



City of Surrey

Social Planning Advisory Committee

Minutes

Executive Boardroom
City Hall
14245 - 56 Avenue
Surrey, B.C.
THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2009
Time: 7:05 p.m.
File: 0540-20

Present:

Chairperson – J. Villeneuve
Councillor B. Rasode
Kuldip Ardawa
Stephen Dooley
Gurtej S. Gill
Karen Kreis
Ms. Devinder Chattha
Merlin Chatwin
Linda Coyle

Absent:

L. Alexander
Dr. Z. Malik
Raj Mehta (alternate)

Staff Present:

A. Murphy, Senior Social Planner
Lisa White, Manager Community and Leisure
Services
H. Dmytriw, Legislative Services

ROUND TABLE INTRODUCTIONS were made.

The agenda was varied for the benefit of the delegation.

A. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was

Moved by Stephen Dooley

Seconded by Gurtej Gill

That the minutes of the Social Planning

Advisory Committee meeting held on November 27, 2008, be adopted.

Carried

B. DELEGATIONS**1. Newton Advocacy Group Society (NAGS)**

Susan Keeping, Executive Director and Judy Peterson, New Initiatives Coordinator at Newton Advocacy Group Society (NAGS) were in attendance to present on a new “Linkline” initiative (a project whereby businesses can call a contact number should they see a homeless person in need of assistance) and a supportive housing project.

Susan Keeping provided the following comments:

- Fundraiser luncheon for Newton Advocacy Group will be held February 6, 2009, 12:00 pm–2:00 pm at the Bollywood Banquet Hall, #210, 8166 – 128th Street. Tickets: \$30.00, call 604-596-2311 x123.
- Keynote speaker: Seth Klein, BC Director of Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.
- We need to start asking the views of each Provincial political party on what they will do on poverty and homelessness.

- In 2008, NAGS applied to the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society's call for proposals for the \$1 million award and was short listed for their application involving three projects.
- 3 strategies included: 1. Rent bank 2. Help line 3. Supportive housing project.

Supportive Housing

Judy Peterson provided the following comments:

- Wanted housing in place very quickly in order to take clients out of parks and into supportive housing (not shelters).
- A study was done by CARMA at Simon Fraser University in 2008:
 - o A costing was done of how much it costs the public system if a person is homeless: \$55,000 per year.
 - o That cost is reduced to \$37,000 when housing and supports are provided.
- NAGS' supportive housing model, based on 8 tenants occupying the house, is estimated to be \$15,240 per tenant per year amortized over a ten-year period.
- NAGS' proposes the purchase and operation of a home for male Project Comeback clients. Project Comeback is a federally funded employment program for homeless or at-risk of imminent homelessness individuals.
- In the fall, NAGS worked with BC Housing toward the purchase of a house. An appropriate house was found and one day before the subjects were removed were informed by BC Housing that funding was no longer available.
- NAGS met with Minister Coleman in January. He stated "You get it started and BC Housing will bring the money to the table." Susan Keeping notes that they want to share this supportive housing model with other non-profits in Surrey. Services already in the community could support the operation of this kind of supportive housing but it requires an outlay of capital. BC Housing would own the house and Newton Advocacy Group Society would operate it.
- The supportive house would have a housing manager who lives in-house for free. People move in and are working or on income assistance but have to be working within three months. Residents would be those who are cyclically homeless. Having supports in the house and rules will teach clients how to live, manage money, learn life skills, in a controlled supportive environment. This deals with multiple levels of need. With a relatively small financial outlay, NAGS could house someone within weeks.
- When the house is no longer needed – BC Housing could sell the house.
- Outreach workers find that people who are homeless are hard to get into housing, so this is an interim step for them. It gives them an address, and provides a stable house for a stable community.
- Business Plan is in draft.

Committee comments:

- People in shelters don't always get employed. This house would have a proper address. It would give dignity and provide a stable home.

Link Line / Help Line – 604.583.DIGS (3447)

- Susan Keeping noted that this is an idea that came out of the business sector. Many businesses have a front row view of homelessness. Homeless people

are found sleeping on door stoops, behind dumpsters, at businesses. There is no one to call.

- DIGS will be a line to call to connect with a Homeless Outreach Worker.
- NAGS are looking for partners on this project. 3 partners confirmed: Surrey Board of Trade, Coast Capital (has agreed to fund), and Newton Advocacy Group (will house the project).
- Judy Peterson, NAGS, has talked to the City's Bylaws and Economic Development Departments.

The Chair thanked the delegation for their presentation. It is good work.

C. DELEGATION REQUESTS

D. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

ORIENTATION

1. Committee Terms of Reference (Hildegunn Dmytriw)

A brief overview of the Terms of Reference was provided.

2. Committee Representation on Community Committees:

(a) Measuring Up

Gurtej S. Gill provided a brief review of the program, its history and goals, objectives, and mandate:

- *Measuring Up: An Accessibility & Inclusiveness Assessment of the Community of Surrey*, Final Report dated October 23, 2008, submitted by the Surrey Measuring Up Advisory Committee, is a very important document for the Surrey community.
- In 2007 the City received funding through 2010 Legacies Now to implement the Measuring Up program in Surrey. The Provincial program was designed to help BC Communities assess how inclusive and accessible they are.
- The Committee was formed in January 2008 consisting of 16-17 people from different agencies and sectors of the community.
- This committee had two goals: to make Surrey inclusive and accessible for all to work and play in the community.
- Recommendation was made that the City of Surrey support an accessibility committee.
- Parks, Recreation & Culture were commendable for their work.

