CONTINUITY WITH CHANGE

An Investigation of the 'Monster House' issue in Vancouver's
Westside Single-Family Neighbourhoods

by

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ABSTRACT

Vancouver's westside residents complain to City Hall about large new houses being constructed in their single-family neighbourhoods. To address the residents' concerns and to promote the 'neighbourliness' of new development, Vancouver's planning department has focussed on the manipulation of bulk and siting controls of new houses, however, residents continue to complain. Why have these new controls been ineffective in resolving the concerns of residents?

The thesis investigates this problem by surveying residents' attitudes and perceptions regarding the development of large new houses. Three different sources of information are used:

1. literature review

2. comments recorded at public meetings

3. directed home interviews with residents.

A literature review of "quality", "neighbourhood", "character", "change", and "continuity" is undertaken to formulate a concept of "continuity with change". Comments recorded at public meetings dealing with the issue of large new houses are analyzed. A questionnaire at the meetings and mapping of the new houses identifies southwest Oakridge as an area highly affected by this new development. Resident interviews are conducted in southwest Oakridge to survey the opinions of residents.

The thesis suggests that there are three major issues which concern residents: first, the unaceptable design and general appearance of the new houses. Second, the feeling of helplessness in the face of change. Third, a concern with Asian purchasers of the new houses and the resulting cultural change in the neighbourhood.

The thesis concludes that since residents' concerns are not limited to the bulk and siting of large new houses, the new controls introduced by City Hall are insufficient and the following issues must be addressed:

(a) the design of the new houses,

(b) the context of the new houses and their relationship to the existing streetscape,

(c) continuity in landscape design,

(d) community participation in managing change,

(e) cultural change in the community.

Alternatives to the present "outright use" system are discussed with special reference to development controls currently being applied successfully in some neighbourhoods in Vancouver.
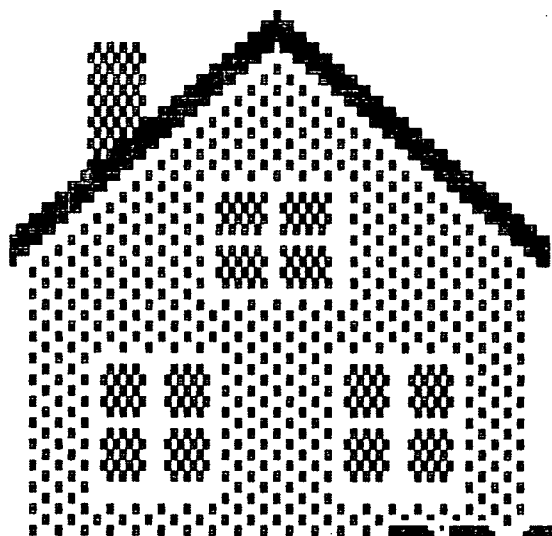
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PROBLEM DEFINITION

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CHAPTER 1 : PROBLEM DEFINITION

Residents are complaining about large new houses being constructed in their neighbourhoods. In order to understand the scope of this problem, a brief history of events, as they were presented to the researcher, will form an introduction to the thesis question. The rationale, an introduction to 'continuity', the importance of the research, methodology and organization, and a selection of key terms, follows.

1.1 The Problem History

Late in 1985, a problem was developing in single-family (RS-1 zoned) neighbourhoods on the westside of Vancouver (appendix 1). Newspaper articles suggested that large new houses were causing anxiety for residents (Vancouver Sun, Sept. 1985). The residents complained about the large size and overwhelming appearance of the new houses (figure 1). They were being constructed to the maximum allowable floor space ratio (FSR) under the RS-1 zoning schedule while the existing homes were, in most cases, much smaller. Nicknames were adopted that reflected the perception of residents who described the new houses as "monster houses", "monstrosities", or "mega houses".

By early 1986, Vancouver City Council members were receiving complaints from residents who wanted something done about the large new houses. Alderman George Puil initiated discussion of the issue at City Council. The researcher interviewed Alderman Puil on February 21, 1986. Alderman Puil said that there were many telephone calls and letters from

Figure 1
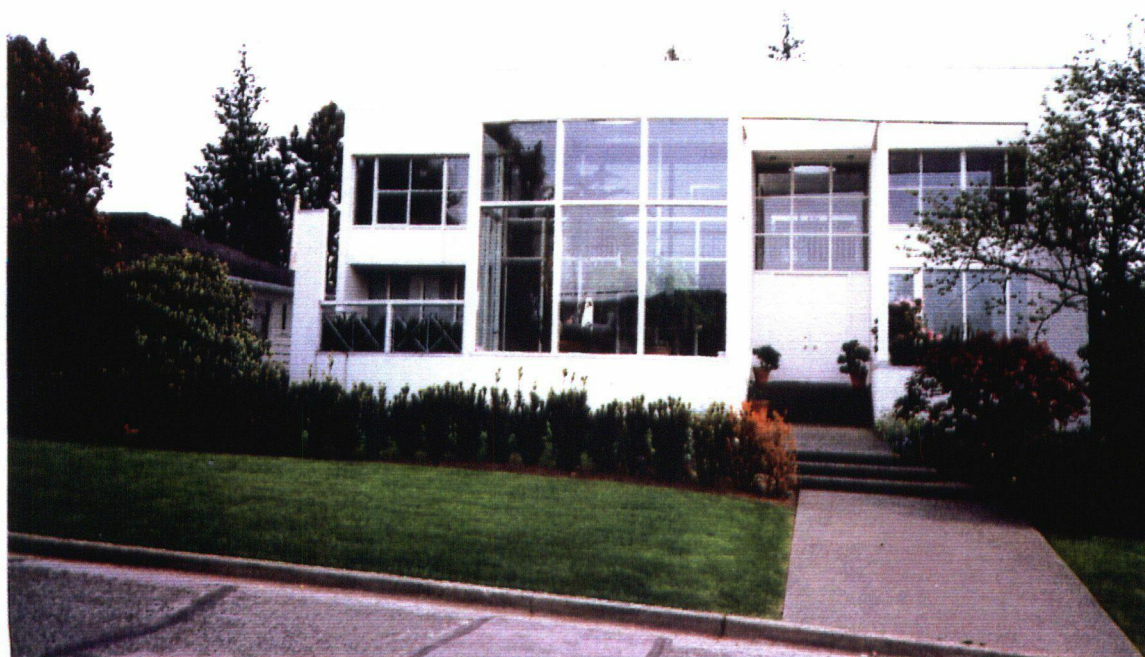
EXAMPLES OF LARGE NEW HOUSES BUILT UNDER RS-1
ZONING REGULATIONS PRIOR TO CHANGES IN APRIL, 1986

various parts of the city complaining about large new houses. In Alderman Puil's opinion, the main concerns of residents were:

1. The new houses were out of character for the neighbourhoods and the new "boxy" designs did not fit in.

2. Residents complained that the new houses blocked established views.

3. New houses were overshadowing the back yards of existing houses and eliminating the privacy that residents had previously enjoyed.

4. Houses were being constructed that were designed for the inclusion of illegal suites. Mr. Puil, however, felt that this was only a problem on the eastside of the city.

1.2 The City's Response

To address the problem the City Council (minutes Jan. 7, 1986) first established the following goals for RS-1 single-family neighbourhoods:

> 1. Maintain the quality and integrity of Vancouver's single-family neighbourhoods.
>
> 2. Allow some change in RS-1 on the condition that neighbourliness is maintained between new development and existing housing.

Second, Council instructed planning staff to remedy this problem by proposing changes to the RS-1 zoning by-law that would alleviate residents' concerns.

Dr. Ann McAfee, housing planner for the City of Vancouver, was interviewed on February 27, 1986. Dr. McAfee said that staff was producing revised RS-1 zoning regulations as requested by City Council. They were working to establish new technical

parameters to acceptable development in single-family
neighbourhoods by manipulating setbacks, height, and other
physical controls outlined in the regulations. They were to do
this without reducing the FSR, the value that determines the
overall size of the structure. Council was afraid that property
owners would ask for compensation for lost development rights if
the FSR was reduced.

In March 1986, the planning department publicized its
proposed revisions at two public information meetings convened
to explain the changes to those concerned. It became evident at
the first meeting that the department had underestimated the
public concern on the issue as the hall selected was
approximately one half the size required to accomodate those
interested in attending the meeting. Participants were very
vocal about their displeasure with the current zoning laws. At
the official public meeting required under the City's charter
the changes were adopted by Council. The changes are explained
in more detail in chapter 2.

1.3 The Problem Continues

By mid 1986, the City was receiving complaints about large
new houses built under the new regulations. The continued
complaints and press coverage on the issue would suggest that
the new regulations did not resolve the concerns of existing
residents.

The pace of demolition and reconstruction of houses in RS-1
neighbourhoods continued to escalate despite the bulk and siting
changes to the zoning by-law introduced in April 1986. The value

of land and the market price of new and older homes continued to escalate despite the warnings of realters and builders who believed that new controls would reverse the market.

By mid 1986, the City was receiving complaints about large new houses being built under the new regulations. The continued complaints and press coverage would suggest that the new regulations did not resolve the concerns of existing residents.

1.4 The Thesis Question

Residents in RS-1 single-family neighbourhoods have been complaining about large new houses being built in their neighbourhoods. The response of the City has been to address their concerns by manipulating bulk and siting controls in the RS-1 zoning by-law. Residents, however, continue to complain. This suggests that the new controls are inappropriate or insufficient to satisfy residents.

Why have changes to RS-1 zoning regulations been ineffective in resolving the concerns of residents over large new houses being constructed in their neighbourhoods?

1.5 Rationale

Preliminary observations by the researcher suggest that retaining elements of continuity consistent with the character and streetscape of each neighbourhood may be more important to residents than reducing bulk and siting. In some instances, in Shaughnessy for example, the new houses are actually smaller than the existing houses yet the residents still refer to the

new houses as "monster houses". This would suggest that size was not the reason for residents' concern in this neighbourhood.

In other areas, where bulk and density are allowed to increase because of bonuses for character retention, there is no apparent conflict between residents and new development. The 200 block West 13th Avenue in Vancouver, zoned RT2A, is such an example. On this street it is difficult to tell which houses are new and which are restored seventy-five year old houses. Although developed at the same time as the large new houses in RS-1, there were no corresponding complaints from residents in this district. The City appeared to achieve increased size and density of development without offending the existing neighbourhood. Could this success not be repeated in RS-1?

The goals for RS-1 are to maintain the quality and integrity of RS-1 neighbourhoods and allow change if neighbourliness is maintained. The importance of maintaining character is revealed in these goals and in the urban design literature, yet the schedule for RS-1 zoned land which covers 70% of the residential land area of the city, virtually ignores character in the regulatory by-law. Is it that the residents here are not concerned about retaining character? The concerns listed by Alderman Puil suggest that residents want continuity with change to maintain the character of their neighbourhoods.

1.6 Elements Of Continuity

Elements of continuity, the threads of consistency over time that define character, must be maintained to allow the existing residents to accept change. Lynch has described these

elements as elements of local continuity (Lynch 1981). New development that is to enhance the fabric and improve the quality of a neighbourhood can be accomplished by understanding what the neighbourhood elements of continuity are. Perhaps a tree must remain, a certain pitched roof, a style of siding, a yard orientation, a type of balcony, a style of access, fencing, clotheslines, chimneys, or a certain lifestyle or history.

There are many neighbourhoods that are enriched by the historical aspect of their housing. The residents take pride in restoring older homes and maintaining an environment of a time past. Others with the same values seek out this neighbourhood. It is an important continuous element in the fabric of the neighbourhood.

Orientation may be important in other neighbourhoods. For example, houses positioned to take advantage of views, and the respect that neighbours have for those views may be elements of continuity. The residents may live there because they have this common value. There may be many changes in the neighbourhood but this aspect, if maintained, will allow the character of this particular neighbourhood to continue. It may not be only the physical view, but the fact that the people living there share a common love of the view and respect their environment and neighbours for it. They may not know all of their neighbours personally but they know that they have this value in common.

Oakridge is a residential neighbourhood in Vancouver that is the focus of our study. In Oakridge there is no view. There are no historical homes. But there may be something else that establishes the character. Perhaps it is the landscape. There

are small houses, bungalows on large lots that leave an
abundance of landscape. The landscape and cottage feeling
appears to be important to residents. Maintenance is a source of
pride and hobby. Preening the landscape contributes to much of
the contact between neighbours.

New homes are now being built that change this value. They
are separate from the landscape and interrupt the continuity of
character within the neighbourhood. The new occupants do not
participate in the preening rituals. They are not landscape
people.

There is a landscape element to the neighbourhood. It is a
shared value which defines its character. It is like the view
element or the history element. It is one element that makes the
neighbourhood character what it is. Perhaps the size and bulk of
the new houses is not as important to residents as the loss of
elements of continuity within the neighbourhood that the new
houses represent.

The City of Vancouver has established goals for RS-1 that
require continuity with change. However, there seems to be a
division between these principles, the theoretical literature,
and the exising residents' concerns on the one hand, and the
practical application of RS-1 zoning requirements on the other.

The original zoning schedule for single-family zones was
written in 1928 for the purpose of bare land development. It was
designed to facilitate the construction of new neighbourhoods,
not the reconstruction of existing neighbourhoods. Numerous
amendments to the schedule and the zoning and development by-law
over the years have not addressed the issue of character. When

reconstruction in existing neighbourhoods takes place, the continuous elements of the neighbourhood should be considered. If not, the residents may perceive a decline in quality in their living environment.

1.7 Importance Of The Research

This research is timely because the number of large new houses in RS-1 continues to escalate. Existing residents are continuing to be upset. The City continues to change bulk and siting regulations to solve the problem. The research is important because there is every indication that this trend will continue and it is important at this stage to confirm or deny the validity of the City's approach.

The pace of redevelopment is reaching the point where the City will loose its option to provide continuity with change. Also, the RS-1 zoned areas cover 70% of the residential land area of the City and any changes to the management of this area have far reaching implications.

1.8 Scope

The reader may become confused with the time frame of this research without referring to this schedule of events:

1985, November - general topic is selected

1986, March - public meetings on changes to RS-1

1986, April - City adopts new RS-1 schedule

1986, June - residents interviewed

1986, August - analysis of data

1987, August - consultants report to Council

1988, January to September - write thesis

1988, March - City adopts new RS-1 schedule

1988, April - confirmation of continuing problem

1988, December - Council proposes new changes to RS-1.

While the research for this thesis was completed in 1986, background material includes information collected up to September, 1988. The problem continues and it was felt that events since 1986 were relevant and important to the thesis.

The spatial scope of the research started with all RS-1 zoned neighbourhoods in Vancouver. Initial interviews reduced this to westside Vancouver, the area west of Main Street. Initial observations and mappings of large new houses reduced the scope to southwest Oakridge, the area bounded by Granville Street, Oak Street, 49th Avenue and 57th Avenue. While specific data may only be relevant to this neighbourhood, the researcher believes that the general observations and conclusions are relevant to all residential neighbourhoods in Vancouver.

1.9 Methodology And Organization

The thesis contends that the residents' concerns are not limited to bulk and siting. If this contention is valid, a new strategy to manage change in RS-1 may be required.

The City of Vancouver has adopted goals for RS-1 that have been outlined in 1.1 . The theme of these goals is to provide continuity with change as an urban design objective in RS-1. To determine why the City's course of action did not alleviate

residents' concerns with new development and maintain these
goals, the thesis will do the following:

1. Research the trends in new development for westside RS-1
neighbourhoods and detail the City's response to these trends.
The purpose is to provide background information and to confirm
that the pace and direction of development has not changed.

2. Develop a base of support for continuity with change in the
urban design literature.
The purpose is to confirm the validity of the City's goals and
to expand these goals into a concept that can be applied to the
problem.

3. Determine which neighbourhood is most affected by this new
development and explore the residents' concerns by analysis of
home interviews and comments made at public meetings.
The purpose is to confirm that residents are concerned with
issues other than bulk and siting, denying the City's approach.

The organization for the thesis by chapter is as follows.
In chapter one, the problem statement for the thesis has been
outlined stating what the issue surrounding the problem is, the
thesis question and a discussion of the author's rationale and
point of view, the importance of the research, the scope, the
three phases of the methodology, and the organization of the
thesis. Definitions are also provided.

In chapter two, background information gives the reader a
broader understanding of trends concerning the construction of
large new houses in Westside RS-1 neighbourhoods. The building
pace, location, market, and description of the new houses is
included. The City's responses to complaints about the new

houses are detailed by listing the changes made to the RS-1 zoning schedule. Conclusions made by consultants contracted to the City are also outlined.

Chapter three develops a concept of continuity with change. It establishes the author's point of view and develops a base of support for this approach in the urban design literature. Quality, neighbourhood, character, change, and continuity are key terms that are considered.

Chapter four outlines the methodology used to analyze the resident's concerns voiced at the public meetings. A survey is used to establish the neighbourhood most concerned about large new houses. The methodology for resident interviews is described.

Chapter five lists the main categories of comments recorded from the public meetings and the neighbourhood interviews. The comments are presented as areas and sub-areas of concern.

Chapter six discusses the conclusions of the thesis. Various alternatives and approaches to managing neighbourhood change in RS-1 in Vancouver are discussed. Specific recommendations that the City can impliment to address existing residents' concerns identified in chapter five are outlined. The thesis concludes with suggestions for further research.

1.10 <u>Key Terms</u>

The following is a list of terms that have specific definitions when used in this thesis.

1. Residents - The term 'residents' usually refers to every

person living in a defined area. For the purpose of this thesis, residents will refer only to people living in houses other than the large new houses as defined in chapter 2. This is simply for convenience to differentiate the residents of the existing neighbourhood from the new residents.

2. New house owners - This term will be used for the new residents occupying the large new houses.

3. Large new houses - The houses are described in detail in chapter 2. In general, they are houses built to the maximum allowable height and density and minimum setbacks. The houses, by definition, have been built since the bear market of 1982. Although new replacement houses were built in RS-1 neighbourhoods before 1982, the market change resulted in a new form that is the object of our study.

4. Continuity with change - This term is developed in chapter 3. It is a planning strategy as well as an objective for urban design in the neighborhood. It allows physical changes to take place but only if they do not disturb the residents' perception of the character of the neighbourhood.

5. Elements of continuity - Factors that define the character of a neighbourhood over time. These elements are the threads of consistency that residents consider important to well-being and sense of place in the residential environment.

