

Condominium Home Owners Association

A non-profit association serving strata owners since 1976

Bulletin: 300-112

Condo Smarts

Headline: Bylaws spell it out

Topic: Bylaws

Publication date: January 30, 2005

Publication: The Province

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Strata titled property has a surprising variety of designations. Strata properties can be apartments, condos, detached housing, townhouses, bare-land developments, parking spaces, storage units, hotel rooms, time-share and commercial and industrial units.

Whatever the description and function, however, a strata is still a strata and subject to the regulations of the strata act. Buyers of unusual strata properties can often be misled as to their rights.

For instance, one recent purchaser of a Fraser Valley bare-land home last week was told that pet bylaws don't apply to bare land properties in the country. Another purchaser, of a commercial restaurant, was told that the noise bylaws only apply to residential owners and that the common gardens can be used by the restaurant for seating. Both of those statements were discovered to be incorrect. The homebuyer would not be allowed to have a pet live on the property, and the restaurant buyer would not be able to use the common property for seating and would be subject to noise bylaws.

Strata Law: The strata act applies to all strata lots if they have been strata-titled under BC Law. Only properties on First Nations lands are exempted. The bylaws are the 'local law' of each

strata, and are based on the strata plan, boundaries, sections and definitions of that plan and the act.

Tips: There is no reason to shy away from strata property. In fact, it's becoming increasingly difficult to do in B.C. Strata living and work spaces are quickly becoming very common in the province, possibly because the legislation is so clearly defined. The tens of thousands of B.C. bare-land strata homes and commercial properties provide owners with extended security, recreation and landscaping features to enhance strata living and work environment to the fullest.

Check the bylaws – which can be an advantage rather than a disadvantage – first. Bylaws, such as pet limitations, age restrictions, rental restrictions and building designs can, if well enforced, maintain a high quality of life for the owners.

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