

EDITORIAL: Dodging monsters

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This week, West Vancouver council endorsed a multi-phase strategy aimed at reining in the monster house phenomenon. But the first phase – dealing with issues like fencing and landscaping – falls remarkably short of addressing the real issue: huge homes being built on small lots out of all proportion to their neighbours. We question council’s timidity in getting down to it.

This is not a new issue. Council has discussed and consulted the public and wrung their hands for years on it. During that time, 150 massive homes have gone up each year in West Van.

Monster homes are overwhelmingly unpopular with most of the public. Which begs the question: what’s keeping councillors from acting?

Most of the opposition to monster home regulation has come from developers. Their self-interest in the debate is obvious, but it should not drive the municipal agenda. Is the planning department understaffed or the culture of West Vancouver town hall just not comfortable in getting down to difficult discussions?

One concern voiced was if West Van moves too quickly it will result in division in the community. Well, news flash: not taking action will result in exactly the same.

Property rights are important but they aren’t absolute – all owners are subject to municipal rules, which aim at the greater good of the community. It’s time to tackle the monster houses head on.

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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