

New bylaws will have negative consequences: resident

The newly-enacted bylaw for so-called 'stable neighbourhoods' will create costs and collateral damages that the Mayor and Council didn't reveal to constituents.

In the demolition of over 1,000 single family homes in Vancouver, the city calculated waste at more than 50 tons per dwelling. Studies show there is a direct link to air pollution and climate change from transport of these materials; depletion of forests, metals and gravel, and manufacturing. Dust that occurs from demolition of the concrete foundations and floors can cause silicosis, while other pollutants such as mold, lead and bird waste are the source of other diseases.

Since the new homes to be built in the 'stable neighbourhoods' have large footprints, less storm water will percolate into the surrounding granular soils. The excess storm water can cause sewers to overflow into basements and garages. Greater space must be cleared for the new home, thereby eliminating trees and shrubs that have provided air quality and shade to their surroundings.

Noise will affect the entire neighbourhood, making it feel like one big construction site. There will be dumpsters on every block and large trucks and equipment stirring up dust and slick, muddy roads when it rains. Imagine all this discomfort and it could go on for years.

The true cost of tearing down a house includes Embodied Energy Loss: the total of all energy consumed in the production of the existing house from the acquisition of natural resources, to product delivery, including mining and manufactured materials; equipment used to transport these products; labour and administration.

But now the same Embodied Energy costs are inherent in the larger homes to be built, but on a grander scale. There is both collateral damage due to economic loss and other factors such as pollution, environmental degradation, noise, loss of natural outdoor space, trees and shrubs, loss of sunlight, flooding, congestion, higher taxes, loss of rental accommodation and rental income, and lack of affordable housing.

The Town of Aurora will also lose the historical character and charm of the Town Park neighbourhood as these period homes are being bulldozed into oblivion. What targets will the overambitious set next? Maybe it will be your street.

By passing the so-called Stable Neighbourhoods bylaw, which called for 4,000 square foot, three-storey houses, Council is aiming to attract young professionals who will be able to pay much greater property taxes, but you can bet the remaining small home owners will be assessed higher property taxes based on higher land value assessments in these new trendy

locales.

What will happen to long-term residents in the Stable Neighbourhoods like myself (52 years) and what will happen to first-time buyers and renters? I personally will be unable to tolerate the noise and disruption.

Unfortunately, first-time home buyers and renters will have to move further afield to the boonies travel greater distances to their employment, which is a costly concern.

So, thank you Mayor and Councillors; you could be the cause of large collateral damages and considerable aggravation.

Ron Miller Member, Ratepayers of Aurora Heights

(Editor's Note: Aurora's new bylaws related to stable neighbourhoods limit gross floor area at 3,982 square feet, they do not specifically call for homes of this size.)