



City of Surrey

Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes for April 27, 2006

File: 360-20 (DAC)
Date: April 27, 2006
Time: 2:30 PM
Location: Planning Room #1,
Surrey City Hall

Attendees:

Council Liaison:

Councillor Marvin Hunt

Councillors:

Members:

Andy Aadmi
Jeff Fisher
Jake Friesen
Avtar Johl
Steve Kurrein
James Patillo
Greg Sewell
Kevin Shoemaker
Dan Weins

City Staff:

How Yin Leung (Planning and Development)
Judith Robertson (Planning and Development)
Nick Marach (Planning and Development)
Vincent Lalonde (Engineering)
Adrian Kopystynski (Planning and Development)

Consultant:

Observers:

Dr. Francisco Percello (Surrey EAC)

1. Review of Market Conditions

The following is a summary of some of the matters discussed:

- Avtar Johl indicated that the market is strong, land prices are high and a premium is being paid for serviceable land.
- Andy Admi questioned the sustainability of the current strong market.
- Jake Friesen commented that prior to the Parade of Homes, he thought the market had begun to slow. However, the market remains strong, affordability is becoming a concern and speculative buying is not present in the current market.
- Jeff Fisher commented that the market is “hot” and wondered about the effect on construction costs when public projects related to Olympic begin to be constructed.
- Kevin Shoemaker commented that there is little finished product on the market, there is the prospect of continuing labour shortages as the construction of Olympic facilities begins and that it is difficult to find good land for development.
- Steve Kurrien discussed the increasing costs for final products.
- Dan Weins commented that there is insufficient finished product to meet market demand.
- There was some discussion about trends in interest rates, land availability and market demand.
- Greg Sewell commented his office has more clients interested in developing sites.
- There was a discussion about the processing and approval times. The main factors noted included: the time to train new City staff, mistakes in plans and documents submitted to the City, the complexity of some development sites, more detailed design review, difficulty in scheduling trades, etc.
- Suggestions to alleviate this included: opening up more NCP areas sooner, shifting some design approvals to the City Architect, having engineering comments being submitted by a developer with a development application, and having design approval after third reading.

- How Yin Leung distributed the monthly lot creation and building permit statistics for the City.

2. Subcommittee on Building Schemes (Nicholas Lai & Jake Friesen)

Nicholas Lai presented possible changes to provisions to the Zoning By-law that if approved by Council, could result in some additional flexibility to interpret building schemes. These included: stair encroachment, the “80/20 Rule”, separation distance for accessory buildings in lane-accessed rear yards, and attic floor space calculations.

A corporate report with proposed changes for the first two items is expected to be ready for Council to consider in a few months. The remaining items will be brought back to a future DAC meeting.

The PowerPoint presentation is available upon request from Nicholas Lai.

3. Development Cost Charges (Vince LaLonde)

Vince LaLonde gave an update on Council’s decision to implement increases in the Dcc rates in a more gradual fashion. Among the consideration to lessen the increase were: deferring some of the scheduled capital projects, increasing the municipal assist factor, grand-father of the rates for eligible projects, and having more frequent and smaller rate increases.

A subcommittee is to be formed to look into other ways to further reduce Dcc’s, but without compromising the standards residents have come to expect from Surrey.

Jake Friesen suggested that the City could consider Calgary’s approach to become a provider for conduit, to accommodate the needs of communication providers. This could become a source of revenues to the City.

4. Soil Deposition By-law (How Yin Leung)

How Yin Leung made a presentation concerning updating the Soil Deposition By-law. This By-law was adopted about 25 years ago. It is inconsistent with the current environmental objectives of the City, is difficult to understand and interpret and is not realistic for today’s issues respecting soil volumes being moved and illegal dumping that sometimes occurs. A new By-law is proposed to be brought forward to Council to resolve the shortcomings of the current by-law.

Some of the comments included:

- Dan Weins suggesting to adjust the tipping fee to make illegal dumping less attractive and for the City to allow soil removal to commence from a development site before final approval is granted.
- Dr. Percello commented that the By-law needs to be clear about the volume of soil that can be moved to minimize impacts, particularly in the ALR.

This item will be forwarded to a future meeting of then DAC as may be warranted.

5. Web Site

The information management practices used by some cities were discussed. In discussion Surrey iHost access, it was suggested that attachments to Corporate Reports be added once the capability is available. It was also requested that further consideration be given to make the staff phone and e-mail address directory available on line.

Further website suggestions may be forwarded to Adrian Kopystynski.

6. Future Agenda Items

Possible future items included: Traffic calming and parking in new subdivisions (Jake Friesen), Strategies concerning construction of turnabouts (Greg Sewell), and the “Green Streets” practice being considered in communities like Coquitlam and West Bank (Ben Taddei).

Other suggestions for agenda items can be directed to the Adrian Kopystynski at the Planning and Development Department.

7. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, May 25, 2006.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.