6. Neighbourly development - Development that is acceptable to the residents of the neighbourhood.

7. Southwest Oakridge - The area bounded by 49th Avenue, 57th Avenue, Granville Street, and Oak Street in Vancouver.
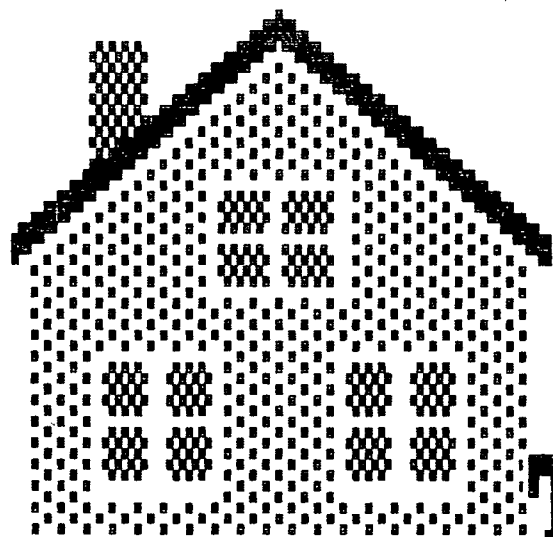
THE 'MONSTER' HOUSE ISSUE

2

CHAPTER 2 : THE 'MONSTER' HOUSE ISSUE

This chapter outlines background material relevant to the issue of large new houses in RS-1 neighbourhoods. The building pace, location, description, and economics of the large new houses are described here. The changes initiated by the City in two by-law amendments are outlined. Critiques of these amendments by private consultants are reviewed.

2.1 Sources

There are many reports dealing with the issue of large new houses in existing single family neighbourhoods in Vancouver and other municipalities in the lower mainland. The reference section lists the reports cited in this thesis.

Preliminary interviews were conducted with aldermen, planning staff, professionals, and building contractors as outlined in the list of references.

Articles in the press on the issue can also be found in the list of references. Realtors and neighbourhood organizations were also consulted.

The data for mapping the location and the pace of redevelopment of lots in Southwest Oakridge was compiled from observations taken by the researcher during the months stated on each of the relevant maps and graphs.

2.2 Building Pace

In recent years, new houses in Vancouver's RS-1 neighbourhoods have begun to replace first generation buildings by demolition and reconstruction on a selective basis. In most

FIGURE 2

New RS-1 House Permits
Vancouver Trend

Series A

Source: Vanc. Dept. of Permits and Lic.
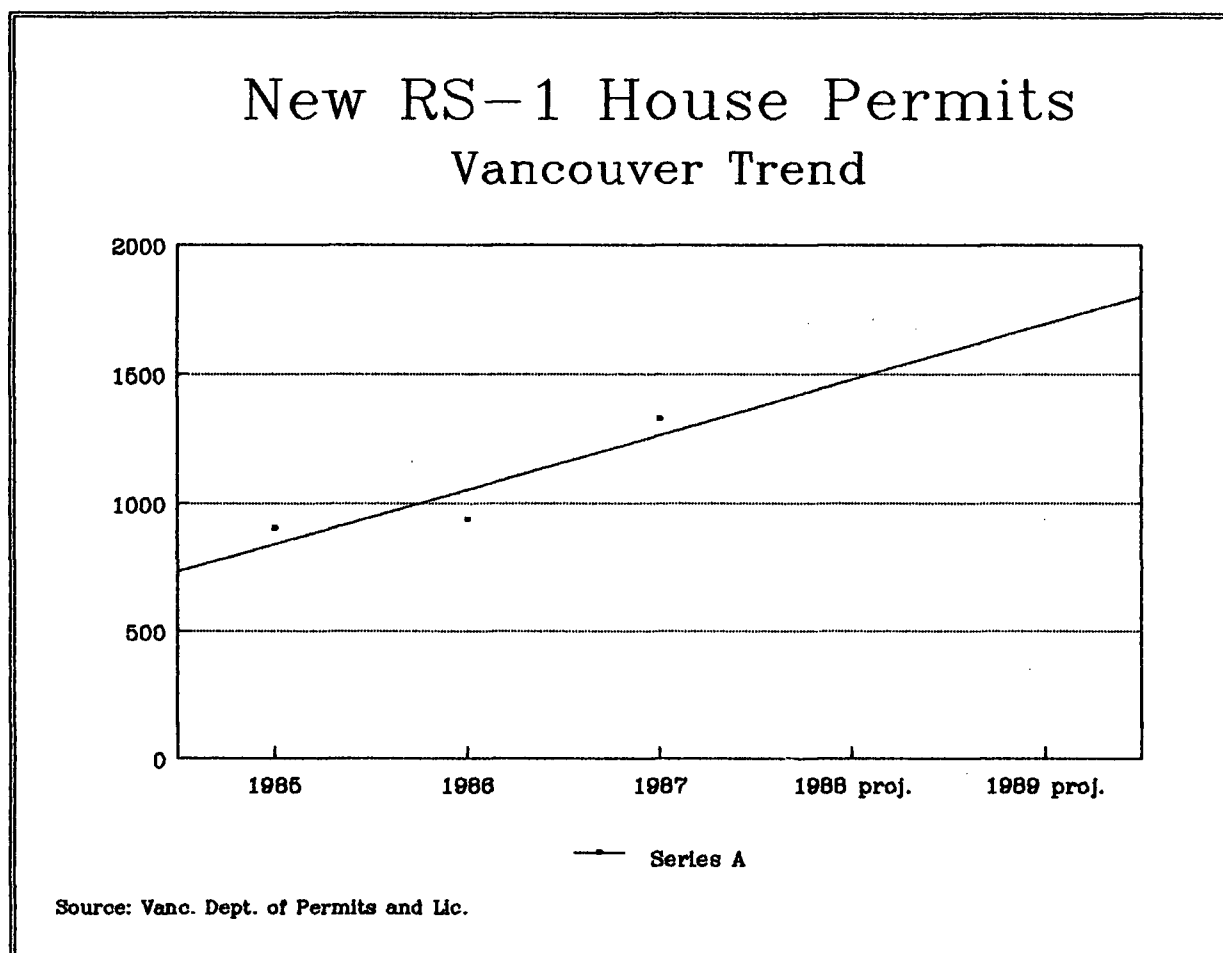
cases, the poor condition of the existing dwelling and the
desires of new immigrant families prompted this renewal.

Until the residential market peak of 1981, the vast
majority of new replacement houses were built on the eastside of
the city. The term used for these houses was 'Vancouver
Special'. Since 1985, the pace of dwelling replacement has
increased dramatically. Also, a market has arisen for new
replacement houses on the westside of the city.

Figure 2 shows the trend for new single-family house
construction permits issued in Vancouver. The pace has increased
47% from 900 permits issued in 1985 to 1327 in 1987.(fig.2)
Permits issued for the first quarter of 1988 suggest a further
increase. If the pace continues, by a simple regression there
would be approximately 1700 permits issued in 1989 (fig.2).

2.3 Location

The concern over the 'monster houses' comes in varying
degrees from every neighbourhood in the city. However, the
problems associated with large lots (over 50 ft. Frontage) are
different from small lot redevelopment.(City Feb. 1988) This
thesis concerns itself only with large lot replacement dwellings
on the westside of Vancouver.

An initial visual survey by the author in March 1986
concluded that the central westside area of Vancouver (figure 3)
was experiencing the largest number of replacements. A further
detailed survey of this area concluded that the neighbourhood
with the highest density of large new houses was southwest
Oakridge, bounded by Granville Street, Oak Street, 49th Avenue,

14A

FIGURE 3

LOCATION OF 'MONSTER' HOUSES

Vancouver central westside
February, 1986

Inset: southwest Oakridge

Source: observation

FIGURE 4

New Houses— S.W. Oakridge
Pace of Redevelopment

source:observation
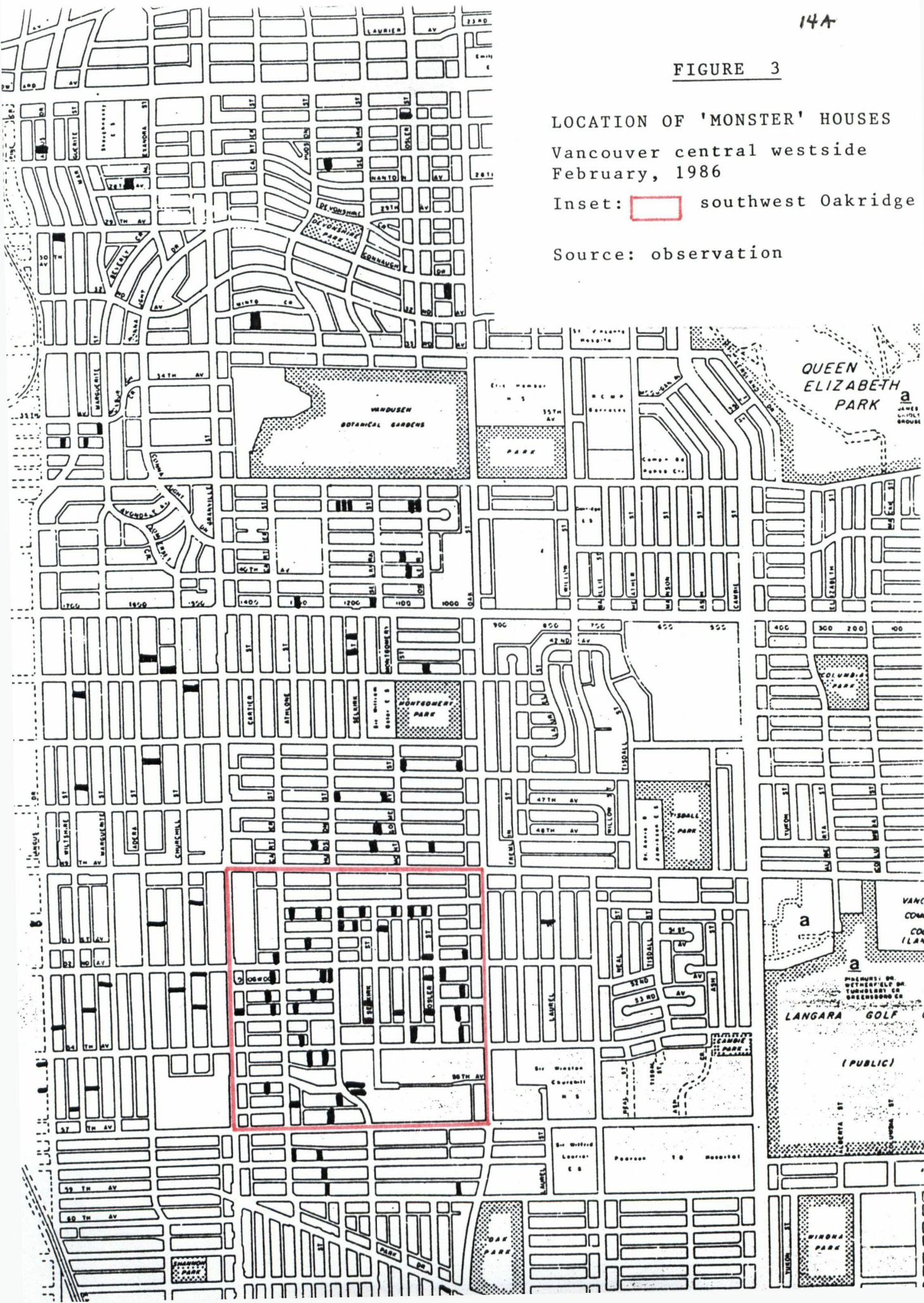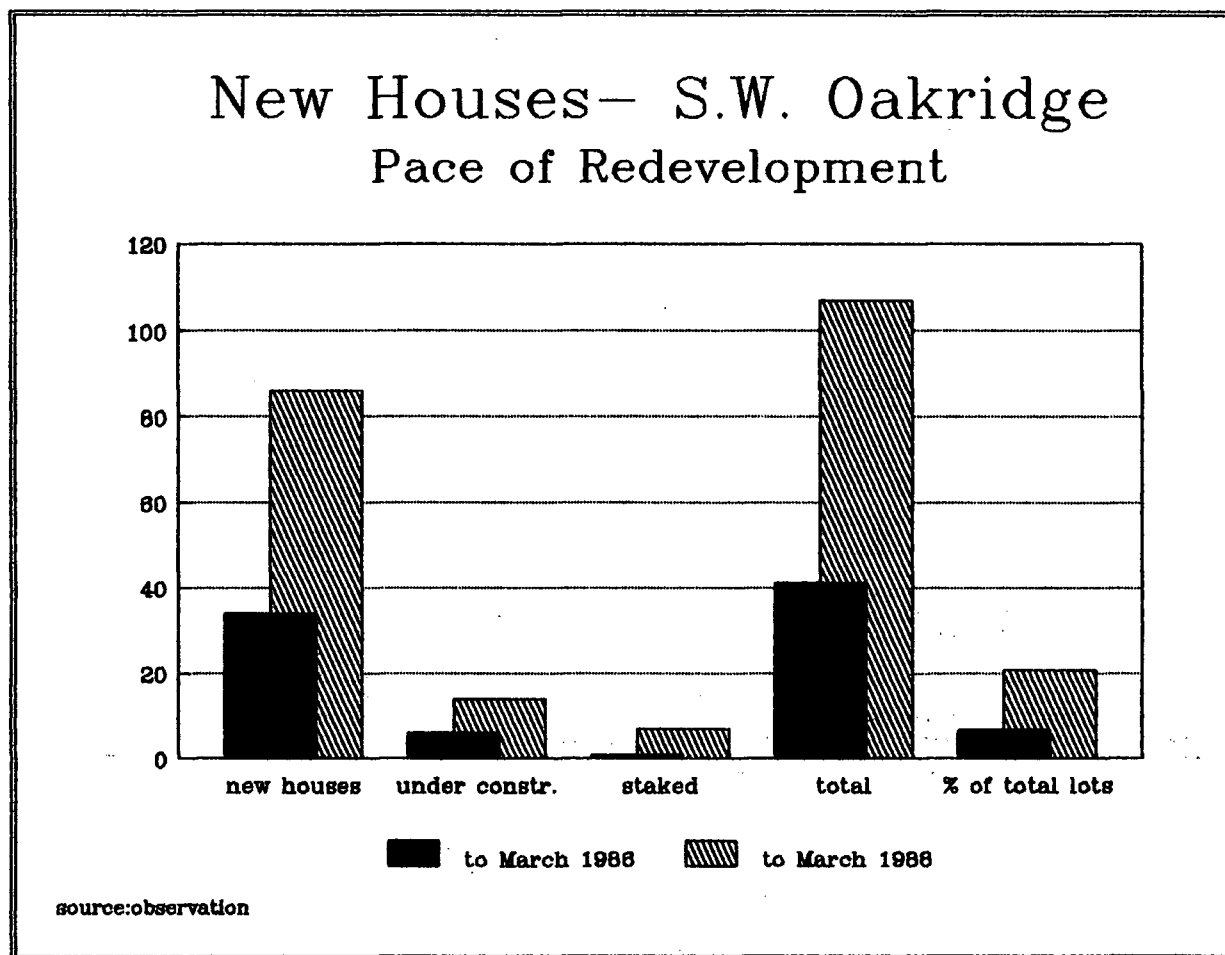
and 57th Avenue.(fig.3)

Southwest Oakridge is particularly significant because the houses being demolished in 1985 were only 25-35 years old and in good condition. Also, the houses in this area are smaller than those in areas where the existing houses are older, creating a greater disparity between new and existing houses. The existing homes are small single or split level homes under 2000 square feet(sf) on large 50-75 foot frontage lots.

Oakridge has attracted the builders of large new homes for the following reasons:

1. Oakridge has a very positive image and is generaly considered to be one of the best neighbourhoods in Vancouver, which has been reflected in land prices.(Andrews, interview)

2. The area has good schools and is close to urban amenities

3. Oakridge has a higher than average proportion of households where children have left home, 37.2% compared to 24.8% for the city as a whole in 1981 (City of Vanc. April 1984).

4. Oakridge has a higher than average proportion of ethnic Chinese residents, 20.3% compared to 6.8% on average for other westside neighbourhoods (City of Vanc. April 1984). This becomes a factor because the vast majority of the new house owners are ethnic Chinese from Hong Kong or Taiwan (Andrews, interview).

Figure 4 shows the rapid increase of new house construction in the southwest Oakridge area. The graph shows the number of large new houses built in southwest Oakridge to March 1986 (black) and to March 1988 inclusive (hashed). Separate bar comparisons show houses under construction, lots staked for demolition, and the percentage of lots consumed. Over 20% of the

lots have new houses. At the current pace, the entire neighbourhood will be demolished and renewed by the year 2000.

The map in figure 5 shows the lots with 'monster houses' in March 1986 (black) and those constructed from March 1986 to March 1988 (red).

2.4 Description

The large new houses are easily recognized when visiting the neighbourhood. Although there are many different designs, colours, and finishes, there are now three basic forms; those built prior to zoning revisions in April 1986, those built between April 1986 and April 1988, and those built after a further revision in April 1988. These dates refer to changes in the RS-1 zoning schedule.

There are several features that all the large new homes have in common.

1. Size - The large new houses are built as close to the maximum square footage allowed as possible, many within 5 sf. For example, a 60x130 foot lot in Oakridge would support a 4680 square foot house. A house of this size would have six bedrooms and den, five bathrooms, family room off kitchen, living room, dining room, and a finished basement with kitchen.

2. Shape - They are rectangular in shape and often symmetrical (fig. 1). The way that the bulk is distributed depends on when the house was constructed in relation to changes in the by-law regulations. For example, prior to 1988 basements were not required.

