



**City of Surrey**  
**Development Advisory Committee**  
**Meeting Notes for September 25, 2008**

File: 360-20 (DAC)  
Date: September 25, 2008  
Time: 2:30 PM  
Location: Planning Room #1,  
Surrey City Hall

**Attendees:**

***Councillors:***

***Members:***

Amy Spencer-Chubey  
Andy Aadmi  
Bill Kruger  
Charan Sethi  
David Porte  
Greg Sewell  
Herb Locke  
Jake Friesen  
Jas Sandhu  
Michael Mortensen  
Steve Forrest  
Quentin Boulton  
Ted Dawson

***City Staff:***

Jean Lamontagne, Planning & Development  
Judy McLeod, Planning & Development  
Sam Lau, Engineering  
Raul Allueva, Planning & Development  
Remi Dube, Engineering  
Tiina Mack, Parks Recreation & Culture  
Dave Mihalech, Engineering (Realty Services)  
Wayne Power, Engineering (Realty Services)  
Theresa Kidd, Planning & Development

**1. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

It was moved by Steve Forrest and seconded by Amy Spencer-Chubey that the minutes of the meeting of July 24, 2008 be received as circulated.

**CARRIED**

**2. Council Policy P-15 “Compensation Formula and Protocol for Habitat Replacement on City Land”**

Wayne Power and Tiina Mack provided a power point presentation and handouts on Policy P-15, which was developed in 2006 and which is now subject to minor updating.

Under this policy, developers may re-locate habitat works on City land in order to offset the environmental impact to their development site. Developers may also create new habitat on their own lands or other private lands near the development site. The program is not mandatory and is intended, when used, to treat developers in a fair, consistent, and transparent manner. The policy allows the developer the opportunity to “un-encumber” his land and allow full use of the land for development. Compensation under the policy is calculated by appraisal staff of the City’s Realty Services Division and is based on the higher of either:

- The net increase in value of the applicant’s land based on the benefit to the land development project as a result of locating the habitat works off the development site;
- or

- 100% of the value of the City land (natural area) being used for the proposed habitat replacement. This calculation will take into consideration the ratio of new works need to fully replace the existing habitat, which could be on a 1:1 or up to a 2:1 bases.

Reality staff will be presenting a Policy amendment to Council in October, which will address the calculation of the compensation amount for the use of City land being based on its “loss in value” due to the habitat use.

The compensation is secured through a “licence of occupation” for a term of 5 years. The licensee is responsible for indemnifying the City, and providing \$3 million in liability insurance. The licence agreement makes provision for re-payment to the City for staff time to monitor the works, to ensure replacement works conform to the plan as approved by DFO, the City and the Environmental Review Committee. The maintenance estimate allows for two additional years of maintenance of habitat plantings.

The application fee is \$2,500 to cover costs of appraisal, initial inspection, licence and plan preparation and reporting. P – 15 licences are recorded and tracked using the city’s Amanda system.

Developers considering the use of Policy P – 15 should approach the Realty Services Division for an estimate of the compensation, monitoring and maintenance costs.

Questions:

It was asked whether the use of P – 15 adds time onto the development process? Wayne Power replied that as long as the developer comes in early for an estimate, it should be able to be processed concurrently with the application.

It was asked whether the city has identified areas that can be used for compensation. Wayne noted that the compensation should be done in the same general area of the City, and the City will help in identifying sites. Projects have been done that enhance detention ponds, for example. There have been 10 licences done to date. This has been a city practice for some time and policy P – 15 has formalized the policy and ensured that it is consistent.

### **3. Taxes for Live/Work Projects**

Nicholas Lai and Judith Robertson distributed a letter received from BC Assessment regarding zoning for Live/Work units. Judith advised that staff had contacted BC Assessment at the request of Jake Friesen to clarify how live/work units are assessed. She had explained the rationale and intent of live/work units, not as a “tax grab” by the City, but as a means of furthering the City’s land use, employment and sustainability objectives.

