

Sept 11, 2025

Kerry Bellamy
Clerk, Municipality of Shuniah

Subject: Zoning Bylaw Amendment Application to allow an accessory sauna building in front of the main building at 2609 Birch Beach Rd

Please find attached:

1. An Application to Amend the Zoning By-Law,
2. Planning Justification,
3. Site Plan,
4. Sauna Building Drawing.

I am submitting the application and the supporting documentation to request a site specific By-law to amend By-law No. 2038-00 Section 4.6.2 b) and Section 10.3.

The reason for the request is to construct a sauna (accessory building) in front of my main dwelling, near the shoreline of lake superior. The proposed sauna building will be 7' x 12' x 10' high, and 84 sq. ft. as shown on the attached drawing.

I trust that you will find the application complete but if your require any additional information please feel free to contact me by phone or email. I look forward to working with you and proceeding to the next steps in the amendment process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "RDoan". The letters are cursive and fluid, with the "R" and "D" being particularly prominent.

Rob Doan

Planning Justification - 2609 Birch Beach Rd.

1. Proposal Benefits

The proposed sauna development will be on private residential property. This will provide the following benefits primarily to the property owner:

The sauna will enhance recreational residential waterfront living on Lake Superior and add to the value of the property.

The sauna will be used in conjunction with the lake for traditional combined sauna and swimming activities. This will improve lake access and utilization especially in fringe seasons when the lake water would otherwise be too cold.

Saunas have many known health benefits especially through contrast therapy of alternating heat and cold. The benefits include improved cardiovascular health, stress reduction, improved sleep, and pain relief for chronic conditions like arthritis.

2. Alternatives

Placing the sauna in alternative locations (which would meet existing by-laws requirements) have been considered but are not feasible for the following reasons:

A property owner has mobility issues resulting from arthritis and joint replacements. The large property size and moderate slope to the lake creates accessibility issues when repeated trips to the lake are considered. Locating the sauna close to the lake makes sauna/swim activity safe and convenient for the owner.

Placing the sauna in either of the side yards would require tree removal and would reduce privacy and green space between the subject property and the adjacent properties.

Placing the sauna in the rear yard would mean that the sauna would be in excess of 200 feet from the lake over moderately sloping terrain. Using a sauna at this location for traditional sauna and swimming activity would be both inconvenient and impractical irrespective of the accessibility issues noted.

3. Potential Adverse Effects

The potential adverse effects for the proposed sauna development are:

Visual impacts on surrounding land - The placement of any accessory buildings at the waterfront could create a visual obstruction of lake views for abutting property owners. This is of particular concern when waterfront lots are narrow and flat. Protecting views is the primary intent of Zoning By-law Section 4.6.2 b).

Lot Size and Accessory Coverage - The Zoning By-law Section 10.3 sets out maximum lot coverage for accessory structures and the main dwelling. The maximum lot coverage is 35% and accessory coverage is 140 sq. m. The intent is to ensure there is reasonable mass and scale of building development relative to the lot size.

Incompatible Land uses (OP 3.2, OP3.20) - Development shall be compatible with existing land uses. Accessory uses are permitted provided that adverse effects upon abutting properties are minimized, and the main use of the property continues to be dominant.

Development in Protected Areas - Development along the shoreline of Lake Superior may pose a risk to building and structures due to flooding, erosion or other natural events. Likewise, development along the shoreline impairment of the quality of the natural environment.

4. Mitigation Measures

The proposed sauna development will have little to no adverse impacts because the following mitigation measures that will be implemented:

Visual impacts on surrounding land

The subject property is large (147 ft frontage, 1.73 acres) and has mature trees and green space along both abutting property lines to the east/west. There are also mature trees in the centre of the property. The sauna footprint and height have been kept small to minimize mass and scale of the structure. The location of the sauna has been carefully selected so that the site lines to the lake for the abutting property owners are unaffected. The presence of the structure itself will not be visible from most locations on the adjacent properties thus minimizing all visual impacts. The adjacent land owners have been consulted and do not oppose the location or construction of the proposed accessory building.

Lot Size and Accessory Coverage

The subject property is large (8420 sq. m) and meets all new subdivision requirements with respect to size. The proposed development will result in a slight exceedance of the maximum accessory coverage (140 sq. m) by 3.8 sq. m. However, the overall lot coverage will remain quite low at 4.5%, which is well

below the maximum limit of 35%. Thus reasonable mass and scale of building development vs. lot size will be preserved.

Incompatible Land uses

The main use of the subject property will not change as a result of the proposed by-law amendment and sauna development. The subject property will continue to be Shoreline Residential and currently meets all other municipal zoning by-law requirements, and is compatible surrounding property uses.

Shoreline saunas are common on waterfront properties throughout the municipality. Currently, council has approved 12 such by-law amendments for similar sauna developments. In addition there are legally non-conforming saunas that were constructed prior to the subject by-law implementation, and more still that were likely constructed irrespective of the by-laws. Shoreline saunas are common to the neighbourhood surrounding the subject property. This is considered a compatible land use within the Official Plan and the Zoning By-laws so long as development will have a limited affect on surrounding properties.

Development in Protected Areas

The proposed sauna location will be 3 meters back from and 0.78 meters above the high water mark of 183.9 masl referenced to the Geodetic Survey of Canada Datum. The location is physically behind an existing shoreline dock crib and rocky bank. This will provide adequate protection against high water levels, wave action, erosion, ice movement and other natural events.

The proposed sauna does not have a drain or water supply (dry sauna) so no changes to septic/well systems are required. There will be no discharge of grey water and thus no adverse effects to the surround lake and protected lands.

The sauna will be located in the LRCA regulated area of the shoreline. As such LRCA permitting and approvals will be obtained prior to development activities.