3. Site Coverage - The houses occupy every allowable square foot

FIGURE 5

LOCATION OF 'MONSTER' HOUSES

Vancouver central westside
February, 1986

southwest Oakridge
March, 1986 to February, 1988

Source: observation
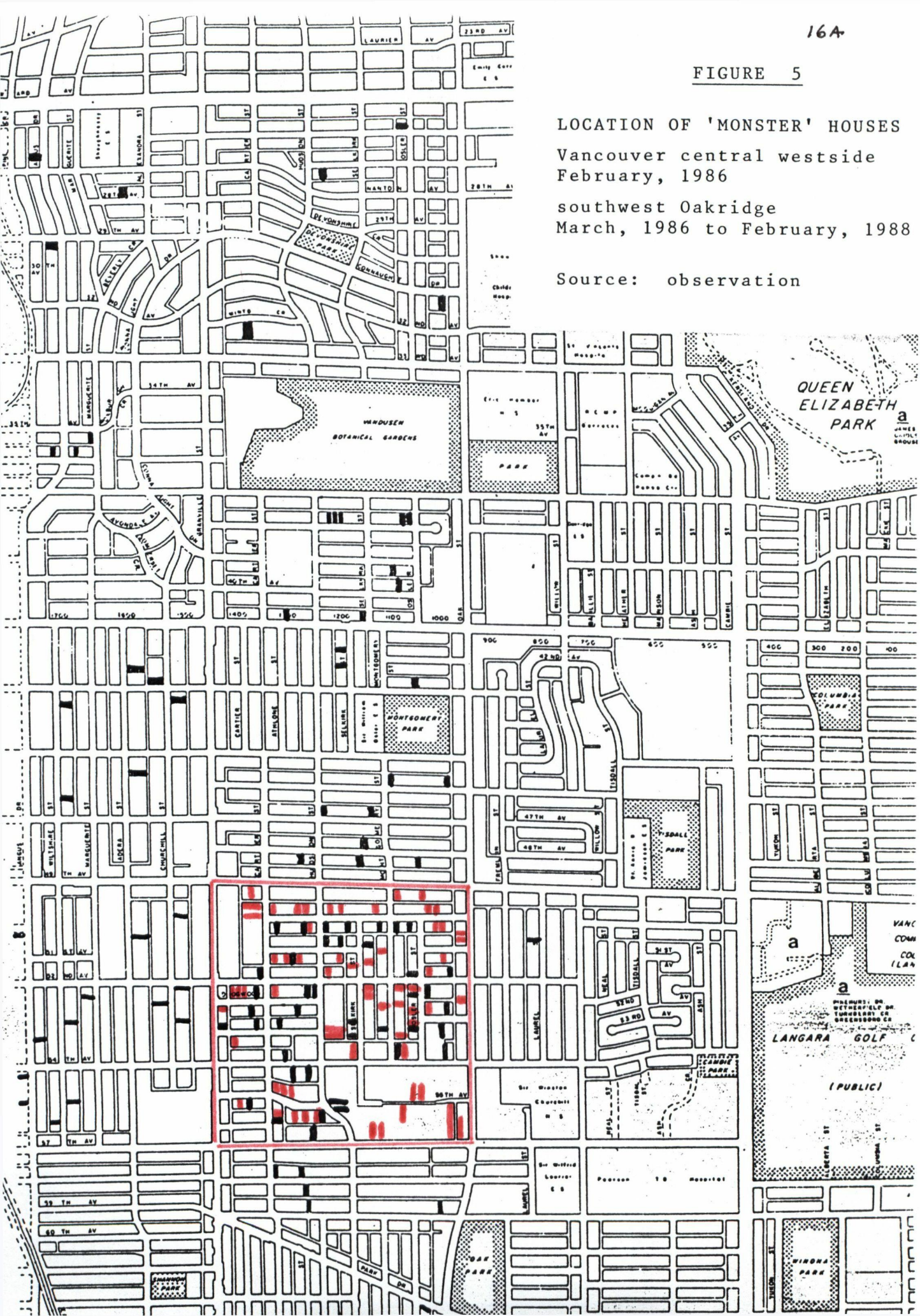
of lot surface.

4. Entrance - The entrance hall is vaulted two stories high with a curving ballastraded staircase.

5. Borders - The property edges are often clearly defined with hedges or brick fencing (fig. 8), while the existing properties are defined by a single bush or a flower garden.

6. Accessories - If summer kitchens, 3 car garages, and breezeways were allowed at permit issuance then they were built. Pre 1986 accessory regulations allowed a continuous structure combining the accessory and principle buildings.

7. Height - The allowable overall height for pre-April 1986 houses was 35 feet and 30 feet for post-1986. All new homes are built to the maximum allowable height.

8. Balconies - Second storey balconies are popular with builders because they are not calculated as part of the FSR (fig. 1).

9. Internal Garages - internal garages with street facing access were popular until they were included in FSR in 1986 (fig.7). In 1988 a further restriction disallowed street access unless a pattern of driveways had been established in the streetscape.

10. External Finishes - Half brick or stone facing on the first storey, and stucco, vinyl, or cedar siding on the second storey is the typical pattern.

11. Interiors - The interiors are plainly finished. There may be five to seven bedrooms and bathrooms, a family room, a vaulted entrance hall, and an emphasis on space rather than style or finishings.

12. Landscaping - because the lots have been cleared prior to construction, the landscaping is immature and the coverage is

Figure 7

HARD SURFACE ELEMENTS OF NEW DESIGNS

minimal. Low maintenance shrubs and surfaces are most common.
Hard surfaces and strong boundary definitions provide the basis
for landscaping.

Examples are shown in figures 1,7,8, and 9.

2.5 Two Markets

The residential lots in southwest Oakridge were subdivided
and developed from bush in the 1950s. At that time they were
bare-land fringe developments with one market, the new home
buyer. With redevelopment in the 1980s, there are two markets
for the same lots, operating at different levels, both competing
for the same location.

The first market is the market for bare lots. Builders bid
for lots, with older houses to demolish, on the basis of
buildable square footage. Large new houses will be constructed
on these lots that sell to the end user for 500-700 thousand
dollars.

The second market is the market for existing houses. Older
homes have traditionally been sought after by first time buyers
or buyers that wish to trade up or down in the market from
another older home. The desirability of westside neighbourhoods
also attracts movement from other areas.

The developer in the first market sees the property as bare
land. There is no value to the existing house because the
developer is only interested in producing new houses. In fact,
the existing house is a negative value in the equation,
regardless of condition, because it has to be demolished. The
social value of a retaining a quality, built resourse is not

considered.

The developer knows that the new house buyer must pay whatever the development costs are. Also, to stay in business he must purchase land at whatever the market price is. To acquire the land this price must not only be higher than the competing developers but higher than the entire second market for existing houses.

The price increases generated by this demand itself increases the demand by including speculators as well as confirming the new house buyer's confidence in the investment. Also, the land price in 1988 has increased beyond the ability of buyers in the second market. The house trader does not see the rationality of paying a large price for a small house. Dividing the price of the land by the built square footage, the older existing house would be selling for approximately 250 dollars per existing sf while a new house sells for only 175 dollars per sf. Therefore, it is rational to maximize the building area. Only large existing houses are traded for and the market for lots with smaller houses is left to developers and eventual buyers from wealthy offshore economies. This covers all of southwest Oakridge.

Why has the market for the large new houses been this good? There are many culturally based as well as economic reasons influencing the decision of the new house buyer;

1. Maximized building area -The land in Oakridge is more valuable than the houses built on that land. If the land cost is divided by the cost of the house, the cost of land per built

square foot of house is proportionally less as the house size increases. Therefore, the economic rationality of building to the maximum allowable floor space ratio increases as the value of the land increases in relation to the total asset value.

2. Immigration - The investor and entreprenneur categories under the iMmigration Act tend to encourage wealthy immigrants who would purchase homes in this market. Home purchase would also provide a base for family and access to education in Canada.

3. Pattern - Once there is a pattern established there is a strong tendency for new immigrants and investors from the same culture to conform to that pattern. If this is the type and location of housing that is considered proper and desirable then the new immigrant with the choice will be safe to buy into this market. As the trend involves a product that could physically exist in the residential environment for up to one hundred years, it will most likely continue for many years with this sector.

4. Conversion - The houses are designed and built in a way that facilitates easy conversion to apartment suites in the future. Symetrical design and additional hidden plumbing capacity add to this perception. There is no evidence, however, that current buyers want anything other than a family home.

5. Newness - The new house investors place a strong value on the newness of the house and will pay to ensure that no others have

lived there.

6. <u>Price increase</u> - The market price for a new 4500 sf home in Oakridge has risen from 100 dollars per sf to 175 dollars per sf in three years. While the building price has remained the same, the land price has increased by over 100% proving an excellent real estate investment.

2.6 <u>RS-1 Zoning Schedule Changes 1986</u>

To address the concerns over percieved bulk and siting problems, the Planning Deparment made the following changes to the RS-1 schedule in March 1986;

1. Building height- pre 1986 - 35 feet maximum

new regulations - height is reduced to 30 feet. There is also the requirement of a 45 degree angled envelope past 21 feet.

2. Front setback- pre 1986 - minimum 24 feet

new regulations - require a 24 foot setback except where averaging of adjacent properties allows either a greater or lesser setback.

3. Side setback- pre 1986 - 10% of lot width to 5 feet.

new regulations - require a 10% sideyard. Second storey setbacks are also required.

4. Rear setback- pre 1986 - 35 foot minimum required.

new regulations - require a 45% setback including lane provisions. Averaging of adjacent properties is allowed.

5. Building depth - pre 1986 - no maximum.

new regulations - there is a 75 foot maximum on building depth. Accessory buildings are still exempt.

Figure 8

EXAMPLES OF LARGE NEW HOUSES BUILT UNDER THE
APRIL 1986 RS-1 ZONING REGULATIONS

6. Front garage access - pre 1986 - no regulations.

new regulations - access to the garage must be from the lane
except where a front access is necessary or typical. This
restriction, however, was only policy, not law.

7. Garage FSR- pre 1986 - exempt from calculation.

new regulation -the part of the garage enclosed in the house
is included in the calculation. A provision for exceptions was
made to account for steep or unusually shaped lots.

Other individual peculiarities of each site were not
addressed under the by-law, however, a property owner may apply
for relaxation to the Board of Variance during the approval
process. An affected neighbour may not appeal to the Board if
the proposal is for outright use. Compare figure 8 with figure 1
to see how the changes affected the overall appearance of the
houses.

2.7 Consultants' Reports

After eighteen months of negative neighbourhood reaction to
the new regulations, a further review of RS-1 was requested by
Council. This time, independent planning and architectural
consultants were employed to advise Vancouver Planning staff and
critique each other's proposals.

After recognizing that lots of different dimensions
encountered different problems in meeting the objective of
neighbourliness, the exercise was divided into a small lot
review, (under 40 feet) and large lot review (over 50 feet).
The two prime consultants were:

1. James Cheng Architects - large lots

2. The Hulbert Group, Architects - small lots.

The critiques were presented by:

1. Paul Ohannesian - Architect

2. Stuart Howard- Architect

3. Eva Matsuzaki- Architect

Each consultant stated that manipulating only bulk and siting regulations would not make new homes compatible or maintain the neighbourliness of new development. Specific recommendations in the studies, however, only addressed these regulations. Their mandate was to address the changes made to the RS-1 zoning regulations in 1986.

2.8 RS-1 Zoning Changes 1988

After the review of proposed changes by private consultants, new RS-1 regulations were proposed and approved on March 26th, 1988. The same comments were made by all players at this meeting as were made in 1986.

The new changes were:

1. Height- the allowable height for the sidewall to reach before a change of setback is required is increased from 21 to 24 feet.

2. Front setback- 20% of the depth of the lot is now required. There is an option for averaging the setback to conform to adjacent lots.

3. Rear setback- 45% of the depth of the lot is required.

4. FSR- the FSR remains at .6 however the distribution of the bulk is now .3 plus 1000 sf above ground forcing the remainder to be placed underground at the option of the developer.

5. Site coverage- has been reduced from 45% of the lot surface

Figure 9

EXAMPLES OF LARGE NEW HOUSES BUILT UNDER THE
MARCH 1988 RS-1 ZONING REGULATIONS

to 40%.

6. Building length- the length is limited to 35% of the site depth.

7. Accessory buildings- set backs are now required for all accessory buildings.

Compare figure 9 with figures 8 and 1 to see how the physical appearance of the new houses has changed with the zoning changes. Note in figure 7 that the new bulk and siting regulations do not affect other aspects, for example, landscape.

The strategy employed by the City continued in the same restrictive land use direction. It is surprising that after two years without substantial improvement, that a new direction is not investigated.

There are beneficial aspects to the changes:

1. There will be less apparent bulk to the new structures.

2. Traditional back yards will be promoted on small lots.

3. The changes are inexpensive to implement and regulate.

4. The existing residents will be appeased for a short time.

The detrimental aspects, however, still include the following;

1. One rule still applies to every lot regardless of local conditions or character.

2. They address only one issue, bulk and siting. Other concerns are not addressed.

3. In areas of large existing houses, bulk reductions make new houses appear small and out of place.

4. They reduce the ability to make alterations to existing houses thereby encouraging demolition (Ohannesian, report).

5. The pace of change has not been addressed, it contines to climb.

6. All players concerned with the issue still have reservations.

7. The changes may affect price but have not affected demand, design, or acceptance of the new houses by the existing residents.

8. The Council's objective of 'neighbourliness of new development' appears as distant as it was before 1986.

The following chapter provides a theoretical introduction to continuity with change, a concept consistent with the goals for RS-1 of the City of Vancouver and capable of relieving residents' concerns.

THE CONCEPT OF CONTINUITY WITH CHANGE

3

CHAPTER 3 : THE CONCEPT OF CONTINUITY WITH CHANGE

Mature neighbourhoods in Vancouver are feeling increasing pressures to change. It is the author's contention that a strategy of continuity with change will allow existing residents to deal with these pressures. This chapter reviews literature relating to the concept of continuity with change.

3.1 Assumptions

> I stopped by the office of a friend who teaches an introductory course at an architectural school. He had assigned his students the job of building scale models of some of the most famous houses in the world and they were sitting in rows on his desk. It looked like a scale model slum. They were a collection of fine buildings, but the result was a good deal less than the sum of the parts. (Barnett 1982, p.213)

A neighbourhood is more complex than a building but there is a way of introducing some of the coherence and harmony found in individual buildings into the neighbourhood. First we must start with several assumptions:

1. The neighbourhood is first and foremost a place to live. It is a place of relationships between people and the physical environment, it is home. Secondly it can be a vehicle for economic generation, but only second.

> We must no longer conceive the city as a forum for the efficient exercise of financial talents and aspirations. On the contrary, it must become a household in which the concern for the welfare of all its members must be the central consideration. (Galbraith 1971, p.28)

2. Quality and abundance are two different things, not necessarily related.

> The city is full of good buildings, homes, but improvement in the overall design or quality of life is not achieved.

(Barnett 1982, p.238)

3. The neighbourhood is the scale that is best suited to the discussion because its unifying character is most sensitive to change. Although the literature refers many times to the city, the community, the village, the settlement, or the building, the comments are relevent to the neighbourhood scale.

> A good place is one which is someway appropriate to the person and her culture, makes her aware of her community, her past, the web of life, and the universe of time and space in which those are contained. (Lynch 1981, p.142)

4. Neighbourhood character is valuable. It is the physical manifestation of the quality of life in the neighbourhood.

> We can not afford to write off the very substantial investment, social, financial, and cultural, in the existing fabric of our cities. (Barnett 1982, p.7)

After many decades of simply building another neighbourhood farther out in the sprawling suburbs, the pendulum has swung back to the city. The original maturing neighbourhoods are being seen in the same light as the new subdivisions of previous years. They are, for many reasons, 'ripe' for redevelopment.

> The recycling of the single family suburb already built will be a major design task of the future. These older suburbs, as their landscaping matures, begin to attain a special character of their own. How to enhance that sensed character and how to densify these aging places is an important prototype problem. (Lynch 1981, p.415)

Vancouver has arrived at Lynch's future. This chapter discusses a concept, a philosophical strategy as a basis for the confrontation of this future.

3.2 Quality

> The shape of one's home or workplace or community where
> most people live out their lives has something to do with
> the quality of life. (Lynch 1981, p.103)

The quality of life has always been an elusive topic to

discuss because it is so hard to define. It pursues the planner

in every aspect of his work because man is pursuing it in daily

life. It is a universally desired attribute that disregards

location and crosses all cultural boundaries.

> The quest for a better quality of life cannot be confused
> with a search for happiness. It is actually a
> determination to improve the conditions we need to
> survive. (Fradier 1976, p.56)

To Fradier, this concern for the quality of life is a basic

quest in consort with a need for survival. It is in the same

level of needs as good health and child rearing, just less

important than the need for food and shelter.

This is a very basic need yet there is very little

discussion about the quality of life in our cities. Lynch states

that "there is less attention...to those personal values which

cannot be converted into dollars." (Lynch 1981, p.241)

The recent concern of our society has been with quantity,

not quality. The number of units, the dollar value of investment

in the physical structure, the square footage, densifying and

redensifying are the standard catch-phrases. One speaks of the

number of amenities that are available, the proximity of

transport systems, and the range of services provided to sustain

a certain 'level' of living. The 'standard of living' has risen

again. It is always bigger or better or more than the year

before.

This quantitative progress appears in free and planned economies. We are constantly reminded of quantitative improvements.

> For the developer there is little time or no time for questions about quality, for quantity takes up all his attention and energy. The actual developments not only smother the real questions, they reduce the questions of values to 'facts' which are expressed in terms of hard cash. (Tanghe 1984, p.109)

Costonis calls the world of consumerism a mindless tendency toward accelerated obsolescence.(Costonis 1974) However with all the benefits of quantity, why do people refer continuously to a missing quality of life?

Older people will say that when they were young life was not without quality and the community environment in which they lived was as good or superior to that of today. They will say that factors of quality that they enjoyed have disappeared in our 'progressive' society (Fradier 1976). Of course comparisons of this sort are difficult to make because "progress is not cumulative", however it is fair to say that "the improvements in living conditions have really only amounted to the improvement of technical aids to comfort within the home".(Tanghe 1984, p.106)

Tanghe suggests that the standard of living must give way to needs other than the continuous extension of consumer goods.

> There is a need for quality, even at the expense of quantity. The well-being of the community is more important than affluence, size, the development business etc. (Tanghe 1984, p.111)

In the society of quantity, statistics end up replacing values. Values are very difficult to quantify, and for many elements of the quality of life it is impossible.

Costonis equates the quality of life with well-being. The way to its fulfillment is suggested as being through a closer association with the environment.

> There is a new reverence for environmental values, showing them "indispensible to human, physical and emotional well-being". (Costonis 1974, p.167)

Tanghe also mentions well-being when he suggests that we "harmonize this planning for prosperity with planning for well-being". (Tanghe 1984, p.107) He sees the values in the way of life of his forefathers being reflected in the environment they created. The neighbourhoods and communities seemed so "genuine and honest" to him, a "lesson for living born out of the everyday life of ordinary people".(Tanghe 1984, p.95)

He delights in the way people took control of their own building. No planning permission was required or needed because a social control mechanism that was built into the community life balanced the individual and community concerns "harmoniously and spontaneously".

Building form grew up slowly and was perfected over many generations. Development was a community act, not a private one.

> Someone owned a plot of land. He found a mason or carpenter. Neighbours and friends were invited to join in; they discussed the trees on the site, its topography, the best way of doing things, and whether the neighbourhood, nearby houses, the street and village had all been properly taken into account. (Tanghe 1984, p.96)

People shared the responsibility: it was a matter of trust amongst those involved in the community.

This appears to be a very naive and idealistic bit of nostalgia at first glance, however it illustrates the careless way in which we have disorganized our urban environment.

Tanghe's comment that this points "to what must happen to our homes and towns if we want to create more hospitable housing districts in the future" cannot be wholly discarded. It is a reaction against the affluent society. It is true that we have paid a "terrible price for progress" and that we now feel a "nostalgia for the house in which our homeless souls once lived, an inescapable longing for a shelter that we can no longer find".(Tanghe 1984, p.95)

A home is more than just having a roof over one's head, being from "this neighbourhood, with all that makes life pleasant in it" is something extra that concerns the quality of life. (Tanghe 1984, p.87)

> Is it too much to ask that a city environment be laid out, built and equipped to meet the psychological needs of its inhabitants, to fit their customs, to respect their recognizable hopes? (Fradier 1976, p.65)

Fradier considers the relationships between the environment (neighbourhood) and the inhabitants to be the measure of the quality of life, that environment includes people, and the built and natural environment.

