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INFORMATION GUIDE
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SECONDARY SUITE APPLICATION AND TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

This guide has been prepared to provide information only and is neither a bylaw nor legal document. Should there be any discrepancy between this guide and the relevant City Bylaws and/or applicable Codes, the text of the Bylaws and Codes shall be the legal authority.

BACKGROUND:

The purpose of this guide is to assist the homeowner / builder or contractor with the Building Permit Application process to establish a Secondary Suite in a single-family dwelling. This guide provides information on the BC Building Code and City of Langley's requirements for permit applications, construction and inspections of.

Zoning Bylaw Requirements

Before a Secondary Suite may be considered, the owner of the property is to ensure the following conditions are met:

- The registered owner of the lot on which the secondary suite is situated, must reside in either the principal dwelling or the secondary suite;
- Only one (1) secondary suite is permitted in a single-family residential building;
- The secondary suite is in, and part of a building which is a single real estate entity. The secondary suite cannot be subdivided from the building under the Strata Property Act. (This means, both dwelling units are registered under the same title);
- The secondary suite will not be permitted in a townhouse, multi-family unit building, or row-house.
- The secondary suite shall not exceed 90m2 (968sqft) of finished living area. (This does not include areas used for common storage, laundry facilities or egress);
- The secondary suite shall not exceed 40% of the gross floor area of the building in which the principal dwelling and secondary suite are located;
- The secondary suite shall be provided at least one (1) off-street parking space, in addition to the two (2) spaces required for a single-family dwelling as set out in Part I E. 4 of the City of Langley Zoning Bylaw;
- The secondary suite shall be provided with a "hard surfaced" walkway/sidewalk to the entrance of the suite.
- The secondary suite shall be inspected and approved for compliance with all the requirements by way a Building Permit.

Technical Requirements for New and Existing Secondary Suites

All suites are required to have the following:

- a kitchen sink, lavatory, bathtub (or shower), and water closet;
- a heating system capable of maintaining a minimum temperature of 22°C during the heating season (e.g. electric baseboard heaters or isolated forced air);
- a minimum ceiling height 2.0m (6'6").

> Where an existing dwelling is over 30 years of age or the extent of the renovations are more than $100,000.00; the Engineering Department of the City of Langley will determine whether the existing utilities need to be up graded.

Application for a Building Permit

The applicant must provide the following Information:

- A completed building permit application form;
- Owner's Acknowledgment (Form 1);
- A title search, (no older than 48 hours prior to the permit application);
- Agent's Authorization Form, *(when a building contractor is involved in the project);*
- Letter of Assurance Schedule B - *(when a Professional Engineer is involved with the project);*
- Professional Proof of Insurance (Form 2) and copy of insurance *(provided by the Professional Engineer involved with the project);*
- 2 sets of site and building plans drawn to scale.

Required Drawings:
The minimum size paper accepted is 11"x17". *(Lined or graph-paper will not be accepted, nor will plans drawn in pencil.)*
All plans and information submitted must be of an appropriate scale, with sufficient detail to establish compliance with the BC Building Code and City of

Langley Bylaws. The plans are to be legible and of suitable quality for digitization. If you are unable to draw appropriate plans, then you must obtain the services of a qualified person. (Designer or Architect)

Site Plan:

The site plan is to be drawn in 1/8" = 1'0" scale and include the following:

~ address;
~ the dwelling sited on the property;
~ north arrow;
~ fronting and adjacent streets;
~ driveway and proposed off-street parking spot;
~ hard surfaced walkway to suite entry.

Floor Plan:

The floor plans are to be drawn in 1/4" = 1'0" scale and include the following information:

~ both floors of the principal dwelling and the secondary suite;
~ all rooms clearly labeled and their sizes;
~ all door and window locations, with sized shown;
~ locations of smoke and CO detectors;
~ locations of exiting or proposed sprinkler heads to be relocated or installed (only if a fire suppression is existing);
~ the method of heating the secondary suite. (e.g. electric base boards or isolated forced air,);
~ a detail of the construction for the fire separation between the dwelling and secondary suite ceilings and walls; complete with the fire resistance and sound ratings;

Cross Section:

The cross-section view is to be drawn in 1/4" = 1'0" scale and include the following information:

~ All construction materials for the walls, ceilings, and floors;
~ Wall and floor assemblies with required fire resistance and sound ratings;
~ Floor to ceiling height of all rooms;

BC Building Code Safety Requirements:

~ All work is to comply fully with the current edition of the BC Building Code;

~ Dwelling units that contain a secondary suite shall be separated from each other by a fire separation having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 30 min.

~ Smoke alarms shall be installed in each sleeping room and hallway of the suite. The smoke alarms shall be wired so that the activation of one smoke alarm will cause the others to sound.

~ An additional, interconnected, photo-electric smoke alarm shall be installed in both the principal dwelling and the suite.

