

DRAFT MINUTES

Development Advisory Committee

File: **360-20 (DAC)**
Date: **March 28, 2019**
Time: **2:30 p.m.**
Location: **3W Meeting Room
A, Surrey City Hall**

Members:

Jennifer Clow
Jeff Fisher
Jasroop Gosal
Mike Harrison
Adrien Herberts
Nathan Hildebrand
James Howard
Anita Huberman
Roger Jawanda
Louis Kwan
Marc MacCaull
Tracy McRae
Scott Pelletier
Mark Sakai
Sunni Sandher
Jas Sandhu
Ross Yamaguchi

City Staff:

Tommy Buchmann
Nadia Chan
Patrick Klassen
Jean Lamontagne
Kristen Lassonde
Ann McLean
Fay Wong

1. Previous Minutes

The notes of the January 24, 2018 meeting were accepted as distributed.

2. 24/7 Construction – Jeff Arason, Design & Construction Manager

This item was removed from the agenda.

3. Habitable Rooms Fronting Streets – Ann McLean, City Architect

A habitable room fronting streets is a functional indoor heated living area with windows at the ground level facing public realm – streets, parks, lanes, greenways. The City is looking for them to help make the connection with the street, encourage places for people, reduce a car dominated landscape, offer flexibility of use, and provide a separation from open concept space. It is also a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) feature.

Habitable rooms are called for in the OCP in several sections: Section 107, 105, 7, and 100. Also referenced in some NCPs.

These rooms are NOT floor area ratio (FAR) exempt. They are counted in floor area. There is no minimum size requirement, but it needs to be functional. Guideline 8 ft x 10 ft. It is not meant to be a mudroom or foyer. The room requires a window but built in closet is not required to allow more flexibility. As such, it could be a den, home office, or bedroom.

Comments:

Marc MacCaull asked why the City does not have a minimum size, as they are typically used as mudrooms. Ann McLean responded, the City wants the area to be flexible and practical. Homeowners have the flexibility to make it what they want. It also needs to be practically used.

Adrien Herbert asked about the potential of some percentage of the block having habitable rooms fronting the street rather than each unit. Ann McLean responded, ideally all should have this. If the City were to set a percentage of block minimum, it would be 90%+ allowing only the oddball unit where it is not possible.

Jasroop Gosal asked about the option of these spaces being used by IT Professionals as a live/work unit. Ann McLean responded, the City has Live/Work designations, which have additional requirements such as accessibility, washroom, separate entrance, fire, and parking. Jean Lamontagne clarified home occupations would be permitted but live/work is more complicated.

James Howard asked if this means no building fronting the street can have an all garage basement. Ann McLean responded that interface is permitted on interior private streets of the complex. The City looks at the public realm and public streets.

James Howard indicated the trade-offs between livability and affordability, and everything driving the size of the home larger affects affordability. Ann McLean agreed.

4. Land Use Plans – Patrick Klassen, Community Planning Manager

A Corporate Report to initiate Fraser Highway SkyTrain Corridor land use planning is scheduled to go to Council on Monday, April 1, 2019. If endorsed, preliminary planning and background studies will begin for the corridor.

Second priority are Town Centre Plans (TCPs) in process: Guildford, Newton, Cloverdale, and Semiahmoo. A June 11th Open House is scheduled for Newton TCP and seeking Stage 2 Council approval in the Fall. A May 6th Open House is scheduled for Guildford TCP with Stage 1 Council consideration targeted for the Fall. Cloverdale TCP has an Open House scheduled April 11th and targeting Council approval in the Fall. Semiahmoo TCP has public engagement underway (February - July, 2019) and a Stage 1 land use plan targeted to be completed in the Fall.

Third priority are Frequent Transit Network planning areas, including King George Corridor, Scott Road Corridor, and South Westminster.

Fourth priority are Neighbourhood Concept Plans (NCPs) that are underway. The Redwood Heights NCP is completed but the City is working with the School District on a school site acquisition. Darts Hill (Grandview Heights NCP #3) has a Stage 1 plan prepared but the City is working with the School District on a school site acquisition. South Campbell Heights has a Stage 1 approved but was referred back to the City by Metro Vancouver.

Comments:

Jas Sandhu asked if the school in Redwood Heights will be an elementary or secondary school. Patrick Klassen responded it would be an elementary school.

DAC member asked how land use plans are expected to be changing along Fraser Highway. Patrick Klassen responded, there are opportunity areas and difficult areas where there are existing communities with issues to address. There are also areas built up in such a way that they are not likely to change.