Is our society's inability to deal with this relationship "an outward manifestation of a much deeper struggle and the longing for another way of life?"(Tanghe 1984, p.111) Why are there "no theories dealing with environmental quality, with the rich texture of city form and meaning"?(Lynch 1984, p.39)

There are two important generalizations that can be made; (1) the relations people establish between themselves and their environment count more for development and enrichment of life than amenities or consumer goods they enjoy, and (2) the user himself must be allowed to exercise more influence

over the quality of his own environment.

Therefore, the measure of quality of life in the
neighbourhood involves the emotional well-being of its
inhabitants. This well-being is reflected in the relationship
that people have with their environment. There are certainly
other aspects to the emotional well-being of inhabitants,
income, health, family status, but this thesis is only
considering it in relation to the residential environment.
Alexander goes so far as to state that a person's state of
harmony depends entirely with their harmony with their
surroundings. (Alexander 1977) This relationship that
inhabitants have with their environment is cumulative and the
whole is greater than the sum of its parts (Fradier 1976). This
added value beyond the sum of the parts is the value, the
quality that must be identified and preserved in our
neighbourhoods. (Alexander 1977)

3.3 Neighbourhood

To find this quality, this well-being, we can look at
communities that have it and try to isolate it. Fradier has
suggested that areas with this quality have
1. People that know one another. They do not have to have a
personal or intimate relationship, simply knowing one another.
2. People that know their area. In our society people know very
little about their neighbourhood.
3. People that know the history of their community. This
knowledge gives the neighbourhood a sense of being one stage in

a continuing process.

4. A form that gives rise to relations, festivals and
encounters. A public or communally oriented overall form, not
private. (Fradier 1976)

Barnes defines the added quality as 'optimum health' and
requires a visual environment which is interesting, which has
aesthetic integrity, and in which a certain amount of change
meaningful to the observer is taking place.(Barnes 1970)

There are many different definitions of neighbourhood.
These range from one small area where the residents 'neighbour'
with each other, to Perry's elementary school catchment area, to
a large political unit that includes all the services required
for self-sufficiency in daily life.

The American Public Health Association defines a
neighbourhood as an "area within which residents may all share
common services, social activities, and facilities required in
the vicinity of the dwelling".(Hygeine of Housing committee
1960, p.1)

In Foley's study of Rochester New York, he suggests that
the neighbourhood cannot be physically defined. Instead he
divides residents into 'neighbours' and 'urbanites'. Urbanites
are attached to individuals and organizations in the larger
metropolis while the neighbours share local facilities in a
recognizable district and neighbour with each other. Families
with children, and renters tend to be 'neighbours'.(Foley 1952)

Lynch describes a neighbourhood as a place that has
homogeneity at a small scale. He would rather use 'local
district' than the word neighbourhood because we are not talking

of this social community here, we are talking of the physical
environment which is a reflection of cultural values.(Lynch
1981)

In post-industrial cities the neighbourhood unit of Perry
and Mumford has been decried as obsolete and unworkable because
one's social neighbourhood is no longer spatial.(Lynch 1981)
With the availability of new transportation and communication
technology the importance of location to fullfill social or
work-home relationships is diminished.(Leven 1984) While
residing in one location, the relationships to other areas may
be very strong, with this social space being more important than
physical space.

All the criticism of the neighbourhood concept, however,
does not alter the desire for the values associated with it,
"the model persists, and even becomes stronger today, as the
concept of neighbourhood reemerges".(Lynch 1981, p.395) Location
is the single overriding concern in all real estate transactions
for housing.(Andrews, interview) While the neighbouring aspect
of neighbourhood has diminished, the aspects of neighbourhood
status, neighbourhood character, and neighbourhood location have
increased in importance.

The neighbourhood idea appears in such disparate places as
the new capital of Brazilia, the suburban new town of Columbia
Maryland, and the political organization of the new China.
(Mumford 1954)

Because people do not live a local existence does not mean
that there is not a strong connection with place and it is
stronger in an area with a strong identity.(Lynch 1981)

Gerson calls the neighbourhood an 'environ', "each one with its own character, each giving the possibility of and setting the framework for a specific way of life".(Gerson 1970, p.18) While his environs are places where a 'perceptible group' meets a 'discernable area', the perceptible group is not necessarily a homogeneous grouping of people. There is a common bond that attracts them to the discernable area which could be one factor only, for example a common desire to ski in a resort town.

The environ has its own 'personality'. Gerson suggests that in the context of the modern city the identity of the environ should become an even more important consideration.

The image or identity of the neighbourhood takes place at various scales. Everyone has an image of Hollywood, Harlem, or an Inuit village regardless of whether they have been there or not. There is an image even though the close social definition is gone. The image, perpetuated by writers, television and other mediums, reinforces the actual character of certain neighbourhoods.

At a different scale, the identity of each neighbourhood has been established in the minds of those who reside in the neighbourhood. If the image of the residents and those outside the neighbourhood are similar then the overall image of both is reinforced. This image can involve just one element or many.

A strong image, although important, is only a small part of the quality, the well-being that we are looking for. Regardless of living in crowded cities, sprawling suburbs or outlying areas, those living in areas without the quality complain of enslavement to routines, terrible transportation, nervous

exhaustion, and a long list of tensions and frustrations. (Tanghe 1984)

Our attempts to create communities from formulas are failures.(Alexander 1979) Surveys are taken of how many parks are needed, what housing requirements are, percentage and preference for playgrounds or shops, but they will not address the imperceptible quality of life that is necessary.

Lynch claims that the neighbourhood concept is reemerging, however this 'concept' is never properly defined. For the purpose of this thesis, it is assumed that most residents feel a strong attachment to their general locale and residential environment for whatever reason, and react with some perceived knowledge of an area they call their neighbourhood.

The neighbourhood includes social and physical elements. Each of these elements has a grain which Lynch describes as "the way in which the different elements of a settlement are mixed together in space."(Lynch 1981, p.265) Observing the behaviour of these different elements separately is pointless as they are part of a synergistic system. (Richman and Chapin 1977)

Gans suggests that within any mix there must be clusters of similarity which are relatively homogeneous and pure so that people may be at ease among their own. At the same time the mix within large areas should be more balanced, and regional access should be high. (Gans 1961)

Although Gans was referring to socio-economic status, the same could hold true for physical or cultural aspects of a neighbourhood. The aspects are interrelated and cannot be considered on their own.

There are brilliant spatial fantasies which accept society
as it is, and social utopias which sketch a few
disconnected spatial features, in order to add colour and
a semblence of reality. The spatial proposals are as banal
and conventional as are the architect's thoughts of
society. (Lynch 1981, p.293)

The quality that is desired in a neighbourhood, the well-
being, the value added, is reflected in the physical chararcter.
As planners we can not produce this quality but we can prepare
the soil for a community with this quality to grow, or help
protect communities that have this quality from losing it. The
first step is to recognize that it is there.

3.4 Character

The character of a neighbourhood is important because it is a reflection of the quality of life in it. Once the character is established, it feeds back onto the neighbourhood, its culture, and the quality of life in a continuous cycle.

> We must look at a settlement as a whole whose elements are in constant and supporting interchange, and where process and form are indivisible. (Lynch 1981, p.98)

The character of the neighbourhood is strongly dependent on this interchange. It is not only an interchange of neighbourhood scale elements, but a nested hierarchy of interchange between individual homes, neighbourhood elements, and the settlement environment as a whole. Each influence feeds back to another scale with different intensities of influence.

> The art of living and building lies in harmonizing the fertile relationships between 'my' home and 'our' street, 'my' street and 'our' neighbourhood, 'my' neighbourhood and 'our' town. (Tanghe 1984, p.183)

The neighbourhood with character reflects this harmony. Character is not created by harmony but there is a positive relationship if not a causal one. This relationship is very strong at the dwelling/neighbourhood level.

Architects are willing to admit that the physical quality of a neighbourhood depends on the proportions and relationships between proportions of built and landscape features.(Fradier 1976) It is the same at the building scale. 'The beauty of good proportions' was a key phrase in LeCorbusier's work. "The welcome sense of a visible order...the cadence on the human scale governing the general character."(Guiton 1981, p.65)

The literature is filled with musical terms used to reflect

character. "Architecture is closely akin to music. It is sequential, a series of visual events."(Guiton 1981, p.43)

Character is often equated with familiar natural elements. A sense of identity is created by retaining these elements which determine the character of an environment.(Lynch 1981) Lynch feels that in low density areas the natural features and the landscape control the character of an area more than the built environment. "The proportions, characteristics, and connections of these public hollows are the character of the city."(Lynch 1981, p.407) He suggests that buildings and facades are decorative elements for these spaces and houses take their identity from them.

In a discussion of streetscape character Wilson also selects the landscape as the first priority within the interrelated buildings, traffic, topography, and landscape.(Wilson and Vaughn, 1971) He defines character as a rhythmic variety, continuity with interest, a harmonious whole. A neighbourhood with character is more than the sum of its parts.(Wilson and Vaughn, 1971)

Preserving existing environmental character is listed by Lynch as a strong value while Fradier includes that a certain amount of meaningful change is necessary as a basic need for our well-being. Therefore the question must be at what rate of change can these qualities, or elements of character be continuously provided? (Lynch 1981)

3.5 Change

The process of change in the neighbourhood has three variables that we are concerned with:

1. Rate - is the change (a)increasing, (b)decreasing,

   or remaining (c)constant.

The rate is the acceleration component of change. For example, if there were two new houses built in January, four in February, and eight in March, the rate would be increasing.

2. Direction - is the change towards (a)growth,

   (b)decline, or (c)stability.

Direction is defining where the change is taking the neighbourhood. If residents perceive that the neighbourhood will deteriorate because of the change, the direction is toward decline. For example, if the eight houses in March were 'crack' houses.

3. Generation - is the force

   of the change (a)internal, or (b)external.

Where is the change being generated? For example, if a youth gang from Los Angeles opened the 'crack' houses in Vancouver, then the force of the change would be external.

> Man adapts biologically very slowly. The conditions our ancestors found favourable thousands of years ago are still the ones that suit us best, the ones still required for optimum health. (Fradier 1976, p.54)

Man has overcome many obstacles to survival to evolve to his advanced capability, however the speed of development and change that exists today is ahead of the adaptive process by an exponential factor.(Fradier 1976) Mobility and development is a reality that no one feels the need to explain. Constant change

is considered the steady state with an increase in the rate, acceleration, being the real measure of change.

"It has become a dogma. Movement, change at any cost is the lifeblood of dynamic societies."(Fradier 1976, p.45) We seem to be trading off the quality in our environment for increased amenity.

Change can also occur at certain critical points. Like a wave that organizes, builds, and crests, there is a certain point when the impetus to change forces the wave to break up or curl. It is a bifurcation point, the point where change must occur.(Prygogene 1984) A small added increment forces the wave past this threshold point. Once a threshold is determined, the proper strategy may be to restrain growth below this point as long as possible then move rapidly beyond it to gain a new stability.(Stanback 1985)

Other models include the infection model that considers the consequences of planting a positive or negative 'germ' in the neighbourhood. Again, the infection rate, the rate at which the new idea or change moves through the community, is an important factor.

The rate of change may be more important than the change itself. The rate of growth should be controlled in order to prevent social disruption and preserve community character and environmental quality.(Lynch 1981)

The direction of change can be growing, declining, or neither growing nor declining, although this state of stability is very hard to achieve. In western society continuous change is almost universal, yet Lynch feels that none of the planning

theories deal successfully with continuous change.(Lynch 1981)

Lynch feels that Plato's theory of absolute stability is very hard to maintain. There is a tendency for stability to foster decline, especially in American communities.

Alexander states that "although it is true that nothing is perfectly stable, and true that everything changes in the end, there are still great differences in degree."(Alexander 1979, p.118)

While Lynch feels that there is some moderate rate of growth which is optimal, he does not dismiss the possible merits of gentle decline. Tourists and others seek out these places because of low stress, strong history, and abundance.(Lynch 1981) By abundance he means many amenities per person.

Gerson states that while change is inevitable, one searches for stability. "It is possible to limit the rate of change in parts of the urban area and even create places of quiet lasting tradition."(Gerson 1970, p.15) This is very difficult to achieve in our society because it usually depends on where the change is being generated.

There are few examples of dramatic change being generated from within the community. Internal changes are usually incremental and in a form that is socially acceptable. External change, on the other hand, can be devastating to the character and quality of life within the community. Other factors become more important. Barnett suggests that "the location of a new development is determined by ease of assemblage as much as by any logical land use factors".(Barnett 1982, p.58)

Lynch contends that those making changes in an urban

setting must have a sense of responsibility borne out of a

relationship to the place to be changed.

> Those who control a place should have the motives,
> information, and power to do it well, a committment to the
> place, and to the needs of other persons and creatures in
> it. (Lynch 1981, p.221)

If a developer from outside the area builds a house to sell it

off immediately, he has quite a different expectation from the

project than if he is going to hold the project or live in it.

Change in our neighbourhoods, regardless of direction, has

to be generated by people with the understanding of effects of

change on individuals and groups, and at a pace that allows for

the continuity of the community. Otherwise the result is that

"the old pattern is lost while no satisfactory new pattern is

created".(Barnett 1982, p.58)

3.6 Continuity

> But while change is inevitable, man searches for
> stability. (Gerson 1970, p.15)

The quality of life is most important at the neighbourhood level. The quality of the neighbourhood is manifest in the character of the physical environment. The physical environment is constantly changing. To help maintain the quality that exists in our neighbourhoods it is important to maintain a sense of continuity in the character of the natural and built environment, continuity with change.

> The quality of the lives we lead depends heavily on our
> ability to maintain, in the context of continuous change,
> a sense of place, a sense of time, and a sense of
> propriety. (Fram and Weiler,1984, p.xix)

It is important to differentiate between different levels of change management. The uninitiated observer will only see total conservation or total redevelopment as the alternatives. This polarizes a community because the two are always in conflict. There are however different philosophies that range between the two poles.

As there are as many definitions as authors on the subject, a redefinition of three conservation levels is as follows:

1. Historic preservation -- attempts to recreate a past that ignores all changes, as if there was a moment in the life of a building, park, or landscape that was true to its history. It creates a museum piece and is best used for monument protection.

2. Heritage conservation --allows the physical environment to remain a part of the present by allowing practical re-use while retaining the illusion of an historic environment. It retains

the best of the past and makes it relevent to and useful for
today's needs. The stipulation is that the environment must be
recognized as important to the national or local heritage. It is
often used as a tool for revitalizing declining commercial
districts and promoting tourism.

3. <u>Continuity with change</u> --provides a set of guidelines to
retain the individual identity of areas, providing a sense of
place with which residents can identify over time. It emphasizes
the differences between communities that were developed by
separate histories. Continuity recognizes that a community's
character or sense of place is a valuable resource that must be
maintained while allowing changes sensitive to this character to
occur. It is often the best policy for managing change in mature
residential areas.

Alexander used the following words for describing a place
that has the quality, the added value; alive, whole, balanced,
comfortable, free, exact, egoless, and eternal. They have an
"order of things which stand outside of time".(Alexander 1979,
p.38) Continuity is a strong element in his theory of patterns
for "every place is given its character by certain patterns of
events that keep on happenning there".(Alexander 1979, p.55)

Although changes over time dissolve certain elements of the
environment, a 'fabric of relationships' is left behind that
repeats itself and builds the character of the
neighbourhood.(Alexander 1977)

Barnett agrees that the relationships of height, scale,
materials and architectural character are each important. The
most important relationships in a single family area deal with

landscaping that will "eventually create an ensemble".(Barnett
1982, p.214)

Tanghe explains that designing for continuity does not
imply that the existing environment be imitated, but it should
respect the "form, colour, textures, and the general spatial
qualities of the existing development".(Tanghe 1984, p.121)

He discusses change and renewal within continuity to
preserve spatial and social identities for an area with
individual character. The existing fabric has to be the model
for new buildings. It is a matter of starting with a philosophy
of continuity.

> We are concerned with a time and space bound cultural-
> historical process by means of which a population
> gradually becomes aware of its identity and its future.
> (Tanghe 1984, p.119)

Harmony is often used to describe the results of this
philosophy of continuity.

> If the style does not harmonize with the local traditions
> we have interruption in the place of continuity. (Tanghe
> 1984, p.157)

Alexander used harmony to describe places that had the
quality. They were beautiful, harmonious, and especially
alive.(Alexander 1979) He reasoned that one generally remembered
the harmonious characteristics of an area instead of the
peculiarities.

LeCorbusier's goal was to attain harmonious proportions, "a
harmonious existence, man in his environment".(Guiton 1981 p.69)

Costonis warns of disharmonious visual and dimensional
patterns in sensitive areas. Harmoniously related buildings from
different periods enrich the observer's sense of time and space
as components of the urban experience.(Costonis 1974) He feels

that areas characterized by a unique roofscape or distinctive
building type should be identified as sensitive to changes in
the elements.

Fram and Weiler also mentioned the need for harmony between
the old and the new. "...the sense of fitting well together, a
combination of parts into an orderly whole. This sort of harmony
is a matter of great value."(p. xii)

There are many arguments against the use of continuity to
control development. The state is stopping progress and
interfering in the free marketplace. They are trying to reverse
time. If the policy was in place hundreds of years ago it would
have deprived our generation of the landmarks that we cherish.

First, the assumption that progress and free market
speculation in land development are desirable ends for a society
in all circumbstances has been consistently and successfully
challenged.(Fram and Weiler, 1984) Continuity resists
individually ill-conceived changes. It also directs change to
keep it from causing damage, waste or loss. Society has always
controlled and directed land development by force, social
pressure, and investment.

Anyone can be a builder. If a mistake is made, the builder
may lose money or go out of business. The community, however,
may have to live with the mistake for the fifty to one hundred
year natural lifespan of the wood frame house. Building changes
the environment significantly over time. It affects the future
as well as the present.

Secondly, the stakes are quite different today. You cannot
compare the current building industry, that can obliterate then

rebuild an entire city, with the way building was done in the
past.

> Man forgot how fatal it is to upset the continuity of a
> spiritual growth which incorporated all the worthwhile
> elements assembled by previous generations. That stability
> is possible only by maintaining the bond with an
> environment which has evolved in a natural way through the
> care of many generations of men. (Tanghe 1984, p.106)

Buildings are designed today by people that have no
relationship to the environment. The vast majority of the new
houses are not custom designed. The only relationship that a
'rack' or mail order plan design has with the context of the
site is the lot dimension.