~ Carbon Monoxide (CO) alarms are required to be installed and interconnected between the dwelling and suite where a fuel fire appliance (natural gas furnace or hot water tank) is in the building or where a storage garage is present;

~ An exit must be provided directly to the exterior from the suite. A second exit may be required dependant on egress from the suite. A window is acceptable as a second exit provided it has an unobstructed opening of not less than 0.50m2 (5.38sqft) with a maximum sill height of 1m;

~ Exiting through a garage or service room is not permitted;

~ **All** bedrooms shall have a window that provides emergency egress to the exterior. The window shall have an unobstructed opening of not less than 0.35m2 (3.77sqft) with no dimension less than 380mm (15");

~ Stair width shall be a minimum 860mm (34") with a rise and run compliant to the BC Building Code;

~ For dwellings equipped with a fire suppression system, modifications to the system will require a separate permit application.

Secondary Suite Heating and Ventilation:

~ For existing dwellings, with an interconnected forced air heating and ventilation system between the principal dwelling and the secondary suite, one of the following three options may be used to bring the system into compliance:

i) the heat registers and cold air returns are to be disconnected from the main air plenum and covered and sealed; the secondary suite is then supplied with electric base board heaters.

ii) where the heating or ventilation system will serve both the secondary suite and the principal dwelling, the system shall be designed to prevent the circulation of smoke upon the signal from a duct type smoke detector. Ducts penetrating fire separations shall be equipped with fire dampers.

iii) an independent furnace and duct system may be installed to heat the secondary suite.

~ A secondary suite, new or existing, is to have its own principal fan, sized and controlled in conformance with the ventilation requirements of the current edition of the BC Building Code.

~ New Dwellings are to be designed so that the furnace room for the principal dwelling is not located in the secondary suite

~ A furnace room in an existing dwelling shall be separated from the secondary suite with a minimum 30 min. fire separation and have doors of a hinged type, complete with weather stripping and a self-closing device.

Separation between the Principal Dwelling and the Secondary Suite

~ Secondary suites and the principal dwelling shall be separated by a fire separation having a minimum 30-minute fire resistant rating;

30 minute FRR with a Sound Transmission Class Rating (STC)of 43:

~ Joist spaces of floor/ceiling assemblies, are to be filled with preformed insulation of rock or slag fibres conforming to CAN/ULC S702. ***(REGULAR THERMAL INSULATION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE, MINERAL FIBRE INSULATION REQUIRED);***

~ Load bearing wall stud spaces (including the exterior walls of the suite) are to be filled with preformed insulation of rock or slag fibres conforming to

CAN/ULC S702. ***(REGULAR THERMAL INSULATION IS NOT ACCEPTABLE, MINERAL FIBRE INSULATION REQUIRED);***

~ Resilient channel, spaced at either 16" or 24" O.C. is required on at least one side of the walls separating the suite and dwelling as well as on the ceiling;

~ Minimum 1/2" type X drywall is required on both sides of the walls and on the ceiling or construction providing an STC rating of not less than 43, or a separating assembly and adjoining construction, which together provide an ASTC rating of not less than 40;

~ Combustible drain, waste, and vent piping must be enclosed by a minimum of 1/2" drywall. Penetrations of a horizontal fire separation (the ceiling of the suite) are not permitted. Openings in the drywall around drain, waste, or vent piping are to be sealed.

45 minute FRR with a Sound Transmission Class Rating (STC) of 48:

~ Floor/ceiling assemblies, joist spaces are to be filled with a minimum 6" of fibreglass insulation;

~ Stud spaces of load bearing walls, (including the exterior walls of the suite) to be filled with fibreglass insulation;

~ Non-load bearing suite separation walls to be filled with fibreglass insulation;

~ Resilient channel is required on ceilings and 1 side of the suite separation wall.

~ 5/8" type X drywall is required on both sides of the walls and ceilings;

Required Inspections:

(As they are applicable to the scope of work being performed)

~ Preliminary inspection of an existing building;
~ Under-slab plumbing;
~ Rough plumbing;
~ Waterlines and P-trap;
~ Framing;
~ Vapour barrier and insulation;
~ Drywall inspection – to confirm installation of the resilient channel and the thickness of drywall on the separation walls and ceiling;
~ Final.

No person may occupy or permit occupancy of any Building or Structure until a Final Inspection has been undertaken by the Building Inspector and occupancy has been authorized in writing.

BUILDING PERMIT FEES:

~ The Building Permit fees are based on the value of construction. A non-refundable application fee will be collected at the time of application. The remainder of the total building and plumbing permit fees will be calculated after the plan review has been completed. A refundable damage deposit is required prior to the issuance of the Building Permit.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

~ Storm sewer lift pumps are not permitted in the single-family residential areas.

~ Required storm drainage is to be connected to the city storm sewer system. If there is no existing connection, an engineered infiltration gallery may be permitted.

~ A Hazardous Material Survey and Notice of Project may be required for Homes constructed pre-1990. For additional information on asbestos removal, please go to: www.worksafebc.com.

~ Required electrical permits are to be obtained through Technical Safety BC. Please contact their office at: 1-866-566-7233.
Email: contact@technicalsafetybc.ca.