

DETACHED SECONDARY SUITES

Zoning Regulations and Development Permit Process



PHOTO: COLIN PERRY FOR LANEFAB

BACKGROUND

During the Community Dialogue on Neighbourhood Character and Housing (2008), West Vancouver residents called for greater housing options in their own neighbourhoods, particularly for seniors, young adults and young families. At the same time, residents wanted to see new housing types that would fit with the established character of their neighbourhoods.

In 2013, the District engaged residents in an in-depth examination of coach houses as a possible new housing type for West Vancouver. This work included a review of coach house policies and regulations implemented in other communities.

On July 21, 2014, Council adopted bylaws to amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) and Zoning Bylaw to allow for the introduction of coach houses in the form of detached secondary suites, starting in the fall of 2014. A *Coach House* is a detached dwelling unit, which is accessory to, and smaller than, the primary dwelling on a residential lot. It may be attached to a garage. A *Detached Secondary Suite* is a detached alternative to a suite within the main house (*a rental coach house*).

ZONING REGULATIONS FOR DETACHED SECONDARY SUITES (Section 130.051 of the Zoning Bylaw)

A detached secondary suite is a permitted use in the following zones: RS1, RS2, RS3, RS4, RS5, RS7, RS8, RS9, RS10, RD1 and RD2. Where permitted, a detached secondary suite is subject to compliance with the following regulations:

- a maximum of one detached secondary suite is permitted per lot;
- the detached secondary suite is not permitted in conjunction with a secondary suite on the same lot;
- the detached secondary suite is not permitted in conjunction with a duplex dwelling;
- the detached secondary suite shall be set back from the rear property line of the lot as follows:
 - minimum 1.8 metres to the rear building wall; and
 - minimum 1.2 metres for any portion of the building containing an enclosed garage.
- the detached secondary suite shall be sited a minimum distance of 4.9 metres away from the principal dwelling on the lot.
- the detached secondary suite shall have a maximum of two storeys with maximum building heights as follows:
 - 4.57 metres if one storey; or 6.4 metres if two storeys;
 - for two-storey dwellings, the upper storey shall have a maximum floor area not exceeding 60 per cent of the main floor area;
- the detached secondary suite shall have a maximum floor area not exceeding the lesser of 10 per cent of lot area or 111.5 square metres, whichever is less;
- the registered owner of the lot must occupy, as his/her principal place of residence, either the principal dwelling unit or the detached secondary suite;
- the keeping of lodgers, a personal care facility, a child care facility or a bed and breakfast is not permitted on a lot containing a detached secondary suite;
- one off-street vehicle parking space must be provided exclusively for the use of the detached secondary suite; and
- the detached secondary suite must not be subdivided from the principal dwelling unit under the *Land Title Act* or the *Strata Property Act*.



DETACHED SECONDARY SUITE FEASIBILITY CHECKLIST

1. confirm your property's zoning to see if a coach house is permitted, —review all other zoning regulations
2. determine whether the allowable floor area on your property is maximized or if any unused floor area is available
3. confirm municipal servicing requirements and associated costs for adding a detached secondary suite
4. if your property is subject to a Development Area Agreement, land use contract or private covenant, review the documents to see if a coach house is permitted and if external approvals are required

DEVELOPMENT PERMIT PROCESS

In addition to compliance with Zoning regulations, all detached secondary suites are subject to a form and character development permit. The objectives for Development Permit Area BF-B 3.1 are:

- to provide for the successful integration of coach houses with the built form and landscape character of existing neighbourhoods;
- to minimize site alteration and retain natural site features;
- to promote a high standard of design, construction and landscaping; and
- to promote energy and water conservation and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

The Director of Planning, Land Development & Permits has the delegated authority to approve or reject a development permit for a detached secondary suite that:

- conforms to Guidelines BF-B 3.1; and
- conforms to the Zoning Bylaw; or
- requires a variance to the Zoning Bylaw that is limited to site coverage, yards, building height and maximum building face envelope.



Such variances would be considered in order to achieve superior siting of a detached secondary suite, taking into account natural site features, neighbouring development, existing views, and steep topography. Applications involving other variances to the Zoning Bylaw require approval by Council. The property owner may appeal to Council to reconsider a decision by the director to not approve a development permit.

Form and Character Guidelines

Development Permit Guidelines BF-B 3.1 address proposed siting (location of a coach house on the property), site and landscape design, and building design. Coach house designs should provide for accessibility or adaptability to meet changing household needs over time. Single-level designs are encouraged where coach houses are likely to accommodate older residents or people with limited mobility. Please see additional information:

1. *Detached Secondary Suites: Development Permit Guidelines*
2. *Accessible & Adaptable Dwellings*

Approval Process

Development Permit approval is a two-stage process, as outlined below. Contact the Planning Department at 604-925-7055 to request a pre-application meeting, prior to building design.

Stage I: Siting Approval

- Review and approval of proposed coach house siting in accordance with the guidelines for *Location on the Lot*, prior to detailed building and landscape design.
- Applicants are required to demonstrate that they have informed neighbours about their proposal, the issues raised, and how these are proposed to be addressed.

Stage II: Building and Landscape Design Approval

- Review and approval of building and landscape design in accordance with the guidelines for *Site and Landscape Design* and *Building Design*.
- At this stage, Planning staff would provide formal notification to residents living within 50 metres of the subject property with information about the proposal, how to provide input, and how it will be considered in the review process.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR DEVELOPMENT PERMIT APPLICATIONS

OCP Designation BF-B 3.1 requires that the following be included with a development permit application for a detached secondary suite:

Stage I Submission

1. completed application form
2. application fee, which will vary based on unit type and approval process:

UNIT TYPE	1-STOREY	2-STOREY
Complies with Zoning Bylaw (<i>staff approval</i>)	\$1,150	\$1,650
Requires Zoning Variances and/or Council Approval	\$1,850	\$2,350

note: fees are subject to change and will be confirmed at time of application.

3. written authorization from the registered owner(s), if applicant is an agent acting on the owner's behalf
4. evidence that the applicant has had preliminary discussions with adjacent neighbours about the proposed development (prior to application), the issues raised and how these are proposed to be addressed
5. site survey: a plan drawn to scale and prepared by a BC land surveyor, showing:
 - lot dimensions and area;
 - topography and natural site features such as trees, rock outcrops and watercourses;
 - legal encumbrances such as easements and rights-of-way;
 - proximity of buildings and structures on adjacent properties;
 - features adjacent to the site including: trees and above ground infrastructure such as driveways, edge of roadway, parking, telephone poles, hydro kiosks and street lamps
6. context plan: showing the proposed detached secondary suite in relation to buildings, driveways and natural features on adjacent properties, and established views
7. site and contextual photographs
8. project details:
 - proposed building location, floor area and height
 - zoning bylaw analysis for property
 - details of proposed site development including landscape alteration, retaining walls, and anticipated rock blasting

Stage II Submission

1. proposed building floor plans, elevations, sections and finishing materials
2. proposed landscape design (landscape plan, planting information)
3. description of sustainable design measures
4. description of adaptable or accessible design features (optional)

CONTACT US FOR MORE INFORMATION

westvancouver.ca/coachhouses

TYPE OF INQUIRY	DEPARTMENT
development permit process, servicing requirements & general inquiries	Planning 604-925-7055
building permits (<i>following development permit issuance</i>)	Building 604-925-7040
registration and licensing of rental suites	Bylaw 604-925-7152



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