



City of Surrey

Development Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes for June 26, 2008

File: 360-20 (DAC)
Date: June 26, 2008
Time: 2:30 PM
Location: Planning Room #1,
Surrey City Hall

Attendees:

Councillors:
Councillor
Higginbotham

Members:
Steve Kurrein
John Sidnell
Aubrey Kelley
Jake Friesen
Andy Aadmi
Tom Miller
Rick Bell
Greg Sewell
Jaz Dsandhu
Charan Sethi
David Porte
Dina Grinell

City Staff:
John Lamontagne (Chair), Planning &
Development
Judy McLeod, Planning & Development
Don Luymes, Planning & Development
Raul Allueva, Planning & Development
Judith Robertson, Planning & Development

1. Minutes (Jean Lamontagne)

It was moved by Jake Friesen and seconded by John Sidnell that the minutes of the meeting of May 22, 2008 be received as circulated.

CARRIED

2. Update - Temporary On-Site and Off-Site Real Estate Development Signs (Raul Allueva)

Raul provided an update on the issue of temporary directional signs, specifically in the Morgan Heights area, where this has become an issue due to the number of construction projects underway. The sub-committee has met to explore options for standard directional signage in defined locations. By-laws officials and Development Engineering have been involved in the discussion, looking at the possibility of specific locations in the road allowance. Raul advised that the signs used for real estate advertising for many years have not met the 4 ft by 6 ft size specified in the sign by-law, but are now mostly 8 feet. There has not been strict enforcement as the city has been trying to be sensitive to the business needs of the development and real estate industries, and have not enforced unless there were serious contraventions. The Staff group is working toward a new recommended standard.

Andy raised the issue of an appropriate warning before signs are removed. Jean indicated that there is a letter advising that the signs must be removed by the owner within one week or the city will remove them.

Jake noted the urgency of dealing with this issue as people are getting lost looking for the sales offices, which is a concern in this housing market. It was noted that while there is a larger update of the sign by-law underway, the issue of temporary directional signs will be brought forward more quickly.

Tom Miller advised that the various owners in the area are cooperating, and looking at branding Morgan Heights in agreed-to identification signage, with the individual sites directional information shown underneath.

Action: Raul is working with Engineering and Realty staff to develop right-of-use for directional signage on city-owned boulevards, and will consult with the subcommittee members, Rick Bell and Kevin Shoemaker, before reporting back to DAC with specific recommendations.

3. The Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy Process (Judy McLeod)

Judy McLeod gave a PowerPoint presentation on the process that is now underway by Metro Vancouver to update the current Regional Growth Strategy, the Livable Region Strategic Plan. The power point provided an overview of the process, and highlights of the policy directions which appear to be emerging in the current "Incomplete Draft - Actions for a Sustainable Region".

A copy of the presentation is available from Judy upon request.

The following is a summary of some discussion points raised by DAC members:

- Concern was expressed with regard to prescriptive nature of the proposed Industrial designation. The Committee general agreed that there should be employment policies, but not a strict Industrial designation that mandates the nature of the industry permitted. Surrey should "push back" on the issue of industrial designations.
- The Region and the city need to "take charge" of our competitive advantages and these advantages need to be expressed in the plan. We should play to our strengths. The Port Kells area should be a transportation and employment hub, not residential.
- There was discussion about the new ALR and Green Zone designations, the required buffers and the possibility of agri-industrial uses in the ALR.
- Surrey must enforce its own by-laws to protect the integrity of industrial land and not allow it to be overtaken by commercial uses such as along 128 Street.
- There was general support for the direction to add density along transit corridors but concern with the commitment to add more transit south of the Fraser.
- There was support for the production of affordable housing, but concern about mandating concepts such as inclusionary zoning, and concern about the ability of the industry to meet targets for the production of rental housing.
- The issue of development fees and bonus density was raised, along with concern that these fees interfere with the ability of the industry to produce affordable housing. It was noted that tools that might work well in the central areas, such as density bonusing, might not work as well in Surrey.
- There was discussion about the culture of abundance in North America versus the evolution of land use in Europe. We should look to Europe as a road map. Morgan

Heights is a great example of the development of a micro-village where people can park their car for the weekend and have all of their amenities at hand.

- There was agreement that the issues south of the Fraser need to be better understood and addressed in the plan.
- It was noted that the implications of \$200 a barrel oil should be addressed.

Action: Staff will continue to monitor this process, and report back to the DAC as further drafts are available, to receive the committee's input in preparing City of Surrey comments to Metro Vancouver.

4. Review of Market Conditions

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

- There are a large number of units on the market, particularly in Morgan heights.
- There are over 2200 serviced and unsold lots currently in the Surrey market. Lot sales have slowed. The current price for serviced RF9C lot is in the range of \$245,000. Contractors are looking for work for the first time in a long time.
- Members from the consulting industry noted that their work is still steady with bringing more lots onto the market, but it has now clearly become a buyers' market.
- Apartment developments in the city centre are selling well, with a mix of end users and investors. The prices are going up and this has taken many investors out of the market.
- The impact and possible domino effect of the housing market south of the border was discussed. It was noted that the market is trying to find a new balance. There is still immigration and job creation in the region. If there is stabilization south of the border things will be ok, but right now a lot of potential buyers appear to be sitting on the sidelines waiting to see what happens.
- Commercial prices have not been as effected, as there is still good cash flow from commercial properties. Many cap rates have gone up.
- The Campbell Heights lease rates are high, but some tenants have dropped off and activity is slower than last year.
- It was noted that lots are being sold in North Delta in the Delsom Estates area at around \$60,000 below market.
- In addition, the banks appear to be squeezing back and are hesitant to make loans for speculative homes, and are demanding substantial securities.

5. Suggested Agenda Items for Future DAC Meetings

Possible items:

- Compensation for Habitat Replacement will be brought forward in July or September depending on staff availability;
- Innovative Housing.

6. Residential Development Summary

The “Summary of Lots Created” and the “Residential Development Summary” were not available at the meeting, and are included as attachments to these minutes. In the future, they will be included as attachments with the agenda, rather than printed for the meeting.

For the Committee’s information, this information is updated monthly and is available on line. The links to this continually updated data are provided below.

<http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/38E0F938-1765-4BD4-B048-D3A724B75385/0/SubdivisionResidentialLotsCreatedMonthly2008.pdf>

<http://www.surrey.ca/NR/rdonlyres/1959D1D9-F0C0-4025-97E8-C34D45B2D655/0/ResidentialDevelopmentSummary2008.pdf>

7. Next Meeting and Adjournment

The next Committee meeting is scheduled on Thursday, July 24 2008.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25 p.m.