Houses are being built everyday that horrify not only the
existing neighbourhoods but the builders as well.(Fradier 1976)
People are being condemned to live in a foreign environment
about which they understand nothing, or rather, about which
there is nothing to understand.(Fradier 1976)

There is no social control borne out of generations living
in one community. In the past there was tremendous social
pressure to conform. Today, the rate and scale of changes that
happen overnight are startling. There is no time for this
'natural' control to work.(Fram and weiler, 1984) Change is now
much faster and the costs are much greater. We cannot treat the
urban landscape in a 'frontier' fashion any longer.

Continuity is a strategy for planning, for moderating the
pace of change and 'healing the raw edges of the new as it meets
the old in mature neighbourhoods. In fact to make sure that new
development is an enhancing process rather than a desructive one
is simply proper planning.(Domincelj 1980)

3.7 Concept Summary

Quality is the most important element associated with a community. Where residents perceive a high level of quality, care must be taken to conserve and enhance it. The neighbourhood character is the physical embodiment of this quality. Our neighbourhoods are constantly changing at an increasing pace. Continuity is the philosophical vehicle that will allow planners to manage this change.

A sense of community and of continuity, a feeling of common destiny is essential for the well-being of any settlement. (Mead 1973)

Little attention has been given to the quality of mature neighbourhoods in Vancouver. With changes that are taking place that alter the character of the environment in single family neighbourhoods it is important for planners to keep this philosophy in mind when making decisions about the impact of new development.

> The aim would be to maintain continuity, both of the neighbourhood itself and of the image of history and of nature that is held by its members. The concept of local continuity will become a key idea in reshaping our settlements.
>
> (Lynch 1981, p.260)
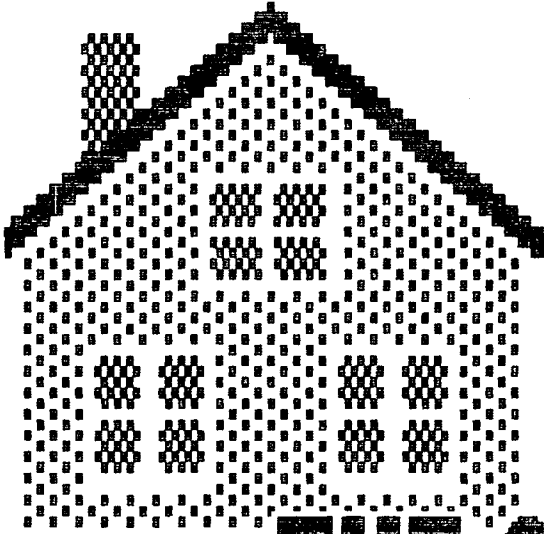
THE SURVEYS

4

CHAPTER 4 : THE SURVEYS

This chapter discusses empirical surveys taken at public information meetings and home interviews conducted in the Oakridge neighbourhood.

4.1 Purpose Of Surveys

The purpose of the surveys was to gather data about the concerns of residents in a neighbourhood feeling the impact of large new houses. The approach was to record the perceptions and feelings of residents without regard for their physical validity. If fears about new construction existed then they were recorded and treated as real whether the source of the fear was real or not.

The survey;

     (a) recorded and evaluated comments at public meetings

     (b) determined the community of most discontent

     (c) gathered comments in that community

4.2 Methodology

"One must live in a city and talk to its people before we can comment." (Lynch 1981, p.350)

To gain some understanding about existing residents' perceptions it is important to enter their world and experience their concerns first hand.

To gather background material for chapter 2.0 it was
sufficient to use the press, various reports, and interviews
with professionals and politicians concerned with the issue.
These sources, however, could not get at underlying perceptions
and concerns that are more private.

Initial inquiries suggested that there was some confusion
concerning the problem. Assumptions had been made by City
Council and planning staff that the problem was one of size and
siting of the new houses. Most residents, however, were not
satisfied with proposed changes to the size and siting
regulations.

The researcher wanted to determine what were the underlying
causes of distress among existing residents. A diagnostic study
would deepen the understanding of the setting by gathering
insight into the structure and dynamics of the overall problem
(Zeisel 1981).

Three sets of data were recorded.
1. Comments made by participants at three public meetings were
recorded. These comments were then evaluated by grading each
response in relation to accompanying applause. The purpose was
to produce a hierarchy of concerns (see 4.3).
2. The participants at the meetings were surveyed to determine
which neighbourhoods were represented and in what numbers. The
purpose was to provide an indicator of concern (see 4.4).
3. In the neighbourhood with the highest percentage of the
population attending the meetings and the highest concentration
of large new houses, a sample of residents was interviewed. The
purpose was to provide a list of concerns to supplement the

concerns expressed at public information meetings (see 4.5).

In the home interviews the respondents were allowed to freely explore a range of topics relating to the new houses. Although this style of interview was time consuming and would not produce statistical data, it was felt that the results would be more accurate considering the purpose of the survey.

The interviewer directed the respondent along a line of questions listed in appendix 4. The list was very general, and was designed to ensure that broad categories or areas of concern were addressed. There was no time limit and the respondent could speak for one minute or one hour on any topic. The questions ensured that areas were covered but did not restrict the respondent. On the contrary, they often stimulated the respondent to consider various directions. The respondent was always asked for any other comments or concerns not covered in the interview.

All of the natural relationships and dynamics of the neighbourhood are best explored where they occur. Residents are able to physically point out problems. It is assumed that residents feel more comfortable in expressing concerns while in their home. There is a confidence that allows them to say things that they would not say at a public meeting.

In the directed interview, a new direction could be explored by the researcher as new information is received in the interview. While a set questionnaire allows the data to be more easily quantified, the respondent is rarely allowed to qualify his answer. The underlying perceptions and emotions may not be discovered because the researcher has already designed the

questionnaire from his own perspective of the problem. While
bias may also appear in the findings of the less structured
interview, it is less likely to remain unnoticed in analysis. In
the structured questionnaire, the researcher may never know that
bias has eliminated possible answers. In the directed interview,
the researcher's primary purpose is to elicit responses that are
not self-evident.

The issues explored in this thesis are qualitative issues.
It is very difficult to define well-being of neighbourhood or
the emotions surrounding a change in character or neighbourhood
in numerical terms.

4.3 Survey Of Comments At Public Meetings

Before changing the RS-1 zoning regulations in 1986, two
information meetings were held at the Oakridge auditorium and
Sir Charles Tupper secondary school respectively. A third
meeting, the public hearing for the zoning change, was also held
at the school.

Each meeting was attended by the researcher. Comments made
by those addressing the meetings were tape recorded.

An analysis of the comments was made by grading the
reaction of the audience to the comments on a decibel scale
using the level indicator on the recording machine. The applause
is graded from level 5, raucous applause, to level 1, scattered
applause. A list of the comments recorded and the graded
analysis of comments at the first and second meeting can be
found in appendix 3. It is assumed that if the audience agreed

with a comment by the speaker they supported it with loud applause.

There were many other indicators of concern at the meetings. At the first meeting over two hundred residents were turned away at the door because the auditorium was full. The staff organizing the meeting was unaware of the importance of the issue. The staff also misinterpreted the issue itself. While they wanted to speak about technical parameters of the zoning schedule, the public wanted them to address basic concepts, feelings, and principles.

At the second meeting the press was thrown out. The residents did not want a media event, they wanted their concerns adressed by council and staff. They were not comfortable with the cameras.

The third meeting was the official public hearing required for the zoning changes. The new by-law which was proclaimed after these meetings is by-law 5986 (appendix 5).

4.4 Survey Of Public Meetings Participants

At each meeting a survey was conducted to determine which neighbourhoods the participants lived in and whether they were new home owners, existing residents, or representatives of the development industry.

The data for these surveys can be seen in table form in appendix 2.

The community of Oakridge in southwest Vancouver had the highest level of attendance at the meetings as a percentage of total population. Oakridge participation was 55% higher than the

second community, Kerrisdale. This correlates to the
concentration of new houses in this area as shown in figure 3
(see 2.3). Therefore, the more new houses in the neighbourhood,
the more concerned the residents.

4.5 Oakridge Directed Interviews

Oakridge was selected for the interviews from the results
of the public meetings survey. It was the neighbourhood that had
the largest percentage of new houses and the largest number of
concerned residents at the public meetings. The new houses also
had the largest impact in Oakridge because the new houses were
considerably larger than the existing small bungalows.

The southwest Oakridge quadrant was the area with the
largest percentage of new houses in Oakridge (see 2.3). The
researcher selected a street that had a typical pattern of new
and existing houses and approached twenty-five houses over three
visits to be interviewed. Twelve residents or resident families
in older existing houses were interviewed while the remainder
either refused or were not contacted on three visits.

Figure 10 shows a map of the research area and the houses
approached. The lots coloured orange are large new houses
existing at the time of interview in June 1986. An outlined lot
is one under construction while a dot means that the lot is
staked for demolition. (It is interesting to note that 25% of
the surveyed houses in 1986 had been redeveloped or were in the
process of being redeveloped in April 1988.)

Each respondent was asked a general guide of questions to
ensure that certain topics were covered (appendix 4). This was

FIGURE 10

LOCATION OF RESIDENTIAL INTERVIEWS
SOUTHWEST OAKRIDGE

FIGURE 10

- ▥ —NEW HOUSES EXISTING AT INTERVIEW, JUNE 1986
- ▨ —NEW HOUSES BUILT FROM JUNE 1986 TO AUGUST 1988
- 1-25 —NUMBERED HOUSES APPROACHED FOR INTERVIEW

only used, however, as a guide to direct the conversation which was allowed to take any course that the respondent wished. Several interviews were done with more than one family member. In all, four men and twelve women were interviewed. All respondents owned their home. Only three of twelve households had children at home. All residents had been there more than five years, some for twenty years and more.
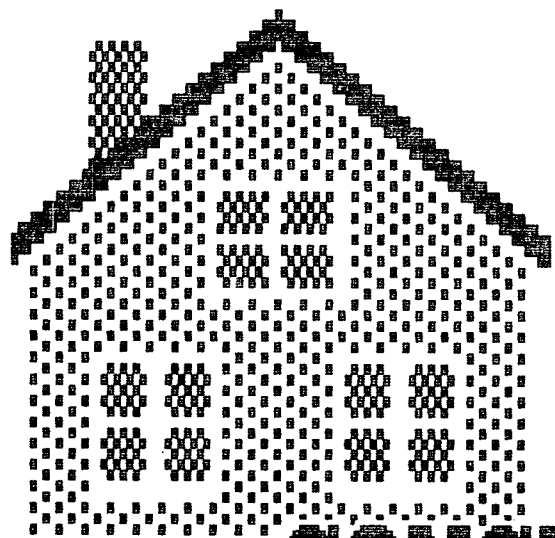
CONCERNS OF EXISTING RESIDENTS

5

CHAPTER 5 : CONCERNS OF EXISTING RESIDENTS

Comments of existing residents from the public information meetings and the neighbourhood directed interviews have been arranged into meaningful categories in this chapter. The three main areas of concern were:

1. Abhorrance of the new houses

2. Helplessness in the face of change

3. Intolerance towards new culture

Respondents ranged in age from sixteen to eighty providing opinions from a cross section within the community. The perceptions of the households were remarkably similar. All age groups and household types had a negative opinion of the new houses. The intensity of concern ran from mild irritation from a resident who intended to take advantage of the increased prices, to despair from a resident who felt that she was being forced to sell.

The concern of the residents can simply be stated as fear of change, the fear of physical changes in the built and landscaped environment, the fear of social and cultural changes, and the fear of the process of change itself, including the direction, pace, and generation of change, and the way that change was being managed by the City.

Comments in quotations were made by residents.

5.1 Abhorrance Of The New Houses

All respondents had negative comments about the new houses
and how they were changing the character of their neighbourhood.

5.1.1 The new houses are ugly

For the most part respondents were unable to communicate
what aspects of the new houses they did or did not like. The
typical comments were very general and negative.

"I just don't like them, they're ugly"
Residents gave few specific details. They liked things the way
they were.

"The old houses were not good looking, that's not the
point"

Attempts were made to create a list of elements or physical
characteristics of the new houses that were particularly
offensive to the existing residents. This process was futile.
Although there were comments from adjacent properties relating
to overshadowing or the loss of privacy, the strongest and most
intense sentiments did not relate to identifiable architectural
features of the building but to the general presence of the new
houses.

Common responses regarding physical design were:
"boxlike", "poor design", "offensive", "poor quality",
"sterile", "cheap looking", "overwhelming", "out of proportion",
"factories", "big square boxes", "abortions", and
"monstrosities".

Not one respondent gave more detail. The general disruption

in streetscape and neighbourhood character were more important
to the residents and could be more easily felt and expressed.

"Maintain the continuity of the streetscape."

"We need to respect the quality of our neighbourhoods."
The neighbourhood belonged to them and the new houses were
tresspassing. Their concern was a change in the general feeling
of repose or harmony within the whole neighbourhood. Each house
is seen in relation to theirs and then to the rest of the
neighbourhood.

5.1.2 Some new houses are better than others.

While all respondents considered the new houses to be ugly
and out of character, they also felt that some of the new houses
were better than others and when prompted could point out ones
that were not as offensive. These were generally houses with
intensive landscaping, mature trees remaining, large roof areas
with varied pitch, and west coast materials and details.

The houses particularly disliked had flat roofs, hard
surface landscaping, and brick or stucco siding.

Houses further away from the respondent were more likely to
be in the 'better' category than houses in the respondent's
immediate streetscape.

5.1.3 The new houses do not belong in my neighbourhood.

Although some of the houses were better than others, it was
felt that they did not belong in the neighbourhood.

"They are nice houses but not in this neighbourhood,

Richmond maybe".

The styles of the new houses were equated with suburban fringe development as this was where the residents had seen these styles before. The outer suburbs are considered less desirable and the residents did not want houses that resembled them.

Further, the researcher was often left considering whether the respondent meant that the houses did not belong or that the people did not belong, or both.

"we have our quota of these houses, they should not allow any more until these assimilate."

5.1.4 They are putting in suites

Another common fear was that the single family status of the neighbourhood would be lost with extended families or multi-suite conversions. Many comments were about the possible densification of the neighbourhood.

"It looks like an apartment, not a house."

One resident was convinced that a triplex was being built next door. Although this was not the case, the number of bedrooms and bathrooms in the new house suggested an easy conversion to suites after inspections were completed.

Extended families were blamed for new houses with ten to twelve bedrooms and as many bathrooms. The residents perceived a larger neighbourhood population and accompanying problems.

5.1.5 The new houses have no landscaping

Landscape was a serious concern, greater than the concern for the houses themselves. It was felt that the houses were in

an existing landscape. The landscape was not an adjunct to the
built environment or creation to visually complement new houses
but an integral part of the unified streetscape. Residents
wanted the existing landscape to be retained.

The existing streetscape was linked to the natural
environment of large open lawns, a personal identification with
trees, an absence of geometric regularity, and an absence of
borders. With the existing homes there were few instances of
man-made fencing or hedges used as lineal separation. All
gardens were equally well maintained without being manicured.

The landscape tended to belong to the public space as
common property. When this was interupted by the creation of a
foreign landscape it took away part of the integrity of the
existing landscape and reduced the quality of the whole
environment.

Many respondents referred to the cleared lot construction
procedure of bulldozing all existing trees and bushes and
levelling the lot.

Neighbours recalled old and grand trees that were
pointlessly destroyed although they would not have affected the
structural siting. Roots of other trees were destroyed by
excavation or lot clearing.

Some adjacent owners insisted that the grade level had
risen up to 24 inches from the previous structure's grade level,
usually accomplished by trucking excavated material from other
sites or using the existing excavated material so that it did
not have to be removed.

With the existing dwellings the landscape is as important

as the structure with the focus outward from large picture
windows taking advantage of neighbour's gardens as well as its
own. The new houses reversed this philosophy with landscape
being secondary to the internal environment. There is an inward
focus. Most trees and shrubs are used to shield the house from
the neighbourhood and declare the limits of a private space.

The public landscape had provided an opportunity for
socializing. Many residents complained that the new landscape
and physical design of the houses restricted opportunities for
neighbouring.

The use of front access internal garages with driveways to
the street was considered the main cause of disruption in the
continuity of the landscape.

5.1.6 The character of the neighbourhood is changing

Residents made many comments that referred to the feeling
of disturbance and interruption in the general physical
character of the neighbourhood caused by the new houses.

"The ambience is changing"

"The village atmosphere is disappearing"

"It's not cozy anymore"

"There was a character that is now being destroyed"
Many negative adjectives were used that described a feeling of
loss attributed to the new development.

Constructive comments were rare. When expressed, however,
the tone echoed the goals of the City Council.

"Assimilate the new, not destroy and rebuild"

"I would make it suit the neighbourhood more"

This change was very hard for the residents to accept.

"I liked it the way it was"

"It just exaggerates other changes in the community"

5.1.7 <u>Our neighbourhood is losing its quality</u>

The residents spoke frequently of "sacraficing neighbourhood character and quality". Although the new houses were very expensive they were still percieved to reduce the quality of the neighbourhood. This quality could not be quantified in the market but existed in the minds of the residents and they wanted it preserved.

5.2 <u>Helplessness In The Face Of Change</u>

Other comments related to the process of change itself and the inability of the existing residents to address it. The question was, why should we have to adapt to these changes? Why are we not directing change in our neighbourhood? It is our neighbourhood. Why not have new development adapt to us?

5.2.1 <u>We did not know of changes.</u>

The fear of change is heightened when the existing residents are unaware of impending development and when the forces behind the change are unknown.

"I would have liked to have known. Maybe I could have stopped it from being a monster"

The residents had no fore-warning of demolitions or new construction in the neighbourhood. Often the resident would return home and a house on the block would simply have disappeared.

Only one respondent had any knowledge of public meetings concerning the issue presented by the Planning Department. The existing residents simply wanted to know what was planned for their neighbourhood.

5.2.2 <u>We don't have any say.</u>

The existing residents felt totally helpless. No one was considering their interests. Most residents felt that they could not influence the changing course of the neighbourhood.

Residents spoke of an "economic imperative" or "forces beyond our control"

"If someone has 600,000 dollars to spend then the house

will be built"

They perceived that changes were made by the forces of economics

and not the will of the neighbourhood or their representatives

at the municipal government.

5.2.3 Contractors are inconsiderate.

Many comments referred to the side effects of change.

Contractors are notorious for being uncooperative. Respondents

complained of loud radios and rude comments especially from

adjacent sites.

Residents complained that the developers ignored their

existence. For example, in one situation a well landscaped

property has a new house constructed on the adjacent lot. After

stripping the land and destroying root networks and without any

consultation the developer placed a new fence up against the

existing fences of the neighbours. The neighbours expected the

owner to discuss the matter with them to provide a shared fence

which is the usual practice with existing properties.

Residents also complained that staggered construction

starts guaranteed the continuity of construction noise. Nine

homes had been started at different times over three years

within earshot of the residents. There had literally been

construction noise daily for three years.

