

Neighbourhoods for a Sustainable Vancouver

January 16, 2009

To: Mayor and Council
City Staff

Re: Public Hearing - Green Building Amendments
Green Bonusing – EcoDensity Action C-10 Report to Council

Attached is our letter that we previously sent to Mayor and Council on this issue and below is the memo we sent for the Council meeting October 28, 2008. The issues we previously raised still apply. These include:

- 1) We feel policies for green buildings should be considered on their own merit not through EcoDensity.
- 2) “Removing barriers to green buildings” as presented in the report is the same as bonusing for green buildings.
- 3) We do not support bonusing density for green buildings and request that most of the green standards for new construction be required under the building codes and within existing zoning by-laws instead.
- 4) We note that planning has clarified in the language of the amendment that only the extra space required to improve wall insulation, and not the entire wall assembly, is to be exempt from floor area. However, this still results in larger building envelopes and footprints of all new construction, even for new single-family houses.
- 5) As we discussed in our previous memo, this amendment applies to all zones under the Zoning and Development By-laws and will result in larger buildings throughout, both in FSR and in height. This will also affect the single-family zones currently being considered for laneway housing. This EcoDensity Action C-10 will mostly be a benefit to new construction and will give further incentive to demolish existing character houses to our already overflowing landfill and replace them with even larger single-family houses that use up more of our natural resources and take up more of the permeable surface of the lot, without housing more people. This is not environmentally sustainable and not a green approach.

We requested a more inclusive and transparent public process before this issue is brought to Council for approval and we see that did not occur, nor were we given any advanced notice that this was coming back to Council. This proposed policy should be withdrawn from EcoDensity and reconsidered in detail on its own merits.

Regards,
Ned Jacobs