

NO: L003

COUNCIL DATE: December 4, 2017

---

## REGULAR COUNCIL - LAND USE

TO: **Mayor & Council** DATE: **November 30, 2017**

FROM: **General Manager, Planning & Development** FILE: **5480-01**  
**3900-30**

SUBJECT: **Proposed Housekeeping Amendments to Surrey Zoning Text Amendment Bylaw 19333, Regarding Calculation of Extended Floor Area in Single Family Residential Zones**

---

## RECOMMENDATION

The Planning & Development Department recommends that Council:

1. Receive this report as information;
2. Approve housekeeping amendments to Surrey Zoning Text Amendment Bylaw 19333 with regard to inclusion of staircases in the calculation of extended floor area for the Single Family Residential (RF) Zone, Single Family Residential Secondary Suite (RF-SS) Zone, and Single Family Residential Gross Density (RF-G) Zone, as described in this report and attached as Appendix "I;" and
3. Set the Public Hearing for *Surrey Zoning Bylaw, 1993, No. 12000*, Text Amendment Bylaw, 2017, No. 19333 for Monday, December 18, 2017, at 7:00 pm at City Hall.

## INTENT

The intent of this report is to amend Surrey Zoning Text Amendment Bylaw 19333 ("Bylaw 19333"), which introduced changes to the way in which "extended height" area (also referred to as "open to below area" and "space under vaulted ceiling") is calculated in various single-family zones, in order to achieve consistency with other single-family zones.

## BACKGROUND

In July 2016, Council adopted changes to the way space under vaulted ceilings is calculated in relation to floor area in the RF-12, RF-13, and RF-10 Zones (Corporate Report No. R158; 2016). These changes recognized that sloping, vaulted ceilings are an attractive feature in contemporary homes, and that vaulted ceilings which are lower than 4.6 metres (25 feet) do not allow unauthorized construction of second storey floor space and should be exempt from "double counting" of extended floor area.

To achieve a consistent height calculation approach in other single family zones, similar amendments were proposed to RH, RH-G, RC, RF-O, RF-SS, RF, RF-G, and RF 12C Zones, at the

July 24, 2017 Regular Council meeting (Corporate Report No. Loo2; 2017). Council granted the associated amending bylaw (Bylaw 19333) First and Second Reading, and instructed Clerks to set a date for the related Public Hearing.

Prior to Public Hearing, Building Division staff identified an issue with the clarity of the bylaw as it was written for the RF, RF-SS, and RF-G Zones where the open to below calculations was proposed to exclude staircases from the square footage calculations. This could have the effect of creating additional open to below space that could then be enclosed at a later date. In order to ensure that the regulations were clearly understood and interpreted and to minimize work done without permit, Community Planning staff identified that further consultation with Building Division staff and local house designers was needed, and requested that Council defer Public Hearing for Bylaw 19333 to a later date.

## **DISCUSSION**

With the goal of ensuring clarity with the proposed changes, additional meetings with the Building Division staff and local house designers were held in October 2017 to review the proposed changes to the way in which open to below area is calculated, and whether the RF, RF-SS and RF-G Zones needed special consideration.

In 2013, Council approved amendments to Single Family Residential (RF) Zone to address the issue of building mass associated with extensive covered decks and double-height (open to below) rooms. This change required that floor area with extended height, including staircases, must be multiplied by two, where the extended height exceeds 3.7 m [12 ft.], except for a maximum of 19 sq. m. [200 sq. ft.]. Since staircases typically only require 7 to 8 sq. m. [75 to 85 sq. ft.], it was deemed that the 19 sq. m. (200 sq. ft.) exemption from square footage would allow for sufficient space for open to below area over staircases, as well as vaulted ceilings.

The most recent proposed bylaw updates to Single Family Residential (RF) Zones (July 24, 2017; Corporate Report No. Loo2; 2017) excluded staircases from the extended height calculation; and, if approved, could essentially allow an additional 8 sq. m. [85 sq. ft.] of floor area more than the current zones allow. The additional floor area could be a potential issue in older, established single family neighbourhoods that are predominantly zoned as RF, RF-SS, and RF-G. Over the years, the City has received downzoning requests from residents in single family neighbourhoods, many of whom have concerns about size and mass of newer houses being built under the RF Zone.

Staff do not have concerns regarding changes proposed in the other single family zones identified in the July 24, 2017 Corporate Report. For example, houses built under RH, RH-G, RC, and RF-O Zones typically have larger sized lots, and have custom house designs. As for the RF-12C Zone, massing is not an issue because the permitted house size is smaller in this zone.

As a result of the analysis, Bylaw 19333 has been updated to continue to include staircases in the extended height calculations for RF, RF-SS, and RF-G Zones. The revisions to Bylaw 19333 are attached as Appendix "I."