5.2.4 Real estate agents hound us.

All respondents complained about being hounded by real

estate agents wanting them to sell their property. One resident

claimed that real estate agents knock on her door up to three times a week inquiring if the owner was prepared to sell so that a developer could knock the house down. It was not a very secure way to live.

In fact a lot of stress could be attributed to this nuisance. Agents would telephone residents to inquire as well. While all respondents said that the agents were courteous in their approach and did not use pressure tactics, the true pressure was exerted by the constant reminder that the neighbourhood was changing and someone was waiting for them to leave.

"We've had two people a week knocking at the door wanting to buy the house"

"Every day we get notices and people from these real estate people coming around"

"At least twice a week for eighteen months"

5.2.5 Our taxes will increase.

All respondents were worried about their taxes going up to reflect the increased value of the land and improvements in the neighbourhood. Many were elderly, on fixed incomes, and would find it very difficult to absorb increases.

One resident saw a benefit to increased values while most did not consider it to be a positive change. Residents felt that there were other values being lost.

"Yes its held up property values but not everything is monetary"

"It's actually reduced the value of my house to zero"

Residents felt that the overall quality of the
neighbourhood was decreasing yet the taxes were increasing.

5.2.6 The pace of change is too fast.

All respondents were surprised at the pace of the change.
They wanted a moratorium so they could have time to adjust and
adapt to the new environment.

> "We have accepted more of these houses than our share. We
> have our quota now."

The pace was consistent with urban renewal, not gradual change
and improvement that was desired by the residents.

5.2.7 The process is geared to the developers not the residents.

Existing residents blamed the City for allowing these
dramatic changes without their consultation. The planning staff
was even accused of deliberately allowing the change as a
prelude to densification of RS-1 and "altering our residential
character that is unique in the world".

Residents felt that staff gave every advantage and
consideration to the developers while they were given no
consideration. Outsiders were making the decisions.

5.3 Intolerance Towards New Culture

Many comments (the most intense ones) did not refer to the physical character of the neighbourhood, the new houses, or the process of change. The changing cultural character was equally or more important than the physical aspects of new development. The cultural changes that the new houses represented were as disturbing to the existing residents as the houses themselves.

1. New immigrants are taking over.

All of the new houses in the area were believed to be purchased by recent immigrants from or residents of Hong Kong. It was clear that residents were fearful of a cultural shift that would severely alter the neighbourhood.

"Where is this all leading"

"It is the end of our way of life"

Most residents wanted to slowly assimilate immigrants into their way of life as they believed had been the case in previous decades. For the most part they did not want a bicultural neighbourhood. They wanted their neighbourhood to remain their own culture, whatever they felt that to be, and regardless of the background of the respondent.

The residents saw the changes as as a destructive force, an invasion and succession rather than an assimilation. Existing residents did not appreciate their neighbourhood being treated as bare land by a different community . They felt their neighbourhood to be vibrant and in its prime.

Several respondents said that they could not communicate with their new neighbours because of a language barrier. Others

stated that the new residents had not been outside for their

entire tenure but simply drove into their homes through the

internal garage without any possibility of contact with the

neighbourhood.

If people liked their neighbourhood and wanted to live in

it then the residents expected them to accept the existing

standards and values. Residents did not want the cultural values

of the neighbourhood to change.

5.3.2 Neighbours leaving were our friends.

Many respondents spoke at length about friends that had

lived in the bull-dozed houses. Without exception they were the

new houses that were particularly disliked. As the new residents

were invariably from a different culture, the existing residents

feared that they would never have friends in those houses again.

The houses represented that change and were hated for it.

"They've been here a year and I wouldn't even recognize

them on the street"

"The people now in these houses, well let's just say that

they keep to themselves"

"I never see them, the neighbourhood was very friendly

before"

"We used to see our neighbours, now we never see them"

The physical barriers created by the designs of the new

houses exagerated the gulf created by language and cultural

differences. Each respondent claimed to have made overtures to

the new neighbours that were rejected.

Most respondents, while not directing racial slurs, implied

that we all know what the problem is but cannot talk about it. One respondent forced me to erase tape recorded comments that could be construed as bigoted. Other comments included;

"If you stop the tape recorder we can really talk"

The residents wanted to live in a residential community that was comfortable and secure. A homogeneous culture was seen as a prerequisite to this stability. A new neighbour from a new culture of a different race in a new house of a different size from a different economic class was simply too many changes to accept.
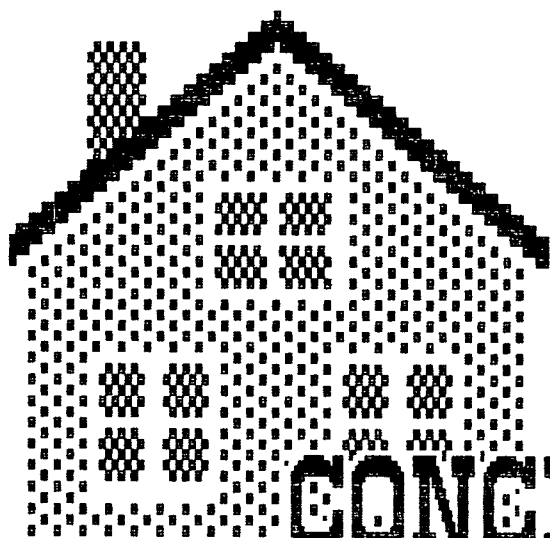
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6

CHAPTER 6 : CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will discuss the conclusions of the research, suggest ways of resolving the problem, and discuss areas for further research.

6.1 Conclusion

In chapter one, the question was asked 'why have changes to RS-1 zoning regulations been ineffective in resolving the concerns of residents over large new houses being constructed in their neighbourhoods?'

This research has established that the residents' concerns are not limited to bulk and siting. The new controls offered by the City are therefore not sufficient to satisfy residents.

It is true that existing houses are being demolished and large new houses are taking their place, however, the size of these new houses is only one aspect of a multifarious change occurring in RS-1 neighbourhoods in Vancouver. The research has concluded that residents are also concerned with all of the following aspects of the change:

1. The appearance of the new houses

2. The context of the new houses

3. Landscaping

4. The administrative process

5. Cultural change

These aspects will be discussed in more detail.

6.1.1 <u>The Appearance Of The New Houses</u>

The large new houses do not look like the existing houses. Most are built from stock plans designed for standard lot sizes. The designs are stark, plain, and box-like, and have been more typical of suburban fringe subdivisions. The most common complaint is that the new houses are ugly. Some designs are considered by residents to be better than others although there is no consensus. These more acceptable designs typically have more traditional lines, more interest, and more subtelty. In other words, they are more like the existing houses in shape, style, and materials.

This researcher has spoken with many homeowners, developers, and designers. The discussion rarely remains on the issue of design without referring to the argument about the 'rights' of the individual property owner. Should the title-holder be able to erect whatever he or she wishes on the property? While the developers and designers wish to have this right the existing residents are split on the issue. In theory most residents want this right. In practice, the residents who have been affected by new development want the neighbourhood to be protected from individually expresive or unneighbourly designs.

Initially claims were made by residents that 'ugly' new houses would devalue the adjacent properties. This has not been the case. Neighbourhoods that are considered desirable for the large new house market have increased in value considerably over the last three years. The residents now fear increased taxes driven up by increased property values.

It is concluded that the physical appearance of the new
dwelling is as important to the residents as bulk and siting.
The residents would like the designs of the new houses to
reflect the designs of existing houses.

When the existing houses were constructed, continuity of
design had been maintained by zoning controls, the building
styles of the period, the availability of technology and
materials, construction practices, the efficiency of repetition,
and the social control of a homogenous market as perceived by
the builder. The same influences for design conformity exist
today for the speculative builder. The new houses all have
similar design elements, however, the new houses are now built
in a mature neighbourhood context and should relate to the
designs of existing houses as well as to each other if
neighbourliness is to be maintained.

6.1.2 The Context Of The New Houses

The relationship of the new houses to adjacent houses and
the streetcape was more important to residents than bulk and
siting controls. The new houses ignore the integration of design
that gave a neighbourhood its character. For example, internal
garages facing the street in new houses severely disrupts the
streetscape in Oakridge.

Residents clearly want the new houses to relate to the
existing streetscape. They feel that developers ignore the
existing neighbourhood context and treat the land in the same
fashion as building on a bare land subdivision on the suburban
fringe. Even in these new subdivisions the builder is required

to conform to strict guidelines that will produce a conformity
of design within the new neighbourhood and avoid any conflicts
between adjacent properties. Redevelopment in mature
neighbourhoods should require similar guidelines to avoid
conflict, not only between designs of new houses, but between
new and existing houses, and the new houses and the streetscape.
This is not only desired by existing residents, it is the policy
of the City as stated in Council's 'Goals for RS-1' (see section
1.2). This policy has not been effectively implimented in RS-1.

Each mature neighbourhood in Vancouver may have distinct
neighbourhood streetscape elements. The residents want those
elements that define the character of the neighbourhood to be
retained. It is concluded that the size of the new dwelling is
not as important as retaining elements of continuity consistent
with the character and streetscape of each neighbourhood.
Residents will be more willing to accept new development in
their neighbourhood if in addition to controlling bulk and
siting controls related to streetscape retention.

6.1.3 Landscaping

In public meetings, neighbourhood interviews, and
discussions with professionals, the management of land not
occupied by buildings was equally contentious as the buildings
themselves. Residents wanted to maintain existing landscapes in
their neighbourhood.

It is concluded that the management of landscaped areas
surrounding the large new houses is more important to residents
than bulk and siting issues. The changes to RS-1 regulations do

not address landscape management. The existing RS-1 regulations leave the design and management of the non-built area of the site to the discretion of the builder. The builder may decide to pour concrete from one property line to the other. There are no compulsory regulations for vegetation or green space.

The most contentious landscape issue is the clearing of all trees and vegetation from the site before starting new construction. The continuity of the landscape is important to residents. Retention of existing trees and bushes would soften the impact of new development increasing the residents' acceptance of large new houses.

The fencing and lighting of new houses is also out of character with the existing neighbourhood. While the existing houses rely on subtle forms of boundary definition and security, the new houses' perimeters and private spaces are starkly identified and secured by high solid fences and flood lighting. If fencing and lighting were designed in the context of the existing neighbourhood, the residents would be more accepting of the large new houses.

6.1.4 The Administrative Process

Residents do not understand the administrative process for demolishing older houses and constructing new ones. Residents feel that the administrative process is weighted in favour of the developer. A majority of comments at public meetings related to a general fear of change. The lack of knowledge about the development process increased this fear.

Residents perceive the changes taking place in their

neighbourhood to be destructive. They feel that their
neighbourhood is a very desirable place to live without these
changes. Before the building of large new houses, new residents
had selected their neighbourhood because they liked the existing
character and existing houses. New residents became a part of
the existing neighbourhood. Now the developers of new houses
wanted to change their neighbourhood.

Residents are unaware of impending changes. They fear that
their neighbour's house will be sold and demolished. They have
no say in what changes will take place in their neighbourhood.
They do not feel that their representatives are addressing the
problem. They do not trust the planning department. Residents
perceive that change is out of control and is not directed in
the interests of the community.

Inconsiderate contractors and realtors increase the anxiety
felt by residents. The fear of tax increases also causes
anxiety. Little is done to soften the process of change to make
change more acceptable to residents. It is concluded that the
process of change and the anxiety it creates is more important
to residents than the bulk and siting of new houses. If measures
were taken to make the process more participatory and
neighbourly, the introduction of large new houses to existing
neighbourhoods would be more acceptable to residents.

6.1.5 Cultural Change

The large new houses are perceived to be sold to Hong kong
or Taiwanese investors. The harshest reactions to the large new
houses were directed to the occupants and their ethnicity.

Although this thesis deals with the physical changes surrounding the development of large new houses in RS-1, the overwhelming and intensely negative reaction to the changing social and cultural character of the neighbourhood must be noted here for it became increasingly difficult to isolate this aspect from the data. The question of whether derogatory remarks were directed at the houses or at the people in the houses was always present.

While the research did not pursue the issue of cultural changes in the neighbourhood other than recording and categorizing commentary on the issue, it can safely be concluded that cultural changes associated with the new houses are more important to residents than bulk and siting. Residents do not want the cultural values of their existing community to change. They perceive the large new house to be the physical manifestation of this change. The desired retention of elements of continuity consistent with the character and streetscape of each neighbourhood can therefore not be divorced from the cultural context of the changes.

6.2 Confirmation Of Results

This thesis has had the benefit of two years duration between the data collection stage and the defense presentation. Events and publications since this initial research tend to confirm the results and conclusions first made in 1986.

Through 1988, the problem of residents objecting to large new houses in Vancouver's Westside neighbourhoods persists despite three attempts at adjusting the bulk and siting

regulations for RS-1. In Oakridge and adjacent neighbourhoods it is still the issue dominating social meetings between neighbours. Complaints are still fielded by aldermen. Also, the demand for the new houses has not abated, but has increased every year.

Articles on the issue are still appearing in local magazines and newspapers, and recently on national radio and television news programs. For example, Sean Rossiter in the Vancouver Magazine (November 1988) quotes architect Richard Henriquez to state that large houses are not the problem but large 'ugly' houses are. Rossiter confirms that it is not merely a question of size. It is a question of context. No house, however big, stands alone. Alderman Carole Taylor still gets many calls on the issue. Taylor feels that the City should accept change but address the worst manefestations by making change kinder and more aceptable. Rossiter suggests that if the new houses are carefully landscaped and designed, big is 'OK'. He states that size gets mixed up in a host of other complaints including the construction and development process.

In Kerrisdale, residents recently stood in front of bull-dozers to stop trees from being uprooted. Three hundred residents attended an ad-hoc meeting on November 16, 1988 and established a homeowners association in the area to address the issues of design, streetscape and landscape. They voted to demand a neighbourhood design review panel for the community.

In December 1988, the City proposed seventeen new changes to the RS-1 regulations. Many of these changes directly relate to character and streetscape retention (City of Vanc. Dec.

1988). For example, there are seven actions recommending maintenance of streetscape character in RS-1 neighbourhoods including encouraging porches, averaging provisions, and a statement of the importance of landscaping. Others deal with the uniqueness of neighbourhoods and sites. Also, actions to assist in renovating existing houses are suggested.

The City has adopted a "continuous adjustment" approach to the RS-1 regulations for 1989. Funds have been budgeted for further study on several areas including the possibility of landscaping regulations. An urban design administrator has been hired by the City to deal specifically with RS-1 issues and the development of new regulations to address them.

6.3 Resolving The Problem

The research has now established a set of criteria that must be observed when discussing possible solutions to the problem created by large new houses in Vancouver's Westside RS-1 neighbourhoods.

(a) Solutions must conform to the goals of the City described in chapter one (1.2). They must maintain the quality and integrity of Vancouver's single family neighbourhoods while allowing some change on the condition that neighbourliness is maintained between new development and existing housing.

(b) Solutions must be consistent with the concept of continuity with change discussed in the literature review chapter three.

(c) Solutions must also address residents' concerns discovered by this research and summarized in chapter five.

The structure of the RS-1 zoning by-law in Vancouver appears to be incapable of supplying a solution that fits these criteria. The schedule was originally designed to manage the construction of new houses in newly created subdivisions. It provides for bulk and siting controls that today take little account of the differences between neighbourhoods, lifestyle demands within neighbourhoods, or continuous elements established over time when redevelopment in mature neighbourhoods is considered. For example, the zoning schedule cannot define or protect landscape patterns, streetscapes, or individual design elements.

The RS-1 zoning schedule also excludes the participation of residents in changes to their neighbourhood. Existing residents consider their input to neighbourhood change to be essential for maintaining neighbourhood quality. They want a process that provides for consultation with them when change in their immediate environment is being considered.

To resolve the problems associated with large new replacement houses, new forms of control must be added. There are currently successful examples in Vancouver to draw upon.

(a) Bonus zoning has been successful in Vancouver in both RT2A and CD-1. This process allows the staff administering the zoning requirements to trade increased development rights for good design, heritage conservation, or the inclusion of community amenities. The Director of Planning has the discretionary power to allow the developer to build the maximum in a range of possible densities if plans are produced that the department considers to be neighbourly or well planned. In CD-1

the property is rezoned allowing a higher density for a specific
development project that would not be allowed under the existing
zoning but is considered in the best interest of the community.
In this case the plans are reviewed by a design panel. Council
must also establish the rezoning after a public hearing.

Opponents of bonus zoning believe that the planning
department is given too much power and that the system is open
to abuse. They say that there really is no choice in bonus
zoning because the market price for development sites always
rises to reflect the bonuses before the developer is able to
make the decision. Still, bonus zoning (or Barnett's 'incentive
zoning') has assisted the City in meeting its objectives in
other zones. If continuous elements are identified, it can be an
effective approach in redeveloping and densifying existing
mature neighbourhoods. A good example in RT2-A is the 200 block
West 13th Avenue. While it is very difficult for the observer to
tell which houses are new and which are seventy years old, the
developers of the new houses obtained increased densities and
floor space. There has been no controversy about large houses on
this street.

(b) A Neighbourhood advisory design panel has been used
successfully in the First Shaughnessy district in Vancouver. A
unique neighbourhood has combined a zoning schedule and design
guidelines with a design panel which advises the planning
department on matters concerning development proposals in their
jurisdiction. The panel is composed of residents'
representatives as well as professionals in planning,
architecture, and heritage preservation.

Developers can increase the density to a maximum of four units if the design preserves the neighbourhood continuous elements, set out in design guidelines, and meets with the approval of the panel and the Director of Planning.

The meetings of the panel, however, are not public and the fact that the panel members are appointed by Council rather than being selected by the community is a point of contention. The real power is the ability to delay projects that are not acceptable.

(c) the neighbourhood professional is another example that has been successful in Vancouver. Norman Hotson on Granville Island is an example. Although a federally owned mixed use community, the same basic principles could be adapted to RS-1 zoned neighbourhoods.

Goals are set by the City for the neighbourhood. A professional planner or urban designer is then consulted to establish the guidelines for acceptable development, the continuous elements of the neighbourhood. The professional is then retained to oversee and approve all redevelopment in the future. A planner with a consulting practice in the neighbourhood would be the most effective.

The author has interviewed a similar professional in a residential neighbourhood in Jerusalem. The professional in this case was an architect and planner who had designed the redevelopment guidelines for the community, Yemin Moshe. Approximately 25% of the planner's time was spent approving neighbourhood redevelopment. He was not allowed to have any pecuniary interest in development or approve his own designs.

Each developer would consult with the neighbourhood professional before submission to ensure that plans were consistent with the City's goals, the neighbourhood elements, and adjacent neighbour's concerns.

