

City of Maple Ridge

TO: Her Worship Mayor Nicole Read
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
MEETING DATE: May 1, 2018
FILE NO: 2017-360-RZ
MEETING: Workshop
SUBJECT: Detached Garden Suite Program Review: Pilot Project Process

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Detached Garden Suites (DGS) are currently permitted in Maple Ridge through regulations in the Zoning Bylaw. In August 2016, Council directed a review of the DGS and Secondary Suites (SS) regulations in an effort to expand and encourage the construction of more units. This review has been underway since the Fall of 2017 and a number of potential expansion options are being explored.

At the February 6, 2018 Council workshop, the outcomes of a public consultation process on potential expansion of the SS and DGS regulations were presented, including the community's feedback on several possible options. During this workshop, Council directed that staff provide information on pilot projects to:

- Allow a Secondary Suite and DGS on the same lot;
- Allow a DGS size to be a minimum of 20.3 m² (219 ft²); and
- Allow a DGS size to be up to 140m² (1500 ft²) or 15% of the lot area, whichever is less.

A pilot project suggests the creation of tangible examples and in order to provide this for each of the above, interested private property owners would need to be brought into this project. In order to facilitate such a pilot project, the following steps are needed:

1. Identification of property owners interested in constructing a DGS unit as described in one of the above configurations;
2. Council adoption of a Zoning Bylaw text amendment for each pilot project property.

To help inform Council's understanding of the proposed pilot projects, between steps 1 and 2 above, an interim step is proposed to prepare a "Look-Book" document which will provide initial conceptual DGS images of what each pilot project would look like if constructed. For each property, the Look-Book document will contain site information, a site plan, and abstract images of a future DGS unit. The intent is to compile concepts for approximately 5-10 existing single-family properties with information that can be used to inform Council's decisions regarding each pilot project Zoning Bylaw amendment. Prior to proceeding with Zoning Bylaw text amendments, the Look-Book will be presented to Council for endorsement.

The Look-Book is a booklet with a collection of site information, site plans, and abstract images that will be produced for each property.

Property owners selected for the DGS pilot project must agree to proceed with preparing building permit plans and obtaining permit approvals upon Council endorsement of the Look-Book and subsequent adoption of a Zoning Bylaw text amendments.

This report presents an outline and process for a DGS pilot project.

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT staff be directed to proceed with the DGS Pilot Project Process, outlined in the report titled, DGS Program Review: Pilot Project Process, dated May 1, 2018.

1.0 BACKGROUND:

While DGS units are currently permitted in Maple Ridge, through Zoning Bylaw regulations, an exploration into the expansion of these regulations is currently underway. The review of SS and DGS regulations was initialized at the August 29, 2016 Council workshop, wherein Council directed staff to look into expanding these programs. A scoping report for the SS review was presented to Council on September 19, 2017 and the DGS scoping report was presented on October 3, 2017. Each of these reports included an outline for a public consultation process and received Council endorsement.

Public consultation commenced in November 16, 2017 with a DGS stakeholder workshop, followed by a public open house for SS and DGS on November 25, 2017. The open house included a questionnaire requesting the community's input on several potential options for expanding the SS and DGS regulations. The questionnaire was made available online after the open house event for approximately three weeks.

The outcomes of the public consultation were presented at Council Workshop on February 6, 2018. At that meeting, Council directed staff as follows:

1. Provide information on pilot projects to:

- a. Allow a Secondary Suite and DGS on the same lot;
- b. Allow a DGS size to be a minimum of 20.3 m² (219 ft²); and
- c. Allow a DGS size to be up to 140m² (1500 ft²) or 15% of the lot area, whichever is less.

2. Undertake further research and report back to Council on:

- a. Allowing a Secondary Suite in all single-family residential zones;
- b. Allow a Secondary Suite within a Duplex unit (RT-1 zone);
- c. Allowing a DGS in all single-family residential zones;
- d. Allowing flexibility in siting a DGS on a lot;
- e. Allowing 2-storey units and units above a garage in all DGS zones;
- f. Allowing Tiny Homes as a permanent DGS structure;
- g. Allowing Tiny Homes as a temporary DGS structure; and
- h. Removing owner-occupancy requirement for Secondary Suites and DGS.

- 3. Undertake interdepartmental/stakeholder processes to:**
- a. Review the building permit application process; and
 - b. Develop an approach for creating pre-approved DGS building permit plans.

