



City of Vancouver *Land Use and Development Policies and Guidelines*

Planning, Urban Design and Sustainability Department

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KITSILANO POINT RT-9 GUIDELINES

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1 Application and Intent

These guidelines are to be used in conjunction with the RT-9 District Schedule of the Zoning and Development By-law in Kitsilano Point, shown in Figure 1.

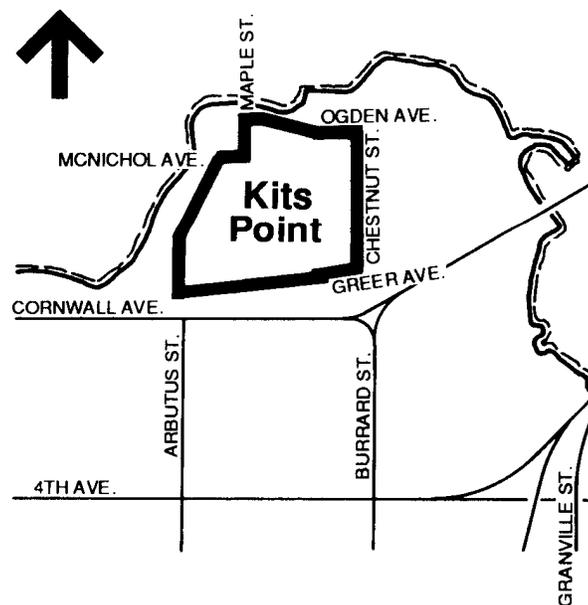
The intent of these guidelines is to:

- (a) encourage development to respect two key aspects of Kitsilano Point character—the small scale of buildings and the green streets;
- (b) allow architectural diversity in new development, rather than prescribe any particular architectural character;
- (c) ensure neighbourliness; and
- (d) maintain a good standard of design and materials.

These guidelines will be used to:

- (a) assist owners and applicants in designing developments; and
- (b) provide a basis on which City staff evaluate projects for approval of conditional approval uses and discretionary variations in regulations.

Figure 1. Kitsilano Point RT-9 Zoning District



1.1 Minor Applications

Under RT-9, many development permit applications will involve a conditional approval use, or a discretionary variation in the regulations. This means a discretionary review process, which can be quite time-consuming.

There will be situations where an applicant wishes to make only a minor change, and the application of the full set of guidelines would be onerous.

- (a) Where guidelines in section 5 do not suggest any exterior upgrading of the building, and where:
 - (i) exterior alterations are not proposed by the applicant, or if proposed are not visible to the street(s); and/or
 - (ii) additions are not proposed; or if proposed are less than 9.3 m² and not visible from the street(s);the application will be evaluated against the guidelines in sections 3 and 4, but not against those in sections 5, 6, and 7.

2 General Design Considerations

2.1 Neighbourhood and Streetscape Character

The character of the Kitsilano Point area is mainly a result of the consistency of lot size, building scale, and siting. The newer development has maintained the form of the independent “house”, with front and side yards, and two to three storey scale. Front yard landscaping—often maintaining elements from the previous house—is an important element in the streetscape, and helps tie the area together visually. Some of the development has followed the historical woodframe architectural style of the original 1900 to 1920 houses closely. In many other cases, the styles have varied—international modernist, mediterranean, post-modern, and 70's west coast regionalism are all found on the Point.

These guidelines continue to ensure consistent and neighbourly siting and massing of the buildings, while allowing freedom of choice in architectural expression, subject to basic limits on materials and the way in which they are used.

Massing

- (a) The overall massing of the building, as seen from the street, should maintain the impression of a single, house-scaled building on a single lot.

Figure 2. Massing



a. New duplex development with single house massing maintains typical streetscape.



b. Longer apartment-type massing not typical of Kitsilano Point.

2.2 Orientation

- (a) On a corner or double-fronting site, all elevations which face a street should be fully designed and detailed.

2.3 Views

Some parts of the area have views to water and/or mountains, by virtue of being on the edge of the area, on a slight slope, or because glimpses are available through the “valleys” between end-gable roofs of the houses to the north.

Buildings (whether existing or new ones) will generally be two storeys, with a partial third level located under a roof. This results from the overall floor space and the need to keep the building depth within reasonable limits. While the views available to neighbours will often be affected, sometimes the choice of a roof shape can protect some view potential.

- (a) Choice of roof forms (cross-gable vs. end-gable), and shape of added dormers, should balance the desired provision of views for the applicant with the need to preserve the views of neighbours.