Another advantage of this process was that the cost of planning approvals was paid for by the developer on an hourly basis. If neighbourly plans were submitted, the approval would be inexpensive. Also, the neighbourhood professional could look at details that concerned individual neighbours or lot specific conditions. Plans were on display at the professional's office during the approval period.

The disadvantage is that the professional has the power of discretion. Although an appeal process is available to the developer and resident, there is always the possibility of abuse. Strict conflict of interest rules must apply. For example, the professional cannot have an interest in land or development that is before him for approval. The range of discretion must be limited and well defined. The professional simply applies a set of criteria and guidelines to the proposal.

Alexander has warned that "when a place is lifeless or unreal, there is almost always a mastermind behind it" (Alexander 1979, p.36) The assertion that a sterile environment is created when an overall planner or designer is present has no merit in the case of Granville Island and Yemin Moshe. The developer can still create a unique structure within the parameters of neighbourhood design. The existence of the neighbourhood professional simply confirms the concept that the neighbourhood must have a designer. One would not consider

having different designers for each unit in a condominium
complex or different designers for individual features in a
house. The neighbourhood professional in the examples looks at
the neighbourhood as one design project, balancing all of the
components.

It is concluded that the current RS-1 zoning by-law is
insufficient to address residents' concerns. An additional form
of control is required to obtain neighbourly development in
Vancouver's single family neighbourhoods. The following is a
list of specific recommendations.

6.4 Recommendations

6.4.1 Appearance of the new houses

It is recommended that a form of bonus zoning be
established to allow increased density or floor space for
designs that are acceptable to a Neighbourhood Design Panel or a
Neighbourhood Professional. Acceptable designs would be those
considered 'neighbourly' by the reviewing body. The cost of this
process would be borne by the developer in accordance with the
time required to process the approval.

It may be necessary to downzone the outright use FSR in
some neighbourhoods as there is the possibility that developers
would ignore the bonuses if allowed to develop to .6. There is
also the possibility that residents would object to a bonus FSR
if the bonus exceeded .6 .

It is not necessary to bonus above .6 unless the unit density was increased for the bonus. Some RS-1 zoned areas will have to be densified as capacity is reached in existing multi-family zones, and the bonus zoning system could be adopted to ensure neighbourly densification.

Many existing houses were built under .45 FSR regulations. If RS-1 was downzoned to .45 with discretionary bonussing to .6, the single family status of the neighbourhood could be maintained. The same bonus would apply to additions and renovations of existing homes up to .6 .

6.4.2 context of the new houses

The reviewing body would establish a set of continuous elements in consultation with residents. These elements would form the basis for acceptable development and bonusing. Each submission would include streetscape plans with an overlay of the new project for approval. There would be an initial cost to the City to identify the continuous elements. In each neighbourhood. The developer would incur additional design costs.

6.4.3 Landscaping

Each submission for development would include a landscape plan and a performance bond would be posted. Significant existing landscape features would be shown and proposed changes noted on the plan. If these features were included in the list of neighbourhood continuous elements, approval would be contingent on the inclusion or retention of these features. The developer would incur additional design costs.

6.4.4 The administrative process

There are several concerns regarding the development process that could be alleviated if the following recommendations were included.

(a) Residents and other interested parties would be able to view plans for new development in their neighbourhood before approvals were given. Development in the neighbourhood should be a public process. The cost of this recommendation would be the increased approval period for the developer. Administrative costs would be included in the development fee schedule.

(b) Before demolition, the developer would be required to post a sign describing the development and informing the residents of their right to view plans and make representation to the approving body. Most other zones in Vancouver require this signage. The cost would be approximately $200 to the developer.

(c) The building permit for new house construction should be approved and issued before a demolition permit on the existing structures is issued. This would control the unnecessary demolition of houses when markets change. There is no cost to this recommendation.

(d) Construction on Sundays and holidays should be disallowed. There is provision in the existing noise by-law to affect this change. Appendix 6 shows that one half of the municipalities in the lower mainland already have this regulation. The maximum cost of this recommendation would be a few days carrying costs to the developer.

6.4.5 Cultural change

The City should promote cultural understanding by educating residents and immigrants about each other's housing needs and values. New residents have simply purchased new housing that was available under the existing regulations. Builders have built housing that they believe to be desired by the Asian market. The only alternative would be to zone for houses that are preferred by this market. This would be unacceptable, therefore the City must convince residents and new home owners that they must both compromise.

The City should make representation to senior levels of government expressing the concern of citizens over off-shore speculation and investment in the housing market. All levels of government are currently encouraging investment and immigration by investors from Pacific Rim countries. If residents do not want this investment or immigration, they must exercise their options under the political process.

6.5 Further Research

The scope of this research has been limited to the application of the principles of continuity with change to the problem of large new houses in RS-1 neighbourhoods. Residents' concerns have been collected at public meetings and neighbourhood interviews to establish that bulk and siting is only one of many issues the City needs to address when dealing with the problem of large new houses. "massaging" the existing zoning schedule will therefore not alleviate residents'

concerns. The market for the new houses changes constantly. The perceptions that residents have about the new houses also change. Further research is needed to maintain a fresh perspective on the issue. For example, what does the City anticipate to be the future of RS-1? Should local community desires take precedence over the future desired by market forces? Do new house owners really want or need this type of housing or are they purchasing what is available? What other ways are there to manage this change? Other cities have also experienced this problem, for example Honolulu, Toronto and Sydney. How have they managed this change? Australia does not allow foreign investment in residential real estate. How has this affected their market and the livability of mature neighbourhoods? The cultural component of the issue is also very explosive and should be immediately researched before a serious backlash occurs.

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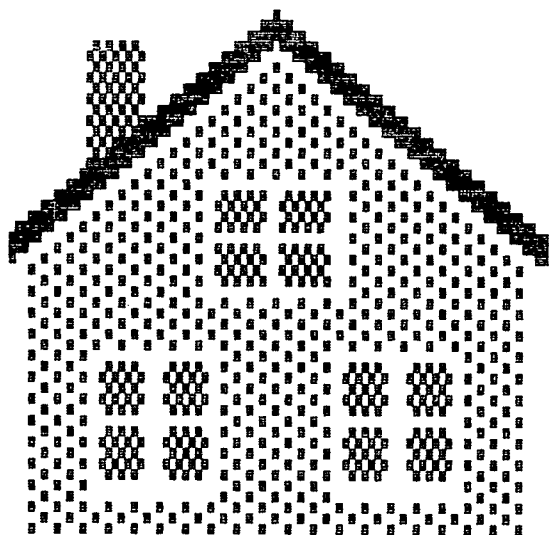
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APPENDICES

RS-1 DISTRICT SCHEDULE

1   INTENT

The intent of this Schedule is to maintain the single-family residential character of the District.

2   OUTRIGHT APPROVAL USES

2.1   Subject to all other provisions of this By-law and to compliance with the regulations of this Schedule, the uses listed in section 2.2 shall be permitted in this District and shall be issued a permit.

2.2   Uses

2.2.A   *   Accessory Buildings customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this Schedule, provided that:

(a)   no accessory building exceeds 12 feet in height measured to the highest point of the roof if a flat roof, to the deck line of a mansard roof, or to the mean height level between the eaves and the ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof, provided that no portion of an accessory building may exceed 15 feet in height;

(b)   all accessory buildings are located in the rear yard and in no case are less than 5 feet from a flanking street, subject also to the provisions of section 11.1 of this By-law;

(c)   the total floor area, measured to the extreme outer limits of the building, of all accessory buildings is not greater than 35 percent of the minimum rear yard prescribed in this Schedule, or 520 square feet, whichever is the greater;

(d)   not more than 80 percent of the width of the rear yard of any lot is occupied by accessory buildings.

*   Accessory Uses customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this section.

2.2.D   *   One-Family Dwelling.

3   CONDITIONAL APPROVAL USES

3.1   Subject to all other provisions of this By-law, including section 3.3.3, and the provisions and regulations of this Schedule, the Development Permit Board may approve any of the uses listed in section 3.2 including such conditions or additional regulations as it may decide, provided that before making a decision it:

(a)   considers the intent of this Schedule and the recommendations of any advisory groups, plan or guidelines approved by Council
    •   for the area; and

(b)   notifies such adjacent property owners and residents it deems necessary.

3.2   <u>Uses</u>

3.2.A   *   Accessory Buildings customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this Schedule, other than as provided for in section 2.2.A of this Schedule.

*   Accessory Uses customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this section.

*   Aircraft Landing Place.

*   Ambulance Station.

3.2.B   *   Bed and Breakfast Accommodation.

3.2.C   *   Child Day Care Facility.

*   Church, subject to the provisions of section 11.7 of this By-law.

*   Community Centre or Neighbourhood House.

3.2.D   *   Deposition or extraction of material so as to alter the configuration of the land.

*   Dwelling Unit for a caretaker or servant in conjunction with a one-family dwelling, provided that the site or dwelling is of sufficient size to warrant the need for a full-time caretaker or servant.

*   Dwelling Unit in conjunction with a neighbourhood grocery store which was in existence prior to July 29, 1980.

3.2.G   *   Golf Course.

3.2.H   *   Hospital, but not including a conversion from an existing building, a mental hospital or an animal hospital, subject to the provisions of section 11.9 of this By-law.

3.2.I   *   Institution of a religious, philanthropic or charitable character.

3.2.L   *   Local Area Office.

3.2.M   *   Marina, but not including boat building and major repairs and overhaul of boats.

3.2.N   *   Neighbourhood Grocery Store operating immediately prior to July 29, 1980, subject to the provisions of section 11.16 of this By-law.

3.2.P   *   Park or Playground.

        *   Parking Area ancillary to a principal use on an adjacent site.

        *   Public Authority Building or use essential in this District.

        *   Public Utility.

3.2.S   *   School (public or private), subject to the provisions of section 11.8 of this By-law.

        *   Social Service Centre operated by a non-profit society.

        *   Special Needs Residential Facility, subject to the provisions of section 11.17.

        *   Stadium or any similar place of assembly.

3.2.T   *   Tourist Court, subject to the provisions of section 11.12 of this By-law.

4   REGULATIONS

All uses approved under sections 2 and 3 of this District Schedule shall be subject to the following regulations:

4.1   Site Area

4.1.1   The minimum site area for a one-family dwelling shall be 3,600 square feet.

4.1.2   Where the site is less than 32 feet in width or less than 3,600 square feet in area, the design of any new dwelling shall first require the approval of the Director of Planning or the Development Permit Board, as the case may be, who shall before making a decision consider any design guidelines approved by Council.

4.2   Frontage -- Not Applicable.

4.3   Height

4.3.1   The maximum height of a building shall be the lesser of 35 feet or 2-1/2 storeys.

4.4   Front Yard

4.4.1   A front yard with a minimum depth of 24 feet shall be provided.

4.4.2   In the case of a site having an average depth of less than 120 feet, the required front yard may be reduced in accordance with section 11.2 of this By-law.

4.5   <u>Side Yard</u>

4.5.1   A side yard with a minimum width of not less than 10 percent of the
        width of the site shall be provided on each side of the building,
        except that it need not be more than 5 feet in width.

4.5.2   In the case of a corner site, the exterior side yard shall be
        regulated by the provisions of section 11.1 of this By-law.

4.6   <u>Rear Yard</u>

4.6.1   A rear yard with a minimum depth of 35 feet shall be provided except
        that where the rear of the site abuts a lane, this required minimum
        depth shall be decreased by the lane width between the rear property
        line and the ultimate centre line of the lane.

4.6.2   In the case of a site having an average depth of less than 120 feet,
        the required rear yard may be reduced in accordance with section
        11.2 of this By-law.

4.6.3   Where a building line has been established pursuant to the
        provisions of section 14.2, such building line shall be deemed to be
        the southerly boundary of any required rear yard on a riparian site,
        notwithstanding any dimension contained herein.

4.7   <u>Floor Space Ratio</u>

4.7.1   The floor space ratio shall not exceed 0.60, except that where an
        existing lot is less than 7.315 m (24 feet) in width the floor space
        ratio shall not exceed 0.45.

4.7.2   The following shall be included in the computation of floor space
        ratio:

        (a)   all floors having a minimum ceiling height of 4 feet,
              including earthen floor, both above and below ground level, to
              be measured to the extreme outer limits of the building.

        (b)   stairways, fire escapes, elevator shafts and other features
              which the Director of Planning considers similar, to be
              measured by their gross cross-sectional areas and included in
              the measurements for each floor at which they are located.

4.7.3   The following shall be excluded in the computation of floor space
        ratio:

        (a)   open balconies, canopies, sundecks, and any other
              appurtenances which, in the opinion of the Director of
              Planning, are similar to the foregoing, provided that the
              total area of all exclusions does not exceed eight percent of
              the permitted floor area;

(c)   where floors are used for off-street parking and loading,
        heating and mechanical equipment, or uses which in the opinion
        of the Director of Planning are similar to the foregoing,
        those floors or portions thereof so used, which:

        (i)   are at or below the base surface; and

        (ii)   are developed as off-street parking spaces having a
                floor located above the base surface, provided that:

                -       the spaces are located in an accessory building or
                        buildings situated in the rear yard; and

                -       the spaces do not have a length of more that 24
                        feet for the purpose of exclusion from floor space
                        ratio computation.

(d)   child day care facilities to a maximum floor area of 10
        percent of the permitted floor area, provided the Director of
        Planning, on the advice of the Director of Social Planning, is
        satisfied that there is a need for a day care facility in the
        immediate neighbourhood;

(e)   areas of undeveloped floors located above the highest storey
        or half-storey, or adjacent to a half-storey with a ceiling
        height of less than 4 feet, and to which there is no permanent
        means of access other than a hatch.

4.8   Site Coverage

4.8.1   The maximum site coverage for buildings shall be 45 percent of the
        site area, except that where an existing lot is less than 7.315 m
        (24 feet) in width the maximum site coverage for buildings shall be
        35 percent of the site area.

4.8.2   For the purpose of this section, site coverage for buildings shall
        be based on the projected area of the outside of the outermost walls
        of all buildings and includes carports, but excludes steps, eaves,
        cantilevered balconies and sundecks.

4.8.3   Except where the principal use of the site is a parking area, the
        maximum site coverage for any portion of the site used as parking
        area shall be 30 percent.

4.9   Off-Street Parking and Loading Spaces

4.9.1   Off-street parking and loading spaces shall be provided and
        maintained in accordance with the provisions of section 12 of this
        By-law.

5   RELAXATION OF REGULATIONS

5.1   The Director of Planning may relax the minimum site area
         requirements of section 4.1 with respect to any of the following
         developments on an existing lot of lesser site area on record in the
         Land Title Office for Vancouver:

         (a)   one-family dwelling.

APPENDIX 2

The First Meeting

The first meeting was held at the Oakridge Auditorium on March
4, 1986. The following is a list of participants and their
community of residence.

        Total in meeting hall........214
        total interviewed............107
        staff.........................6
        aldermen......................4

community	residents	builders	n. h. owners
Marpole	1		
Dunbar	5		
Pt.grey	5		
Kerrisdale	21		
Oakridge	30		1
Shaughnessy	4		
Arbutus ridge	3		
Total westside	69	0	1
Eastside	30	2	1
Outside Vancouver	2	2	0
Total	101	4	2

Speakers

        builders...........1
        architects.........3
        residents.........14
        total.............18

The Second Meeting

The second meeting was held at Sir Charles Tupper School auditorium on March 11, 1986. The following is a list of participants and their community of residence.

```
Total in meeting hall........261
total interviewed............190 (73%)
staff........................6
aldermen.....................0
```

community	residents	builders	n. h. owners
Hastings/sunrise	10	1	
Renfrew/collingwd	4		
Killarney	7	1	2
Sunset	9	2	1
Vic. Fraserview	9	2	
Kensington/cedar c.	9	1	
Mt. Pleasant	5	3	
Oakridge	23	1	
Kerrisdale	26	4	1
Dunbar	8		
Point grey	8		1
Arbutus	7		1
Shaughnessy	9		
Riley park	11	2	2
Grandview/woodlds.	1		
Marpole	1		
Total westside	82	5	3
Total eastside	65	12	5
Outside Vancouver	4	14	
Totals	151	31	8

Speakers

```
residents....................15
arch/builders/r.e...........15
new house owners.............1
total.......................31
```

The Third Meeting

The third meeting was held at Sir Charles Tupper Secondary
School auditorium on March 18, 1986. The full city council was
present as an official public meeting. The following is a list
of participants and their community of residence.

Community	residents	builders	n. h. owners
Hastings/sunrise	3	4	
Renfrew/collingwd	2	1	
Killarney	6	4	1
Sunset	9	6	
Vic.fraserview	8	6	
Kensingtn/cedar ctge	9	3	
Mount pleasant	2	1	
Oakridge	23		
Kerrisdale	14	2	
Dunbar	12	4	1
Point grey	12	3	1
Arbutus	13	3	
Shaughnessy	8	1	
Riley park	9	2	
Grandview/woodlds.	2		
Kitsilano	2	5	
Marpole		3	
West end		2	
Westside total	84	21	2
Eastside total	50	29	1
Outside Vancouver	0	17	0
Totals	134	67	3

Speakers

```
residents...................12
architects..................4
builders....................3
real estate.................5
new home owner..............1
total.......................25
```

APPENDIX 3A

The First Meeting

Applause meter level 5 readings (raucous) to level 1 readings (scattered).

Level 5 Responses

--Introduction of George Puil and Gordon Campbell

--'The vast majority of people who live in the neighbourhoods like them the way they are. The city gains by this change (large new houses). What do we get, nothing. Up to a year ago the City thought this was a non-issue.'

--'You just move in, go to City Hall and plead hardship and you get a permit for suites, that shouldn't be.'

--'If we delay for another 6 months to a year another 1000 of these damn things are going to go up.'

--'There seems to be a feeling that there is a worldwide population problem so we have to sacrifice our neighbourhood character and quality to accomodate density that goes up and up.'

--'What would it take to put a freeze on while this whole question is thoroughly investigated?'

--'You still get monstrosities with the new rules. It is still going to destroy our neighbourhoods and that is what you are asking us to accept.'

Level 4 Responses

--'I would like it on record that this meeting supports my motion to put a freeze on new construction.'

--'We can stop it legally for a period...well that's better than nothing, we'll take it.'

--'The idea is quite deliberately to allow these monstrosities to continue to alter the density and alter our residential character that is unique in the world.'

--'Can we not have a freeze?'

--'Many of these owners do not pay income tax, take the income to other countries and still get the homeowners grant.'

--'It is not residents that are putting up these houses, it is developers from other areas that buy up old houses and put up monstrosities that are not economically viable as an ordinary single family house.'

--'The overviewing and shadowing problem will still exist.'

--'We look at other people's homes not our own. It is important what we have to look at.'

--'Why has the City not enforced its own by-laws for single family areas?'

--'How can there be hardship suites after someone pays for a half million dollar house?'