Council direction for information on pilot projects (in item 1 above) and the creation of pre-approved DGS building permit plans (item 3(b) above) are discussed in this report. Subsequent reports will come forward to Council at a later date to discuss undertaking further research on DGS expansion options under item 2 above and a process to review the building permit application process under item 3(a) above.

2.0 DISCUSSION

The aim of the proposed DGS pilot project is to enable built DGS units on existing single-family properties to create tangible examples of a:

- Secondary Suite and DGS on the same lot;
- DGS between 20.3 m² (219 ft²) and 36m² (388 ft²); or
- DGS up to 140m² (1500 ft²) or 15% of the lot area, whichever is less¹.

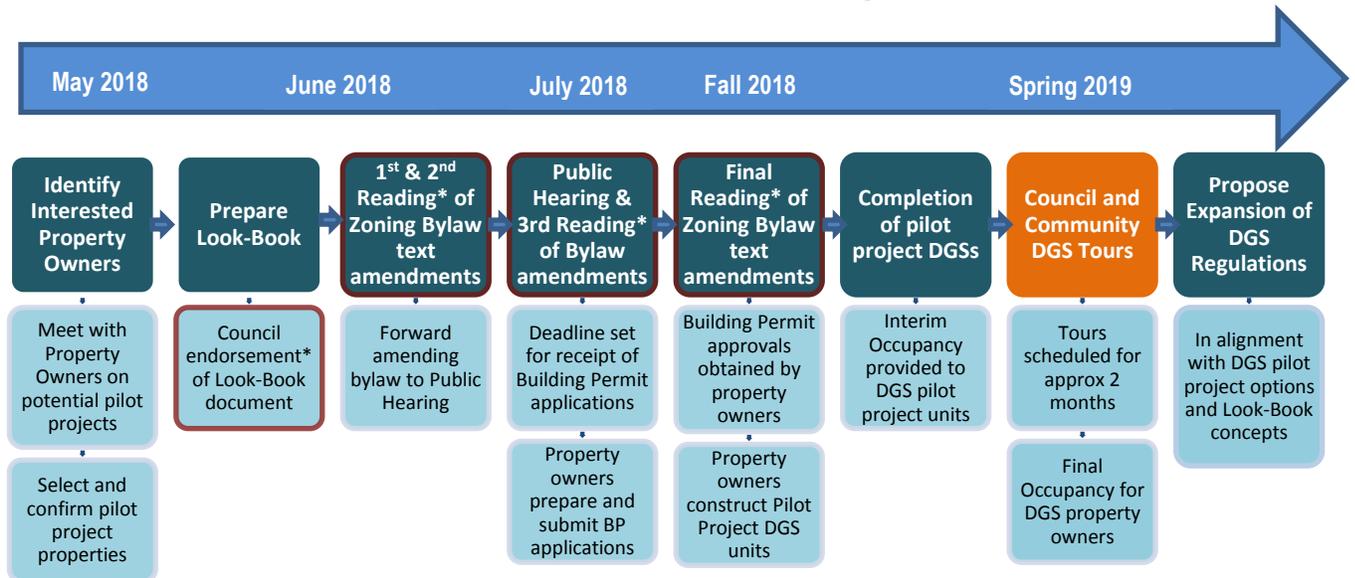
Given that the intent of a pilot project is to limit a regulatory opportunity and not have it broadly available at the outset, it will be necessary to identify a small number of specific single-family property owners who are interested in building one of the above and the adoption of text amendments to the Zoning Bylaw for each pilot project property.

One additional step proposed to be integrated early on in the pilot project is the compilation of a Look-Book document that contains a conceptual design for each property selected. The intent of creating a Look-Book prior to DGS construction is to provide a common viewpoint early in the process of how the units will appear on site and within the neighbourhood context, thereby enabling Council to make a more informed decision on Zoning Bylaw text amendment approvals. It should be noted that full DGS designs, that indicate building style, siding, and colour, will not be provided with the conceptual Look-Book designs as property owners will undertake such efforts later within their own DGS design process.

¹ Note that under current regulations, DGS units are permitted to be a minimum size of 37m² (398 ft²) to a maximum size of 90m² (968 ft²), or 10% of the lot area, whichever is less.

2.1 DGS Pilot Project Process

The proposed process for a DGS pilot project is mapped out in the diagram below.