2.4 Privacy

Some overlook of yards and decks between houses on lots of this size is unavoidable. Direct lines of sight into side windows can also be a problem. However, detailed design consideration of specific problem areas can be beneficial.

- (a) The location and orientation of windows should be considered carefully to avoid overlooks. Window openings on the side wall should be planned so that they do not directly align with those of adjacent buildings. Privacy should be considered when locating dormers and skylights; and
- (b) Privacy for patios, porches, balconies or decks (including refuge decks) should be provided by inseting or screening with light lattice work or landscaping. This is a particularly important consideration for porches, balconies and decks located above grade.

2.5 Safety

Security is improved in areas where casual surveillance by neighbours and passersby is possible.

- (a) Visibility of entrances should be ensured from the sidewalk; and
- (b) Discrete entry and pathway lighting should be provided.

2.6 Access and Circulation

- (a) Pedestrian access to the front door of units should be from the street;

Most of the area has lanes, but some blocks do not. In these cases, where access must be from the street, the result in the past has frequently been large curb cuts across sidewalks, major areas of paving, bulkier houses, inadequate unit entrance design, and little landscaping.

- (b) Vehicular access should be from the lane, where one exists; and
- (c) On those few sites in the area with no lane, where access must be taken from a street, driveways, manoeuvring areas, and garages should be designed and landscaped to be as attractive as possible.

3 Uses

3.1 Multiple Conversion Dwellings with More than Two Units and/or Additions

- (a) In considering development permit applications for conditional approval of multiple conversion dwellings, the following factors will be taken into account:
 - (i) quality and liveability of the resulting units;
 - (ii) suitability of the building for conversion in terms of age and size; and
 - (iii) effect of conversion on adjacent properties and on the character of the area.
- (b) Additions may be permitted to facilitate meeting these criteria, and to accommodate requirements of the Building By-law. While there is no set limit to the size of additions, it is noted that a .75 maximum floor space ratio may not be fully achievable within these guidelines; and
- (c) Buildings suitable for conversion should also be either on the Vancouver Heritage Register, or deemed by the heritage planner to have heritage merit, or have been built before January 1, 1930 and have original character substantially intact. Renovations and additions for conversions should be compatible with the original character of the building.

4 Guidelines Pertaining to Regulations of the Zoning and Development By-law

4.1 Front Yard

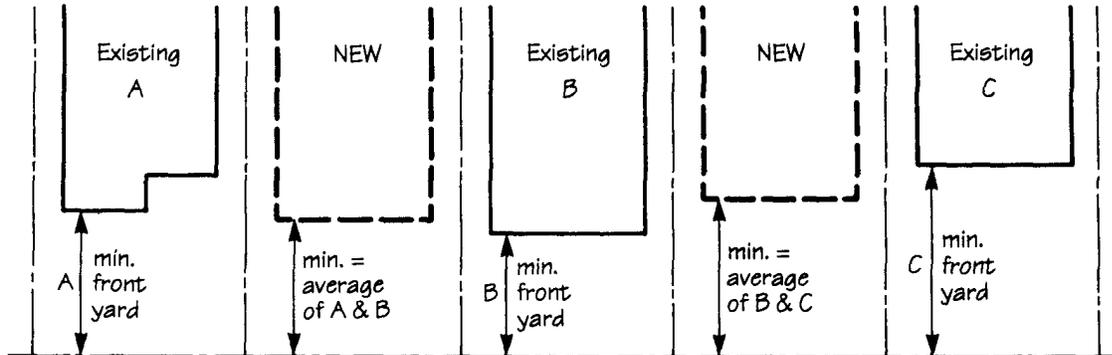
As provided for in the district schedule, variations in the front yard may be permitted.

- (a) In cases where:
 - (i) a site is less than 36.5 m in depth; or

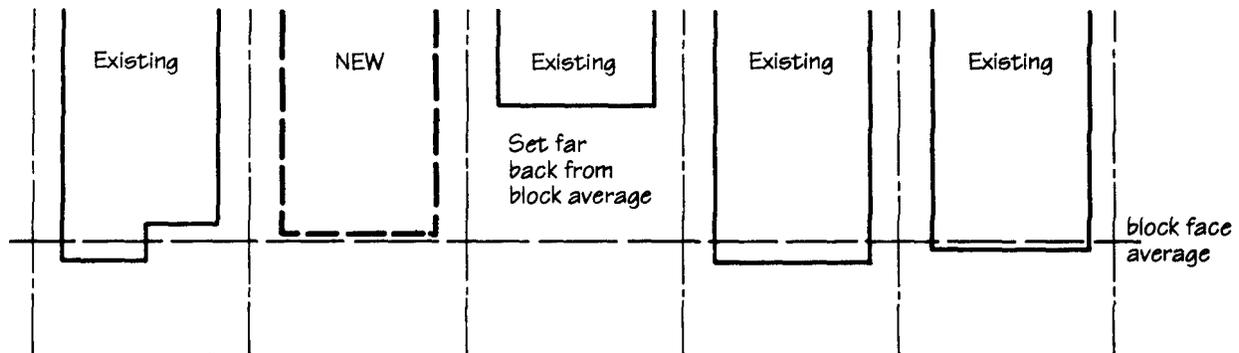
- (ii) the front yard of one of the houses immediately adjacent to the site is significantly forward or back from the average of front yards on that block face, (i.e., approximately 3.0 m or more), the front yard may be adjusted to maintain the appearance of the block.