DAC member asked about the difficulty in approving applications on Fraser Highway with the uncertainty of SkyTrain. Jean Lamontagne responded, the City has Interim Implementation Strategies as to not delay projects that would be transit supportive for the area, similar to what was done on King George Blvd. Patrick Klassen also clarified, Translink is currently doing an analysis that will provide more clarity. This is one of the studies the City will be waiting on before starting land use planning.

Nathan Hildebrand asked if this presentation has been communicated to Council and stressed the importance of indicating to Council that the lack of decision-making is resulting in missing opportunities for the best development outcomes. Patrick Klassen clarified that pieces have been communicated to Council and a formal session is planned so that we can align ourselves better.

DAC member asked if there is alignment between Council and the School District before they buy a site? Jean Lamontagne responded, Council understands the School District needs a Stage 1 approval before moving forward on a site.

Anita Huberman asked how smart development differs from development in the past. Patrick Klassen responded, we have not had that direction from Council. The principles of smart development from a planning perspective is similar to the principles of smart growth, which already exist in the OCP.

DAC member asked where the new B-Lines are planned. Patrick Klassen responded, Scott Road to Newton, an extension of the current line or the new Scott Road line to Semiahmoo. Also, improvements to the existing B-Line, full shelters, times for next bus, etc.

5. Trees & Landscaping update on changes – Nadia Chan, Trees and Landscape Manager

Trees & Landscaping have begun implementing process changes. Three new staff were hired in the last 6 months. These positions were very difficult to fill. There is a shortage of suitable arborists in the region.

One new arborist is dedicated to single family building permits. The other two are being trained. The two senior arborists are focusing on development and subdivisions. This has allowed the City to reduce wait time on non-development tree cutting permits to now a less than two week wait.

There is a new process, starting with the single family building permits. There is a new inspection request email address where the applicants submit photos. The City Arborist can see right away if things are not completed. The wait time has been reduced from 3 weeks to 1 week. The goal is 3-4 days. Replacement fee and tree bonding has been reduced from an 8-week to 3-week delay.

There is a new barrier inspection process: submit using email and the City will do the inspection OR having the consulting arborist submit a barrier inspection report using a template. This will be launched mid-April.

Trees & Landscaping is now using GIS to log all retained and replacement trees, tree cutting permits, and infractions. This allows the technicians to know exactly what tree they are looking for and details about it. They can also quickly check suspicious tree cutting.

Arborist Report template launching mid-April. The template includes a checklist and details to allow reports to be done more quickly.

Landscape Review starting in May. There are two options: call or email and the City will send someone out or scheduled CL and field review. Trees & Landscaping is also looking at Engineering's inspection processes to see if there are efficiencies that can be transferred over.

For internal communication and process between Planning and Trees & Landscaping, there is a priority list given from Planning which is being tweaked to incorporate the arborist working on subdivisions only.

Comments:

Marc MacCaull commented on the identification of street trees and internal communication with the Parks Department. Nadia Chan responded, this has changed, now Parks has dedicated staff. Trees & Landscaping will now send the plans to Parks, Parks will comment, and then Trees & Landscaping does their review with the input from Parks.

6. Comments on the market (all members)

Most DAC members indicated a softening of the residential market with decreasing demand while demand for commercial and industrial in Surrey remains high. They reported price drops on single family lots but not on commercial lots. DAC members indicated the rising costs of projects due to new cost charges and regulations across all municipalities. Noting, the rising costs of construction while the market is falling. There is an increase in the demand for feasibility studies now as developers are more cautious and there are fewer amateur players than there were in the past.

Jean Lamontagne indicated the City has not seen a slow down, as there were more development applications submitted this month than last.

7. Other Business (All)

Introduction of Tommy Buchmann as the new Development Services Manager, replacing Remi Dube who is now the Building Division Manager.

Noting changes to the BC Building Code by the province.

Mark Sakai asked about the Provincial legislation changes such as dramatically changing public hearing process or CP process. Jean Lamontagne commented that discussions regarding this were focused on the Vancouver process. Many of the items discussed, such as public hearings seem to be working quite well in Surrey.

A DAC member mentioned the challenges with getting physical trees inspections into the system.

A DAC member requested for TransLink to attend a future DAC meeting to comment on SkyTrain and Fraser Highway.

8. Next Scheduled Meeting – April 25, 2019

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:04 pm.