of open space for use by all units on the lot;
- **excluded parking/accessory space:** In proportion to lot size, a specified amount of enclosed parking/accessory area is not counted in 'dwelling unit size' yet affects overall building massing. On a standard size lot a maximum of 226 sq. ft. (accommodating one enclosed parking space) is not counted.
- **other excluded spaces:** as with single family housing, some floor space is excluded (e.g. space under stairs, space under 4' in height); (a 500 sq. ft. dwelling unit on a standard size lot with one enclosed parking space and floor area/ thermal exclusions could result in an overall LWH square footage of about 875 sq. ft.)
- **architectural expression:** as with outright main house regulations in RS-1 and RS-5, LWH regulations allow for a variety of roof forms, architectural styles and materials, with the intention of facilitating a variety of expression as well as more affordable design and material options.

Guidelines:

- The accompanying LWH guidelines focus on the design of upper storey massing, windows and balconies with the intention of reducing shadowing, overlook and perceived scale.
- While the guidelines do not specify architectural character or materiality, the guidelines do state that foundations, planting and materials used should convey a sense of permanence and residential character.

Monitoring Results

The monitoring found that most LWH are 1 ½ storeys in height with a traditional pitched roof

Lot size

- o About half of all LWH are on lots 33' - 40' wide; two applications with lot widths less than 33' (25' and 31') have sought Board of Variance approval

Number of Storeys:

- o 83% are 1½ storeys in height
- o 17% are 1 storey in height

Roof Forms:

- 83% traditional pitched roof
- 17% contemporary roof forms:
 - 8% mono-slope / shed roof
 - 5% asymmetrically sloped roof
 - 4% flat roof

Enclosed Parking Area:

- Most applications exceed the 226 sq.ft. allowance for parking as a typical parking space is 240 sq.ft.; the 14 additional sq.ft. would come out of the dwelling unit floor area;

Massing:

- As per design guidelines all upper storeys have stepped back from the garden by 5' and kept eave heights down to 12' maximum;
- Perceived massing of some LWH large due to upper storey design.

Location on the Lot:

- As per regulations, most have been located in the rear 26', the garage/parking area, but there are a small number of cases involving deeper lots where the LWH has extended further into the backyard, as allowed under the design guidelines;
- Most LWHs have exceeded the minimum 16' separation between the LWH and the main house, with an average separation of 29'.

Architectural Character: See Photo Gallery (Appendix C)

Perceived Height and Massing Concerns

The most common concern raised regarding LWH is that the new units look too large and too tall when viewed from neighbouring yards and the lane. This concern has been raised about LWH in a variety of circumstances:

- on varying lot sizes (33' X 115' to lots that are 56' X 180' in size)
- for both mid-block as well as corner locations
- in both RS-1 and RS-5
- for a variety of roof forms
- in both scenarios of total site redevelopment, and where a LWH is added while keeping the existing house; and
- on lots of both north and south orientation

5) SIZE AND TYPE OF DWELLING UNIT

The regulations currently provide for:

- LWH dwelling unit sizes that are proportionate to lot sizes, resulting in unit sizes of about 500 sq. ft. on standard 33' lots and about 750 sq. ft. on 50 foot lots. This was intended to allow for a variety of unit types, ranging from studios to 2 bedrooms.
- A maximum unit size of 750 sq.ft. regardless of lot size; this is intended to minimize land value and redevelopment impacts.
- Minimum unit size of 280 sq.ft. relaxable to 205 sq. ft.; this is in keeping with secondary suites within apartments allowed elsewhere in the city (e.g. East Fraser Lands) and is intended to assist with affordability and flexibility.

- excluded parking/accessory space: In proportion to lot size, a specified amount of enclosed parking/accessory area is not counted in 'dwelling unit size' yet affects overall building massing. On a standard size lot a maximum of 226 sq. ft. (accommodating one enclosed parking space) is not counted (so a 500 sq. ft. dwelling unit on a standard size lot with one enclosed parking space, plus exclusions could result in total LWH square footage of about 875 sq. ft.).
- other excluded spaces: as with single family housing, some floor space is excluded (e.g. space under stairs, space under 4' in height);

Monitoring Results

- Average unit size: 580 sq. ft.
- Unit size range: 340 to 750 sq.ft.
- Unit Types:
 - o 67 % are 1 bedroom units;
 - o 28 % are 2 bedroom units (usually on larger lots with unit sizes of around 680 sq. ft.);
 - o 5 % are studio units (all but one is on a 33' wide lot).