Figure 3. Front Yard

a. Normal minimum front yard averaging



b. Anomalous existing buildings



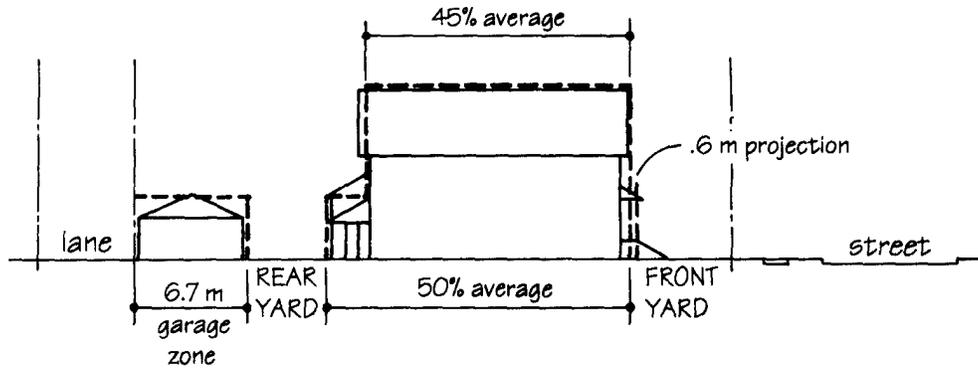
4.2 Building Depth

Increases in the 40% maximum building depth may be considered for both existing and new buildings provided they meet the following guidelines. The percentages are to be measured prior to any required lane dedication.

(a) Percentage Limits

- (i) For the cellar or basement, and first storey, a maximum average of 50% building depth may be allowed. A low roof, low parapet, or open guardrail for deck or balcony may be permitted on top of the extension;
- (ii) For the second floor and above, a maximum average building depth of 45% may be allowed;
- (iii) An increase in the 45% limit on the upper floors may be considered when the adjacent building(s) upper floors project beyond;
- (iv) At no point should the building depth be greater than 55%; and
- (v) Greater percentage building depths may be considered for:
 - retention of existing trees or other significant landscape material; and
 - buildings on sites less than 30.5 m.

Figure 4a: Building Depth: Percentage

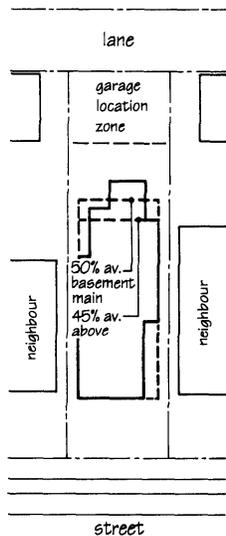


(b) Placement

- (i) The flexibility in the building depth percentages should be used to the benefit of the neighbouring buildings. Considerations include privacy, shadowing and visual impact of the addition or new building. The best massing solution may vary depending on the particulars of the neighbouring buildings; and
- (ii) Portions of the building may project up to 0.6 m into the front yard in order to allow flexibility in placement. However, this should not increase overall average percentage depth. In providing this projection allowance, it is not intended that the whole building will be moved forward. For example, the first floor may be forward over the whole width of the building, or the full height may be forward over part of the width. In designing the projection, attention should be given to creating transitions to the adjacent front yard lines through small insets, location of porches, and so forth.

Figure 4b. Building Depth: Placement

i) Use flexibility to benefit neighbours



ii) .6 m projections for part of building front



5 Architectural Components

Objective:

To continue to allow newer development in the Kitsilano Point area to reflect a variety of architectural styles. This may include a wide range, e.g. buildings closely reflecting the traditional houses of the early 1900s, post-modern styles, international modernist style, and so forth.