## **SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS**

The changes recommended in this report respond to the following Desired Outcomes (DO) in the Sustainability Charter 2.0.

## **Built Environment and Neighbourhoods**

**DO6:** Land is used efficiently and sensitively, and development minimizes the impacts on the natural environment, viewscales, agricultural land and urban wildlife.

**DO8:** The built environment enhances quality of life, happiness and well-being.

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the discussion above, staff recommends that:

- Receive this report as information;
- Approve housekeeping amendments to Surrey Zoning Text Amendment Bylaw 19333 with regard to inclusion of staircases in the calculation of extended floor area for the Single Family Residential (RF) Zone, Single Family Residential Secondary Suite (RF-SS) Zone, and Single Family Residential Gross Density (RF-G) Zone, as described in this report and attached as Appendix “I;” and
- Set the Public Hearing for *Surrey Zoning Bylaw, 1993, No. 12000, Text Amendment Bylaw, 2017, No. 19333* for Monday, December 18, 2017, at 7:00 pm at City Hall.

*Original signed by*  
Jean Lamontagne  
General Manager, Planning & Development

PH/ss

Appendix “I” Proposed Amendments to *Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000*, as amended

**Proposed Amendments to  
Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as amended**

The following amendments are proposed to Surrey Zoning By-law, 1993, No. 12000, as amended:

**AMENDMENTS TO SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL ZONES**

**Part 16 RF Zone**

Amend Section D. Density as follows:

- Delete Sub-section D. 2. (a) iv. and insert the following in its place:

“iv. For the purpose of this Section and notwithstanding the definition of *floor area ratio* in Part 1 Definitions of this By-law, the following must be included in the calculation of *floor area ratio*:

(a) Covered areas used for parking, unless the covered parking is located within the *basement*;

(b) The area of an accessory building in excess of 10 square metres [108 sq.ft.];

(c) Covered outdoor space with a height of 1.8 metres [6 ft.] or greater, except for a maximum of 10% of the maximum allowable floor area of which 15 square metres [160 sq. ft.] must be reserved for a front porch or veranda; and

(d) Floor area including staircases, garages and covered parking with extended height exceeding 3.7 metres [12 feet] must be multiplied by 2, excluding:

~~(i.)~~ ~~staircases~~;

~~(ii.)~~ 19 square metres [200 sq.ft.] and

~~(iii.)~~ floor area directly below a sloped ceiling less than 4.6 metres [15 ft.] in height, provided that the area has at least one wall 3.7 metres [12 ft.] or less in height.”

**Part 16A RF-SS Zone**

Amend Section D. Density as follows:

- Delete Sub-section D. 1. (d) and insert the following in its place:

“(d) For the purpose of this Section and notwithstanding the definition of *floor area ratio* in Part 1 Definitions of this By-law, the following must be included in the calculation of *floor area ratio*:

i. Covered areas used for parking, unless the covered parking is located within the *basement*;

ii. The area of an *accessory building* in excess of 10 square metres [108 sq.ft.];

- iii. Covered outdoor space with a height of 1.8 metres [6 ft.] or greater, except for a maximum of 10% of the maximum allowable floor area of which 15 square metres [160 sq. ft.] must be reserved for a front porch or veranda; and
- iv. Floor area including staircases, garages and covered parking with extended height exceeding 3.7 metres [12 feet] must be multiplied by 2, excluding:
  - ~~(a)~~ staircases;
  - ~~(ba)~~ 19 square metres [200 sq.ft.] and
  - ~~(eb)~~ floor area directly below a sloped ceiling less than 4.6 metres [15 ft.] in height, provided that the area has at least one wall 3.7 metres [12 ft.] or less in height.”

### **Part 17 RF-G Zone**

Amend Section D. Density as follows:

- Delete Sub-section D. 4. (a) and insert the following in its place:
  - 4. (a) For the purpose of this Section and notwithstanding the definition of *floor area ratio* in Part 1 Definitions of this By-law, the following must be included in the calculation of *floor area ratio*:
    - i. Covered areas used for parking, unless the covered parking is located within the *basement*;
    - ii. The area of an *accessory building* in excess of 10 square metres [108 sq.ft.];
    - iii. Covered outdoor space with a height of 1.8 metres [6 ft.] or greater, except for a maximum of 10% of the maximum allowable floor area of which 15 square metres [160 sq. ft.] must be reserved for a front porch or veranda; and
    - iv. Floor area including staircases, garages and covered parking with extended height exceeding 3.7 metres [12 feet] must be multiplied by 2, excluding:
      - ~~(a)~~ staircases;
      - ~~(ba)~~ 19 square metres [200 sq.ft.] and
      - ~~(eb)~~ floor area directly below a sloped ceiling less than 4.6 metres [15 ft.] in height, provided that the area has at least one wall 3.7 metres [12 ft.] or less in height.”