

Corporation of the District of Maple Ridge

***PUBLIC HEARING***

February 20, 2007

The Minutes of the Public Hearing held in the Council Chamber of the Municipal Hall, 11995 Haney Place, Maple Ridge, British Columbia on February 20, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.

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***PRESENT***

*Elected Officials*

Mayor G. Robson  
Councillor E. Daykin  
Councillor A. Hogarth  
Councillor L. King  
Councillor C. Speirs  
Councillor K. Stewart

*Appointed Staff*

J. Rule, Chief Administrative Officer  
C. Carter, Manager of Community Planning  
R. Riach, Property and Risk Manager  
A. Gaunt, Confidential Secretary

***REGRETS***

Councillor J. Dueck

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Mayor Robson called the meeting to order. The Property and Risk Manager explained the procedure and rules of order of the Public Hearing. He advised that in accordance with the Community Charter, once a Public Hearing item is closed, no further input into that item can be received by the Municipal Council until they are either adopted or defeated. The bylaws will be considered further at the next Council Meeting on February 27, 2007.

The Mayor then called upon the Manager of Community Planning to present the following items on the agenda:

**1) RZ/068/06**

**MAPLE RIDGE ZONE AMENDING BYLAW NO. 6430-2006**

**PURPOSE:** To amend the Zoning Bylaw to allow for mid-size daycare facilities for up to 15 children in residential areas.

The Zone Amending Bylaw does the following:

- defines “neighbourhood daycare” as an establishment for the provision of care for a maximum of 15 children in a home environment;

- amends the definition of “Family Daycare” to update the reference to the Community Care and Assisted Living Act and to clarify that Provincial regulations provide for up to 8 children in care in a home based environment (this includes preschools and out-of-school care);
- amends the general use provisions of the Zoning Bylaw to establish criteria for neighbourhood daycare centres in most residential zones;
- amends the Residential Zones chart in the Zoning Bylaw to provide for Neighbourhood Daycare in most residential zones, except R-3 (Special Amenity Residential District), R-1 (Residential District) and CD-1-93 (Amenity Residential District) zones; and
- amends the definition of “Child Care Centre” to update reference to the “Community Care and Assisted Living Act”.

The Manager of Community Planning gave a power point presentation providing the following information:

- Application Information
- Facts
- Provincial Regulations
- Current Maple Ridge Regulations
- Proposed Regulations – Neighbourhood Daycare – Permit As Of Right
- Summary of Bylaw 6430-2006
- Definitions
- Parking and Loading Bylaw

Mayor Robson asked staff for clarification of the proposed bylaw amendment.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that, under the current zoning bylaw, a person wishing to operate a daycare in a residential area in the District of Maple Ridge can have up to eight children and will need a provincial license to operate. An application to operate a daycare must be made to the Health Unit which then requires the municipality to approve zoning as well as ensure that fire and building regulations have been met. If an application for a daycare is made which involves more than eight children, it must be zoned either commercial or institutional.

### **Tara McKean**

Ms. McKean asked why a daycare couldn't be opened in a residence with a suite. She also asked if a suite had previously been in existence, could this area be converted to a daycare.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that a main issue would be the lack of availability of parking as most single family residences would not have the capacity for this amount of parking. She also advised that an area previously used as a suite could be converted to a daycare.

**Mitch Cant**

Mr. Cant stated that many restrictions had been placed on the potential operation of a daycare in regard to secondary suites, other home occupations and parking and questioned whether or not restrictions should be made instead around the availability of parking rather than on a home operating another business. He also expressed that Provincial Licensing Guidelines appeared to be based on space and availability.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that the bylaw being addressed had been written in same format as other general regulation provisions to allow for consistency. According to these bylaws, a home cannot have more than one type of business use, which includes having a suite.

The Manager of Community Planning also advised that although a municipality can decide on the maximum number of children it is prepared to allow in a daycare situation through zoning, local government regulations must comply with the Provincial Act which dictates the number of children allowed in specific daycare situations.

Mr. Cant questioned whether allowing commercial daycares to take over a neighbourhood was a positive step or whether this bylaw would encourage people to run unlicensed daycares as a way to provide for the need parents have to keep children of varying ages together in the same facility. He also commented on the change in wording on this year's business license which now stated that family daycares could operate with eight children compared to seven children last year, despite Fraser Health's stipulations of family daycares being restricted to seven. He also mentioned the higher fees for this year's business license.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that the province does state that a family daycare can only have up to seven children. She also explained that there have been licenses issued in the District of Maple Ridge for up to ten children due to a combination of daycare situations. She reiterated that although the District of Maple Ridge business license has stated eight children are permissible, the provincial number will take precedent over this.

Mr. Cant expressed that he would like to see Council approach the Provincial Government and encourage them to rescind closing the Child Care Resource and Referral Centres throughout British Columbia.

**Lynn Malbeuf**

Ms. Malbeuf asked if the specification that a proposed neighbourhood daycare couldn't be within 200 metres of another neighbourhood daycare related only to neighbourhood daycares or also to licenced family or group daycares.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that this specification pertained only to neighbourhood daycares and that family daycares would be exempt from the 200 metre requirement.

Ms. Malbeuf stated that although the idea of the proposed bylaw was fine, it seemed unrealistic in the sense that neighbourhood group daycares are required by provincial regulations to employ qualified staff with Early Childhood Education training and that these types of people are in high demand.

Ms. Malbeuf also spoke to the provincial funding cuts which will eventually see the Child Care Resource and Referral Centres close down in September 2007.

### **Sherry Welykholowa**

Ms. Welykholowa questioned the purpose of amending a bylaw which could actually encourage people to overextend on what they are allowed to do legally. She explained that under current provisions, a daycare was allowed seven children as a family daycare and that group centres were allowed eight children, although this qualification was specific to children's ages as well as requiring an Early Childhood Education. She cited a case in her neighbourhood where there were several unlicensed daycares with anywhere from eight to ten children as an example of an amendment to the existing bylaw giving people who were already not following the system a further advantage.

Ms. Welykholowa also stated that she was unaware of any care providers being asked for input as to the impact of the proposed amended bylaw and questioned whether a one to fifteen child ratio was going to improve quality care for children.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that the province has many categories of daycare, however, in local government there are only two classifications and therefore, the District would like to establish a third. She emphasized that despite the zoning bylaw, the province will dictate the number of children allowed in a certain classification of daycare and explained that the proposed bylaw only applied to facilities licenced by the province. If a facility was not licenced by the province, the District of Maple Ridge will not issue a business license under this classification of the zoning bylaw.

Ms. Welykholowa asked what had prompted the proposed changes to the zoning bylaw.

The Manager of Community Planning advised that requests had been received from residents within the community and that during the Official Community Plan review, it had been requested that work be done on easing up on regulations around daycare.

Ms. Welykholowa asked for a definition of areas not recommended for this zoning.

Mayor Robson advised that all residential areas except extremely small lots were included in this zoning.

There being no further comment, the Mayor declared this item dealt with.

Having given all those persons whose interests were deemed affected by the matters contained herein a chance to be heard, the Mayor terminated the Public Hearing at 7:33 p.m.

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G. Robson, Mayor

Certified Correct

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R. Riach, Property and Risk Manager