5.1 Roofs and Chimneys

There is a variety of roof shapes in the Kitsilano Point Area, ranging from steeply pitched to flat. Materials also vary, with wood and asbestos shingles, tile, and metal roofs represented.

- (a) A building should have a clear main roof form. Subsidiary roof forms and dormers should be clearly subordinate to the main form, in size and number. If the building style is intended to make reference to a historical style, the roof should be consistent with this;
- (b) Flat roofs are permissible, noting that they necessitate more attention to the proportions of the building massing. Where a flat-roofed third level is proposed, it should be compared against other possible forms with regard to impact on sun access to, and views from, neighbouring properties;
- (c) A variety of roof materials are acceptable. Generally, one roof material should predominate in a building, but combinations of roof materials are possible; and
- (d) Chimneys should be of brick, stone, finished metal, or boxed-in and clad with material to be compatible with the building.

5.2 Windows and Skylights

A variety of window styles and treatments are found in Kitsilano Point.

- (a) A variety of window treatments and skylights are acceptable. However within a single building the type of windows constructions and detailing should be consistent. “Nail-on” windows are not acceptable.

Figure 5. A Portfolio of New Development

These examples show how quality design is achieved in the diverse styles of architecture encouraged in Kitsilano Point.



a.



b.

Adaptations of traditional woodframe house style:

- simple massing, steep roof pitch, ordered window placement;
- uniform narrow clapboard/wood shingle walls provide texture; and
- simple but substantial wood trim provides interest.

Figure 5. (Continued)



- c. **Adaptation of Italian villa style:**
- deeply inset, well-proportioned series of arches creates “loggia”;
 - strong roof form and chimneys visually balance the base; and
 - single wall material (stucco), with interest from 2 colours, simple raised banding.



- d. **Early 70's west coast regionalism:**
- basic geometric forms with simple shed roofs; and
 - wood shingle (or wood siding) and glass used in stripped, spare manner on all surfaces.



- e. (left) **Adaptation of International Style:**
- basic flat-roofed box;
 - wood siding detailed as smooth, seamless skin; and
 - large windows, balconies, doors in careful composition.

(right) **Adaptation of California Spanish or Mission style:**

- basic flat-roofed box (note similarity to example at left);
- single wall material (stucco);
- “Spanish” elements used to add interest (tile roof, round “beam ends”, metal balcony, etc.); and
- design escapes busyness by limiting number and size of features so mail wall is still dominant as a plane.

Figure 5: (Continued)



f. Adaptation of traditional woodframe expression, weakened by:

- roof forms too complicated; and
- use of two main wall materials, as well as two colours of trim on the many features accentuates an overly “busy” appearance.

5.3 Entrances, Stairs, and Porches

Entrances animate the street, and create a sense of identity and address for units and buildings. The location of individual front doors on the street is one of the patterns that gives Kitsilano Point its friendly neighbourhood character.

- (a) Unit entries should be expressed on the building through the treatment of stair and door details, provisions of an overhang or porch, etc.;
- (b) Unit entries should be clearly visible from the street wherever possible. Where an entry to a unit cannot be located on the front of the building, its location should be made evident through the use of a clear pathway, building setback, and/or architectural or landscape gateway elements; and
- (c) More than two entry doors may be located on a facade. However, special attention should be given to the design quality to avoid a “motel” appearance. Grouping of access paths and stairs may be necessary to maintain a landscaped yard.

5.4 Balconies

- (a) Balconies and decks should be designed as integral parts of the building, complementing its massing, materials, and detailing.

5.5 Exterior Walls and Finishing

A variety of finishing materials occurs in Kitsilano Point, ranging from the wood shingle and narrow siding of the historical houses, through stucco, brick, vinyl and aluminum siding. High quality design is an important objective of the guidelines. Given the diversity of architectural style which the guidelines envisage, the quality of materials and the way they are used will be critical to achieving design quality.

- (a) A variety of exterior wall materials may be used, including:
 - wood siding of various types;
 - wood shingle;
 - logs;
 - brick;
 - stucco;
 - ceramic or clay tile;
 - stone (or stone tile);
 - concrete and concrete block.Glass or glass block may also be present in windows, skylights etc.
- (b) Some exterior wall materials may not be used, including:
 - vinyl siding;
 - aluminum siding;
 - other metal siding;
 - asbestos or asphalt shingle.
- (c) Where a material is proposed that is not covered by (a) or (b), its acceptability will be evaluated on a case by case basis;

- (d) Generally, a single main material should be used on the walls. (The roof will usually be another major material.) Foundations (including porch column bases and basement walls), trim, and accents can be of additional materials, but should be subordinate visual elements;
- (e) Trim and details as appropriate to the style of the building should be used. They should be designed and detailed consistently throughout the building;
- (f) Materials should be handled in a manner appropriate to their nature. In particular, brick and stone facing should not appear to be thin layer on the facade. The facing should be taken around the side of the building (or portion), and terminated at a logical point. It should be detailed so as to have apparent depth and weight; and
- (g) Large blank walls, including interior sidewalls, should be avoided whenever possible. Window openings, detailing, materials, colour, wall articulation and landscaping should be used to enliven them and reduce their scale.