* Council consideration required

Through the process outlined above, it will be important to document the experience of the property owners involved as well as identify lessons learned to help inform a future expansion of the DGS regulations. Additionally, feedback from neighbours of the pilot project properties will be sought throughout the process.

2.2 Steps in Process

2.2.1 Identifying Pilot Project Properties

The public consultation process for SS and DGS in November 2017 generated substantial interest within the community and since February 2018 when the report on outcomes went to Council, several property owners have put forward their names and contact information for any upcoming pilot project opportunities. However, most of these property owners live on large lots and are interested in constructing a 140m² (1500 ft²) DGS unit. As such, more advertising will be needed to create pilot project examples that include providing DGS examples on a variety of lot sizes and using different construction or design techniques. Advertisements can be placed in the Maple Ridge Times newspaper, posted on the Maple Ridge website, FaceBook page, and Twitter, as well as drafting emails to property owners who participated in the public consultation and requested to be kept updated on progress of the SS and DGS review process. Where possible, property owners will be encouraged to talk with their neighbours early in the process and discuss their intentions for DGS construction.

It is anticipated that between 5 to 10 property owners may be needed to demonstrate the various permutations resulting from differences in site configurations, topography and servicing requirements. This will ensure that if one or two property owners are unable to meet their commitment of potential future DGS construction, other examples will help fill the void. Additionally, property owners may choose different forms of construction, such as wood-framed or

modular, which will provide different forms and styles for other property owners to view and consider for their own future DGS project.

Planning, Building, and Engineering staff will form a selection committee to identify a short-list of candidates and then meet with prospective DGS pilot project property owners to confirm who will participate. Once property owners are identified for each of the three DGS pilot project options², commitments will be secured through a Letter of Agreement along with a fee (up to \$1,000) to cover costs for creating the Look-Book concepts. Additionally, each DGS pilot project property owner will be required to enter into a housing agreement to secure commitments made during the pilot project, such as preparing building permit plans at their own expense and then gifting the plans to the City. Each housing agreement will be created by bylaw and requires Council consideration and approval. These plans could then be made available for future use by property owners, as pre-approved building permit plans, if the Zoning Bylaw regulations are amended to incorporate the pilot project options for all eligible properties.

2.2.2 Preparing the Look-Book Concepts

The Look-Book visual concepts are intended to establish a shared understanding of what expanded options for DGS developments may look like in terms of integration with existing development on the site and within the neighbourhood. It is anticipated that once pilot project properties are selected, it will take approximately one month for the Look-Book to be completed and brought to Council for consideration and endorsement. Look-Books are commonly used in the fashion industry to illustrate a product through a collection of photos. Staff are proposing to expand this concept to clearly show an expanded DGS program in a form that is easily understood by all.

Small Housing BC (SHBC) has been working with City staff on the SS and DGS program review and they have offered their expertise to create the Look-Book for this pilot project. For each pilot project property selected, the Look-Book will contain a:

- Profile of property owners that includes what the DGS pilot project means for them;
- Description of the neighbourhood context;
- Site conditions, showing the lot dimensions, topography, existing access, parking, buildings and servicing;
- Site plan, showing footprint for infill development, including any new accesses for walkways and parking;
- Outline of servicing requirements, including water, storm, and sanitary;
- Conceptual elevations of DGS unit, including views adjacent to existing buildings on site and from neighbouring properties; and
- Projected costs for building foundation, site servicing, and construction.

² 1) SS and DGS on one lot; 2) Minimum size DGS of 20.3m² (219 ft²); 3) Maximum size DGS of 140m² (1500 ft²).

It is possible that a property owner may propose an alternative or variation to the 3 pilot project examples directed by Council (being the SS & DGS; smaller DGS, and larger DGS). For example, along with several inquiries received, property owners have expressed interest in a two-storey 140m² (1500 ft²) DGS, to enable construction over a garage and preserve more yard space. Additionally, inquiries have been received regarding allowing a DGS with a crawl space for storage. It should be noted that these options may be included in the Look-Book as additional possible pilot project examples, as property owners are aiming to create an accessory dwelling unit that meets their needs. If this is the case, it should be noted that Council will have an opportunity to review and comment on the concepts of any new options prior to proceeding to 1st and 2nd Reading of the text amendment bylaw.

A draft of the Look-Book will be provided to neighbouring property owners of the pilot project properties with an invitation to forward any comments and attend the public hearing for the text amendment bylaw.