--'The FSR has not changed. I am flabergasted by this fact.'

Level 3 Responses

--'People think that it is arbitrary relaxation of regulations that is the problem.'

--'We are reducing our standards to third world countries...we should not only be maintaining our standards but improving them.'

--'Tailor make zoning schedules to special needs and circumbstances of the many diverse residential sub-areas.'

--'If bulk is the problem then reduce FSR.'

--'All the houses were the same shape then along came one of these guys with a lot of money and no brains and put up a three storey building.'

--'We can define them in different communities later. There's no harm in accepting them now.' (new regulations)

--'These people don't pay taxes(suites). They are not adding anything to the city.'

Level 2 Responses

--'What qualification do you need to be a builder?'

--'The City should require it to conform to the setbacks of the street.'

--'What's the use of the new regulations if you're not even enforcing the old ones?'

Level 1 Responses

--'How do these contractors get a permit to build these monstrosities they are not going to live in, they build them to sell for a profit.'

--'What about additional survey costs?'

APPENDIX 3B

The Second Meeting

Level 5 Responses

--'I am not against demolitions. I am against the lack of information about what will come after the demolitions. If we're talking about neighbourliness we must have assurances. We need a sense of what's coming, that's all I ask.'

--'Most of the discussion is after the fact. You could avoid a lot of the problem by dealing with the issue before demolition permits are issued.

--'What has the City been doing for 50 years if you're changing quite dramatically the regulations in a few months and not achieve this nebulous thing called neighbourliness, affecting 200 million worth of property development?(builder)

--'Everyone seems to be knocking the builder, they build to economic constraints.(builder)

--'What happens to the little old lady whose house we buy and give it to a builder. She gets 80,000 and can buy a condominium with it. With the new regulations we're only looking at paying the old lady 55-60,000.(realter)

--'If the facts show that Vancouver families are getting smaller why do we need bigger houses?

--'What stands today is a testimony to the arrogance of the builder, the insensitivity of the developer, and greed. I hope your ordinance will pass to prevent further monstrosities from being built.

--'These are secondary suites, not illegal suites, this is not going against the future development of Vancouver.(developer)

--'If we do this in such a short time there will be major repercussions economic and social for years to come.(builder)

Level 4 Responses

--'Could we not have the buildings in proportion with the adjacent properties perhaps at no more than 40% greater density.

--'Our group is concerned how hard it is to get information

regarding demolition and building plans. The ease at which demolitions can occur, they are handed out by a clerk for a small fee. There are no assurances how the new construction will conform to the streetscape.

--'Go regulate the westside and leave the eastside alone.(builder)

--'If people are paying 280,000 for a lot I don't think you can restrict them to building a bungalow.(builder)

--'It depends on different areas and circumbstances that deserve consideration, many houses will become noncomforming.(architect)

--'Regulate all other lots but not 33 by 120 lots, leave the little guy alone.'(builder)

--'This won't stop a 27 foot high wall being built next to the little house.'

--'This will create a new Vancouver special, a flat roofed box.'(architect)

--'People living in the lower level are extended families. The neighbouring going on is within the confines of that house. Their lifestyle is the envy of a lot of people.'(realter)

--'In 1974 you had to have full development plans before demolition. You also had to sign that the basement would not be used for anything but a single family dwelling.'

--'You are attempting to change in an extremely short period what was fine for 50 years, it should take years for you to modify it.'(builder)

Level 3 Responses

--'Could you quantify neighbourliness? What does it mean?(architect)

--'Architects design a house then walk away saying isn't that aesthetically pleasing, they live somewhere else. I have nothing but sympathy for those living in the immediate vicinity of these houses.'

--'Where is there 75 foot deep house? Most homes are 25-30 feet. 75 feet overshadows most gardens and its happening now in my neighbourhood.

--'The pictures are isolated cases for people in the West End who support you. How many Eastsiders are at the meeting?(builder)

the way these meetings are arranged is a joke. There are no

councilmembers. Neat stickhandling.'

--'27 foot height restriction is no good on a sloping lot.(architect)

--'We must have a soft pencil in the setback so we can have creativity.'(architect)

--'If you happen to be next to one of the large houses your lot will be worth more because you can build there.'(builder)

--'I'm sure you're not telling us we have to conform to streetscape the style of houses built in the pre-war.'(architect)

--'We should take a lesson from them. They have grandparents and cousins and great celebrations in the house.'(realter)

--'This should not be for people who already have their own house. Developers, they make the monstrosities. I want more trees. I wish you would find other ways than height to enhance our neighbourhood.'

--'70% of Vancouver is RS-1. Obviously a very small percentage are at these meetings. Most are not even aware of what may be happening to them in the near future.'(realter)

Level 2 Responses

--'I agree that some of these buildings are too large.'

--'You are talking too technical and detailed for most of the people here.'

--'After 25-30 years the streetscape is going to look very nice.'(builder)

--'If it goes through it will ruin Vancouver, especially the eastside. Why not the westside with the bigger lots.'(builder)

--'The small houses need to be changed. Most housing in Vancouver needs replacement.'(builder)

--'Why has the city not asked for input from developers, builders and architects as well as citizens?'(architect)

--'Peserve single family areas for those who value that. You are not being honest about what you are doing.'

--'The Planning Department should accept the blame, not un-neighbourly citizens in Vancouver.'(builder)

--'The little old ladies we are talking about are very well taken care of as far as I'm concerned. They are very happy to

deal with me.'(realter)

--'Different neighbourhoods have different needs. The illegal suite issue is fuelled by these large houses.'

Level 1 Responses

--'Vancouver is praised for having the best housing design in Canada.'(builder)

--'It is not enforcable, the one of height, because you have to get height from neighbour.'

--'I support the general thrust of this program, to preserve existing streetscapes.'

--'I look at the market point of view. People ask me how is the market today, not how is the neighbourliness today.'(realter)

APPENDIX 3C

The Third Meeting

1. A Residential Representative

--the new houses were ugly.

--their property was being reduced to lot value.

--the new houses invaded their privacy.

--some had a 30 foot high wall next to their garden.

--all the vegetation is usually removed.

--traffic is increased.

--perfectly good affordable housing is destroyed.

--illegal suites are a factor, they simply add to the cost of
the property.

--the term 'summer kitchen' is a loophole that should be
eliminated.

--citizens have no input, there is nothing you can do.

--the builders are rude and arrogant, creating a mess, noisy,
and totally unsympathetic.

Other selected comments from residents were;

--The houses are not built to specs,things change, the elevation
changes and the city does nothing about it.

--A lot of people enjoy living in their back yards.

--We need to respect the quality of our neighbourhoods.

--Maintain the continuity of the streeyscape.

--It is a poor use of resouces, to tear down well constructed
housing that is still good for 30-40 years.

--Architects want you to study some more so they can put out 5-
600 more monstrosities.

--Anyone can be a builder with no expertise or qualification.

--All houses built in the 20s and 30s were set up in a subdivision to give the best opportunity for a view.

--This is a tactic by the Planning Department to ruin RS-1 and densify.

--For the board of variance, a small notice in the paper is no good.

--Why were monstrosities allowed in the first place?

2. Development Industry Representatives

Builders, architects, and real estate agents made presentations as well, receiving applause from their supporters. It was noted that all builders left immediately after speaking, not remaining to listen to other speakers. Their comments included;

--what we are doing is sending the old people to rest homes early.

--We should privatize planning.

--This is down-zoning and it should go in the round file.

--You are stealing people's property values.

--You will get worse monstrosities with these regulations.

All of the speakers could not be heard in the time allotted for delegations and the meeting had to be adjourned with a committment to hear the remaining speakers the following week.

At the conclusion of the meeting, staff was instructed to make minor revisions to the zoning proposals including modifying the height requirements.

At the regular council meeting of April 29, 1986 the changes to the RS-1 zoning schedule were adopted by a vote of council. The new by-law is by-law 5986. (appendix 5)

APPENDIX 4

SURVEY QUESTIONS

1. Male/female
2. Owner/tenant
3. Are children at home
4. Length of residency
5. Ethnic background
----

1. Do you feel there is a problem regarding new construction in your neighbourhood?

2. What do you think about the new houses on your block?

3. What do you specifically like/dislike about them?

4. If you had a choice how would you change them?

5. Do you feel the neighbourhood is being affected in any way?

6. What is the future of this neighbourhood?

7. Is that what you want?

8. What are your future plans?

APPENDIX 5

RS-1 DISTRICT SCHEDULE

1   **INTENT**

The intent of this Schedule is to maintain the single-family residential character of the District.

2   **OUTRIGHT APPROVAL USES**

2.1   Subject to all other provisions of this By-law and to compliance with the regulations of this Schedule, the uses listed in section 2.2 shall be permitted in this District and shall be issued a permit.

2.2   **Uses**

2.2.A   *   Accessory Buildings customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this Schedule, provided that:

(a)   no accessory building exceeds 12 feet in height measured to the highest point of the roof if a flat roof, to the deck line of a mansard roof, or to the mean height level between the eaves and the ridge of a gable, hip or gambrel roof, provided that no portion of an accessory building may exceed 15 feet in height;

(b)   all accessory buildings are located in the rear yard and in no case are less than 5 feet from a flanking street, subject also to the provisions of section 11.1 of this By-law, except that accessory buildings or portions thereof which:

(i)   are located between the principal building and the minimum rear yard required by section 4.6, or

(ii)   extend into the required rear yard for a depth of 12 feet or less,

shall comply with the minimum side yard requirements of section 4.5;

(c)   the total floor area, measured to the extreme outer limits of the building, of all accessory buildings is not greater than 35 percent of the minimum rear yard prescribed in this Schedule, or 520 square feet, whichever is the greater;

(d)   not more than 80 percent of the width of the rear yard of any lot is occupied by accessory buildings.

*   Accessory Uses customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed in this section.

2.2.DW [Dwelling]

*   One-Family Dwelling.

City of Vancouver   RS-1
Zoning and Development By-law   March 1987

3   CONDITIONAL APPROVAL USES

3.1   Subject to all other provisions of this By-law, including section
         3.3.3, and the provisions and regulations of this Schedule, the
         Development Permit Board may approve any of the uses listed in
         section 3.2 including such conditions or additional regulations as
         it may decide, provided that before making a decision it:

         (a)   considers the intent of this Schedule and the recommendations
               of any advisory groups, plan or guidelines approved by Council
               for the area; and

         (b)   notifies such adjacent property owners and residents it deems
               necessary.

3.2   Uses

3.2.A   *   Accessory Buildings customarily ancillary to any of the uses
         listed in this Schedule, other than as provided for in section 2.2.A
         of this Schedule.

         *   Accessory Uses customarily ancillary to any of the uses listed
         in this section.

         *   Ambulance Station.

3.2.C   *   Child Day Care Facility.

         *   Church, subject to the provisions of section 11.7 of this
         By-law.

         *   Community Centre or Neighbourhood House.

3.2.D   *   Deposition or extraction of material so as to alter the
         configuration of the land.

3.2.DW   [Dwelling]

         *   Dwelling Unit for a caretaker or servant in conjunction with a
         one-family dwelling, provided that the site or dwelling is of
         sufficient size to warrant the need for a full-time caretaker or
         servant.

         *   Dwelling Unit in conjunction with a neighbourhood grocery
         store which was in existence prior to July 29, 1980, subject to the
         provisions of section 11.16 of this By-law.

3.2.G   *   Golf Course.

3.2.H   *   Hospital, but not including a conversion from an existing building, a mental hospital or an animal hospital, subject to the provisions of section 11.9 of this By-law.

3.2.I   *   Institution of a religious, philanthropic or charitable character.

3.2.L   *   Local Area Office.

3.2.M   *   Marina, but not including boat building and major repairs and overhaul of boats.

3.2.N   *   Neighbourhood Grocery Store operating immediately prior to July 29, 1980, subject to the provisions of section 11.16 of this By-law.

3.2.P   *   Park or Playground.

      *   Public Authority Building or use essential in this District.

3.2.PK   [Parking]

      *   Parking Area ancillary to a principal use on an adjacent site.

3.2.S   *   School (public or private), subject to the provisions of section 11.8 of this By-law.

      *   Social Service Centre operated by a non-profit society.

      *   Special Needs Residential Facility, subject to the provisions of section 11.17.

      *   Stadium or any similar place of assembly.

3.2.UC   [Utility and Communication]

      *   Public Utility.

4   REGULATIONS

All uses approved under sections 2 and 3 of this District Schedule shall be subject to the following regulations:

4.1   Site Area

4.1.1   The minimum site area for a one-family dwelling shall be 3,600 square feet.

4.1.2   Where the site is less than 32 feet in width or less than 3,600 square feet in area, the design of any new dwelling shall first require the approval of the Director of Planning or the Development

Permit Board, as the case may be, who shall before making a decision consider any design guidelines approved by Council.

4.2   Frontage -- Not Applicable.

4.3   Height

4.3.1   The height of a building shall not at any point protrude above an envelope located in compliance with the side yard regulation and formed by planes vertically extending 21 feet in height and then extending inward and upward at an angle of 45 degrees from the horizontal to the line where the planes intersect, provided that in no case shall the maximum height of a building exceed the lesser of 30 feet or 2-1/2 storeys.

4.4   Front Yard

4.4.1   A front yard of 24 feet shall be provided, except that:

(a)   on a site where the average front yard depth of the two adjacent sites on each side of the site is less than 20 feet or more than 28 feet, the depth of the required front yard shall be that average, subject to the following:

(i)   if one or more of the adjacent sites is vacant, it shall be deemed to have a front yard setback of 24 feet;

(ii)   if one or more of the adjacent sites front on a street other than that of the development site, then such adjacent sites shall not be used in computing the average;

(iii)   where the site is adjacent to a flanking street or lane, the average depth shall be computed using the remainder of the adjacent sites; and

(b)   on a double fronting site the Director of Planning may vary the front yard requirement.

4.5   Side Yard

4.5.1   A side yard with a minimum width of not less than 10 percent of the width of the site shall be provided on each side of the building.

4.5.2   In the case of a corner site, the exterior side yard shall be regulated by the provisions of section 11.1 of this By-law.

4.6   Rear Yard

4.6.1   A rear yard with a minimum depth of 45 percent of the site depth shall be provided except that where the rear yard abuts a lane the minimum required rear yard shall be decreased by the lane width between the rear property line and the ultimate centre line of the

lane. Where no lane exists the site depth shall be reduced by 10 feet for the purposes of calculating the required rear yard, which shall be measured from the rear property line. Accessory buildings and any portions of a principal building which comply with the accessory building regulations, which for this section 4.6.1 shall not be considered as part of the principal building, may be located within the required rear yard. Roof gardens, sun decks, and any other appurtenances which, in the opinion of the Director of Planning, are similar to the foregoing, may be located in the required rear yard on accessory buildings or portions of a principal building but only to a maximum depth of 12 feet.

4.6.2   The Director of Planning may permit a decrease of the rear yard to a depth of not less than the average yard depth of the two adjacent sites on each side of the site, subject to the following:

(a)   where an adjacent site is vacant the average rear yard depth shall be computed using the remainder of the adjacent sites;

(b)   where any adjacent site has its rear property line abutting the side property line of the site, or any of the adjacent sites, no site adjoining that side property line shall be used in computing the average yard depth;

(c)   where the site is adjacent to a flanking street or lane, the average yard depth shall be computed using the remainder of the adjacent sites.

4.6.3   Where a building line has been established pursuant to the provisions of section 14.2, such building line shall be deemed to be the southerly boundary of any required rear yard on a riparian site, notwithstanding any dimension contained herein.

4.7   Floor Space Ratio

4.7.1   The floor space ratio shall not exceed 0.60, except that where an existing lot is less than 7.315 m (24 feet) in width the floor space ratio shall not exceed 0.45.

4.7.2   The following shall be included in the computation of floor space ratio:

(a)   all floors, including earthen floor, to be measured to the extreme outer limits of the building;

(b)   stairways, fire escapes, elevator shafts and other features which the Director of Planning considers similar, to be measured by their gross cross-sectional areas and included in the measurements for each floor at which they are located.

4.7.3 The following shall be excluded in the computation of floor space ratio:

    (a) open balconies, canopies, sundecks, and any other appurtenances which, in the opinion of the Director of Planning, are similar to the foregoing, provided that the total area of all exclusions does not exceed eight percent of the permitted floor area;

    (b) patios and roof gardens, provided that the Director of Planning first approves the design of sunroofs and walls;

    (c) where floors are used for off-street parking and loading or uses which, in the opinion of the Director of Planning, are similar to the foregoing, those floors or portions thereof not exceeding 24 feet in length so used which:

        (i) are located in an accessory building and any portions of a principal building which comply with the accessory building regulations, or

        (ii) on sites that have no developed secondary access and are within a portion of the principal building which does not otherwise comply with the accessory building regulations, up to a maximum of 450 square feet.

    (d) child day care facilities to a maximum floor area of 10 percent of the permitted floor area, provided the Director of Planning, on the advice of the Director of Social Planning, is satisfied that there is a need for a day care facility in the immediate neighbourhood;

    (e) areas of undeveloped floors located above the highest storey or half-storey, or adjacent to a half-storey with a ceiling height of less than 4 feet, and to which there is no permanent means of access other than a hatch;

    (f) floor located at or below finished grade with a ceiling height of less than 4 feet.

4.8 Site Coverage

4.8.1 The maximum site coverage for buildings shall be 45 percent of the site area, except that where an existing lot is less than 7.315 m (24 feet) in width the maximum site coverage for buildings shall be 35 percent of the site area.

4.8.2   For the purpose of this section, site coverage for buildings shall be based on the projected area of the outside of the outermost walls of all buildings and includes carports, but excludes steps, eaves, balconies and sundecks.

4.8.3   Except where the principal use of the site is a parking area, the maximum site coverage for any portion of the site used as parking area shall be 30 percent.

4.9   [Deleted -- see Parking By-law.]

4.10 to   (Reserved.)
4.15

4.16   Building Depth

4.16.1   The distance between the front and the rear of a principal building shall not exceed 75 feet. Accessory buildings, or any portions of a principal building which comply with the accessory building regulations, are exempt from this regulation.

5   RELAXATION OF REGULATIONS

5.1   The Director of Planning may relax the minimum site area requirements of section 4.1 with respect to any of the following developments on an existing lot of lesser site area on record in the Land Title Office for Vancouver:

(a)   one-family dwelling.

5.2   The Director of Planning may relax the height and yard provisions of sections 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 of this Schedule where, due to conditions peculiar either to the site or to the proposed development, literal enforcement would result in unnecessary hardship, provided that:

(a)   he first has regard to applicable guidelines or policies which City Council may from time to time determine;

(b)   he notifies such adjacent property owners and residents he deems necessary; and

(c)   in no case shall the height be increased to more than 35 feet or the yard requirements be reduced to less than 60 percent of the amount specified in this Schedule.

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