6 Open Space

Open space on private sites in Kitsilano Point has historically been of two kinds. The semi-private space of the front yard provided a green streetscape — a public face for the visual enjoyment of both the residents and neighbours. Private open space for active use was normally in the back yard. While normally also “green” in nature, it was not primarily a visual amenity.

These two types of space are still critical to the liveability of both the units and the neighbourhood as a whole. However, variations are necessary to accommodate the new patterns of development. In particular, the front yard must often accommodate the useable patio of a unit, as well as be the public face on the streetscape. The rear yard of new development is smaller than in the past, and active use there tends to limit the amount of green area. Above grade open spaces such as balconies and decks are often used to increase the amount of open space available to units.

6.1 Private Open Space

- (a) A minimum of 4.5 m² of private open space should be provided for each unit, with a minimum single dimension of 2.0 m. Wherever possible, this should be at grade. Above grade balconies and decks may augment this, or may substitute, where on-grade space is not feasible; and
- (b) Private open space should be oriented to take advantage of sun and views wherever possible. It should be designed to ensure adequate visual privacy from the street.

7 Landscaping

While there is a variety of architectural styles in Kitsilano Point, the landscape sets a cohesive framework, improving the chances of a compatible fit between buildings. The most important aspect in this is the front yard which, while having various landscaping treatments, is primarily green, with a combination of lawn and informal plantings. Some old stone retaining walls exist, but solid walls and fences at the property line are rare.

- (a) Existing trees and landscape features (such as stone walls) should be maintained in new development, wherever possible;
- (b) Grass should be used in the City boulevard between curb and sidewalk. The “inside” boulevard (between sidewalk and property line), is also City property. It should also be landscaped;
- (c) If possible (depending on site size and private on-grade open space) a portion of the front yard adjacent to the property line should also be landscaped as a visual amenity for the street. The impact of this small area should be enhanced through layering of planting (e.g. vines on any fences or walls located behind it);
- (d) A significant portion of the front and rear open areas should be planted rather than paved. Consider allowing some unpaved area in private patio areas;
- (e) The normal front yard fence height limits in the Zoning and Development By-law (1.2 m in front yards) may be increased to 1.9 m to allow higher screening around private patio areas. However, maintaining the green amenity of the street must also be considered. Therefore, unless the front yard is unusually small, a fence higher than 1.2 m will not be considered within 2.0 m of the front property line; and

Along a side yard, a 1.8 m fence is permitted. Where the side yard flanks a street, care should be taken to soften the fence with landscaping.

- (f) Screening, fencing, or walls should be coordinated with the materials and colours of the building, and with the specific location. Some types (lattice, low walls with higher planting) allow views and light to penetrate, and are more suitable to create a friendly appearance near the street, or to allow informal surveillance from the street into the property for security. More solid walls or fences may be used where complete privacy is appropriate.

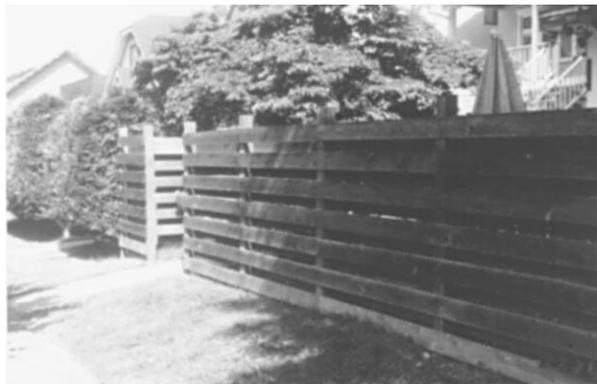
Figure 6: Landscaping



- a. Old granite walls and established landscaping are features to be retained.



- b. Grass boulevard, street trees, varied landscaping between walk and wall, and vines on the wall enhance the sidewalk experience.



- c. Height, design and landscaping of fences should be more carefully considered for visual impact.



- d. Tall privacy screening provided by green hedge, with small scale gateway to indicate entry to units.