A final element of the Look-Book is that it can become a living document, whereby as the DGS pilot project concepts evolve, if approved and permitted, the Look-Book can be equally expanded upon. Staff will investigate opportunities to expand the Look-Book at the end of the process with final design drawings and costing figures for each of the pilot projects.

2.2.3 Text Amendments to Zoning Bylaw

Upon Council endorsement of the completed Look-Book concepts, various text amendments to the Zoning Bylaw for the pilot project properties will be brought to Council for 1st and 2nd Readings with a recommendation that the amending bylaws be forwarded to Public Hearing. The text amendment bylaws are necessary to enable the Look-Book conceptual examples to be constructed on the pilot project properties.

If Council grants 1st and 2nd Readings to each text amendment bylaw, it is anticipated that the bylaw will be scheduled for the July 2018 public hearing making Council consideration of 3rd Reading possible before August.

2.2.4 Housing Agreement Bylaws

A housing agreement bylaw will be required for each pilot project property (as is currently required with all DGS building permit applications) that will include the property owner's agreement to various conditions including:

- The timely preparation and iteration, at the property owner's cost, building permit plans submitted to the City for review and approval;
- Adherence to strict deadlines in order to process all housing agreement and text amendments concurrently;
- Subject to copyright interests, approved building permit plans to be gifted to the City for potential future use as pre-approved DGS plans;
- Commencing construction of the DGS immediately upon adoption of the text amendment to the Zoning Bylaw and building permit issuance with the aim to have all DGS pilot projects completed at roughly the same time;

- Allowing tours of the constructed DGS for Council and the community for approximately two months prior to receiving final occupancy;
- Use of images and their story in ongoing web and print media to further showcase the pilot project outcomes.

The housing agreement bylaws will be brought to Council for 1st and 2nd Reading along with the text amendment bylaw.

2.2.5 Preparation of Building Permit Plans and Final Reading of Bylaws

After 3rd Reading of the text amendment bylaws and the respective housing agreement bylaws, pilot project property owners will be asked to begin preparation of their building permit plans. All costs related to preparation of building permit plans will be the responsibility of the property owners.

When the Building Department is ready to issue building permits for the DGS pilot project units, a report will be prepared for Council recommending Final Reading of the text amendment bylaws and the housing agreement bylaws.

2.2.6 DGS Pilot Project Tours and Expansion of DGS Regulations

As discussed in Section 2.2.4 above, staff and property owners will host Council and community tours of the newly constructed DGS prior to receiving final occupancy of the unit. It is anticipated that approximately two months will be sufficient to enable Council and all other interested parties to view and experience the structure on the site and within the neighbourhood setting.

Once the tours are complete, a final report to Council on the outcomes of the DGS pilot project will be prepared and include:

- Update Look-Book designs and costing information;
- Feedback on the experience and outcomes for pilot project property owners;
- Feedback received from neighbours on the completed units;
- Lessons learned through the pilot project process;
- A recommendation on proceeding with an expansion of the DGS regulations to fully incorporate the pilot project options into the Zoning Bylaw.

3.0 INTERDEPARTMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

Throughout the DGS pilot project process, Planning staff will be working closely with the Building and Engineering Departments as a working committee. This working committee will initially review and select pilot project properties and continue to meet to discuss Look-Book information and comment on concepts for the first and final drafts. Additionally, the Fire Department will likely be involved in review of the Look-Book concept plans.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

It is anticipated that the Look-Book portion of the project will cost \$5,000 to prepare, graphically layout and complete and it is intended that the property owners participating in the pilot project will pay a fee (up to \$1,000) to cover the costs of creating this document. As a City initiated process, property owners will not be required to pay the text amendment fee (\$1,913.00) or the public

hearing fee (\$882.00), but will be required to pay for preparing and erecting the signage on their property, as per the City's Development Sign Policy 6.21, for Zoning Bylaw amendments.

5.0 CONCLUSION:

The proposed DGS pilot project process is intended to provide tangible built examples of the three DGS options Council is considering for expansion of the SS and DGS regulatory program. The pilot project and its Look-Book documentation will enable Council and the community to see and experience the three DGS options under discussion from concept to completion.

It is intended that the outcomes of the DGS pilot project will be compiled in a report to Council along with recommendations on proceeding with expansion of the SS and DGS regulations within the Zoning Bylaw. If expansion of the SS and DGS program is approved, the Look-Book concepts and DGS pilot projects will continue to serve as examples and ideally help generate interest and increased uptake in DGS construction.

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