BC Assessment’s position is that if land is zoned to accommodate live/work, it would be zoned as Class 6 until such time as it is occupied. If occupied for a residential use it would then be re-assessed. This is done in complete understanding of the City’s zones.

It was noted that it sounds like a BC Assessment policy rather than a regulation or legislation. The committee felt that the City should take a strong position and oppose the BC Assessment ruling, and that it needs to be driven at the senior level.

Jake Friesen noted that the live/work concept has failed in Vancouver and will fail here if people have to pay 3 times the taxes for a live/work unit than if they go across the street and have a home office.

**Action item:** Staff will follow up with further discussion with BC Assessment and will include Amy Spencer-Chubey in the discussions.

#### **4. Update on Development Directional Signage in South Surrey**

Raul Allueva provided an update on the issue of directional project sales signage for developments in the Grandview area of South Surrey.

- 5 to 8 signs have been approved. The signs are intended to assist way-finding and do not to include any advertising, only directional information. The name of the project is allowed on the sign, but not logos.
- The City is running as a pilot project in the Morgan Heights area initially. The design is being finalized and final licence is expected to be approved within the next couple of weeks. Engineering staff have been out to inspect locations and ensure safe site lines.
- Signs will be owned by the developer and discussions with regard to risk management are still ongoing.

Committee members acknowledged staff efforts on this matter. However it was noted that their needs to be better communication with staff enforcement in the field with regard to over zealous enforcement.

Questions:

It was asked if all sites were spoken form. Raul advised that there is currently still space available. Once a project has been sold out, the name would be removed to open up space for new development.

It was asked how long this “pilot” will last before it becomes formal policy. Raul advised that staff will review the sites periodically, and that staff will report back in approximately 6 months on the results of the pilot.

#### **5. Market Conditions Update**

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

- Jean Lamontagne advised that August has been the lowest moth for the receipt of development applications since 2000.
- Ted Dawson, Mosaic Homes, advised that the market is down but his project has sold out . Traffic increased in September. He expressed concerned that the next few months will be paralytic so is proceeding cautiously.

- Charan Sethi of Tien Sher advised that his 3<sup>rd</sup> building has now started construction and sales will start in February.
- Greg Sewell noted that sales are very slow in the Morgan Heights are for single family homes. There are currently 114 listings in the Grandview Heights/Morgan Heights area and no sales.
- Jake Friesen reported that they are writing deals, but people are having trouble getting financing. Mortgage financing has become very difficult, especially for self-employed people.
- David Porte advised that purchases have fallen by one half. Land sales in Campbell Heights are very slow. He also raised a concern with regard to City staff being more receptive to the urgency of tenant improvements in industrial projects, where the timing of the approval could mean losing a tenant.
- Amy Spencer-Chubey from Greater Vancouver Home Builders Association, reported that she is fielding a lot of questions from the public about the economy, and she is being cautiously optimistic.
- Bill Kruger echoed that the consulting business has slowed.
- Steve Forrest from Adera noted that the fall is not looking great but feels that the New Year will be good. He has two projects in Surrey currently, value and quality are important though financing is tough.
- Jas Sandhu from Colliers advised that the Commercial investment side has slowed down and finances are an issue for people.
- There was a general consensus that people are wanting to buy but banks are nervous, people can't get the financing, and deals are falling through .

## 6. Suggested agenda items for future DAC meetings

- M.O.T. Highway 99 local road status-resolution.
- The status of NCP's in Grandview Heights.
- Assess for City to remove signs on private land.
- An Update on the Registration of Lobbyist By-law.
- The issue of demolitions and infill in the Whalley and Newton areas. How will grade/average lot elevation be calculated?
- Update on the Sustainability Charter, and the Sustainability Checklist.

## 7. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, October 23, 2008 at 2:30 pm.

The November meeting of DAC will be cancelled and replace by a meeting on December 4, 2008. The main topic for that agenda will be the draft 10 Year Plan and DCC Rate Revisions.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:15 p.m.