



Attic Spaces in a Single Family Dwelling

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Purpose:

- To inform owners and contractors that constructing an accessible unfinished attic in a single family dwelling, for future conversion into a liveable space when the maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR) has been reached, **is not permitted**.

Background:

- It has come to our attention that a number of single family dwellings are being designed and built to facilitate conversion of an accessible unfinished attic space into a liveable area including storage space. The area of the liveable area would be included as part of the FAR and if the single family dwelling has already reached the maximum permitted FAR, converting such areas contravenes the Zoning Bylaw.

Implementation:

- Effective immediately unfinished attic areas in a single family dwelling must not incorporate any of the following features in the building design:**
 - Attic ceiling joists, when permitted, and the bottom cord of roof trusses sized to support more than a ceiling load as prescribed by the BC Building Code.
 - Installing sub-flooring over the bottom cord of roof trusses or when permitted, attic ceiling joists.
 - Storing or applying interior finishing material for walls or ceilings of the attic.
 - Insulating the attic space from the exterior space.
 - Roughing-in electrical wiring or heating system.
 - Providing truss designs to permit the future removal of the central web members.
 - Framing the attic in a manner to allow sufficient headroom, for a future room.
 - Framing a floor/ceiling or wall assembly to facilitate a future stair or doorway opening other than a required attic access in compliance with the BC Building Code.
- Effective immediately framing material used for unfinished attic areas in a single family dwelling is limited to the following:**
 - Conventional roof rafter and ceiling joist assembly when the clear height from the underside of the ceiling joist to the highest point within the attic area is less than 1.5 m.
 - Conventional web trusses (Fink or Howe) are permissible for all attic areas.

Should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions concerning this bulletin, please reference the Bulletin Number and email building@richmond.ca or call the Building Approvals General Inquiries line at 604-276-4118.