- Final report and recommendations to Council for implementation was presented to City Council December 15, 2008.

Gurtej Gill expressed his appreciation for the opportunity of being a part of that committee.

The Chair thanked Gurtej Gill for his efforts and contributions.

(b) **Food Action Coalition**

Karen Kreis represents the Social Planning Advisory Committee on the Food Action Coalition.

Merlin Chatwin provided the following update:

- The Surrey/White Rock Food Action Coalition secured funding for the next year.
- It is now in its 4th year and now is the time to put structure to the Food Action Coalition with a community advisory committee and an action team.
- Actions for this year include to: connect with the School District and work on their food policy, to connect with the senior groups, Harvest Box, DiverseCity's community garden project; and farmer's market.
- Established connection with the Social Planning Advisory Committee and the Agricultural Advisory Committee. Representatives from the Food Action Coalition are on both committees.

The Chair noted that the Food Action Coalition provided a very informative presentation to this committee last fall. The Harvest Box is so successful. Congratulations to the group on the work they have done. This Committee is more closely in line with the Social Plan and Sustainability and the reduction of poverty.

(c) **Welcoming and Inclusive Communities**

Steve Dooley will represent the Social Planning Advisory Committee on this committee. He noted that it is so new that it hasn't met yet.

Aileen provided a brief background. The focus of the Program is:

- To help make communities more welcoming of immigrants.
- The Program has four components to it; is sequential. Communities will work through the steps. There are dollar amounts attached to each component.
- Surrey Foundation partnered with the City and applied to the Province for Component 1 – Community Partnership Development. The application was successful.

Gurtej Gill commented that there is a need to provide new immigrants with information to increase their awareness regarding issues within the community such as legal, cultural and political issues.

3. Social Planning Priorities

Copies of the Summary of the Social Plan and 2007-2008 Annual Report were provided.

Aileen Murphy provided the following comments:

- The plan was adopted in 2006.
- 5 year plan lists 65 priorities. Implementation of the Plan involves many City departments. Recreational services and libraries are active in implementation of the plan.
- The last recommendation of the plan is to do an annual report on which priorities have been addressed.
- The social planning website page is: www.surrey.ca/social-planning.
- Three priority areas of work for social planning in the coming years are:
 1. **Immigrants and Refugees** –
 - Welcoming and Inclusive Communities Partnership
 - A *study* is underway with a grant from BC Housing to look at the housing experiences of refugees in Surrey. The City has contracted Immigrant Services Society, who is working in partnership with a Metropolis UBC researcher, to conduct the research.
 2. **Homelessness and Housing** –
 - This is a big area of focus in terms of the work plan of social planning:
 - A Housing Action Plan will be developed. The Plan will focus on current and future housing needs related to affordability and diverse housing choices.
 - The recovery house issue is another priority. Some sort of regulation/accountability is required both to ensure that recovery house operators cannot exploit the vulnerable residents, and that these houses do not have a negative impact on the neighbourhoods in which they are located.
 - Surrey Homeless and Housing Society Board of Directors is responsible for the \$9 Million Fund.
 - In October 2008, the Society awarded a \$1 million grant to Atira for their Maxxine Wright project – a supportive housing project for at-risk pregnant and parenting women. Project is expected to break ground in February 2009.
 - The Society's Board is now involved in a strategic planning process – to determine parameters and priorities for future granting and to develop a fund raising strategy to continue to build fund.
 - City now has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing and is committed to partnering with the Provincial government to increase the supply of supportive housing in Surrey.

The Chair commented that the Surrey Homelessness and Housing Society has a very committed Board of Directors. This sends a good message. She added that the City is serious about playing a role in social housing and is making this issue a high priority.

3. Children and Youth –

- Social Planning and CLS are partners on the Youth Engagement in Community and Social Planning project.
- A Youth Participation Coordinator has been hired. He has set up a Youth Council in Whalley. The Youth Council has organized two annual youth forums.
- The Youth Participation Coordinator has also conducted youth-friendly consultations for planning processes including City Centre Plan and Sustainability Charter.
- The Youth Council is currently involved in working with CLS to plan a new youth space in the North Surrey Recreation Centre. The space will be used 3-4 evenings a week, and run more by the youth.
- The Youth Council is interested in presenting to this committee in March.
- A Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy will be developed over the coming year. The Strategy will identify policies and practices that will promote the healthy development of children and youth in Surrey.

The Chair thanked Aileen for her presentation. Council will be very supportive of the Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy since it pertains to sustainability.

E. NEW BUSINESS**1. City of Surrey Sustainability Charter**

Committee members are requested to appoint two Committee members to review a Sustainable Development checklist.

- Mark Allison prepared a memo requesting each committee of the City to nominate two representatives and two alternates to attend a workshop one evening in early March to look at the checklist.

It was

Moved by Councillor Rasode

Seconded by Gurtej S. Gill

That the Social Planning Advisory

Committee appoint two representatives and two alternates to review the City of Surrey Sustainability Charter.

(a) Two representatives: Kuldip Ardawa and Karen Kreis; and

(b) Two alternates: Merlin Chatwin and Stephen Dooley

Carried

F. ITEMS REFERRED BY COUNCIL

G. UPDATES

1. Church & Affordable Housing Conference held October 17-18, 2008 (deferred from November 27, 2008)

Karen Kreis attended the Conference and found it to be very interesting. The following information was provided:

- Conference was held in Vancouver. The conference was faith oriented.
- Surrey – “A Rocha” (is Portuguese and means “The Rock”) is an Eco village. Contact: Marco Kostamo, Executive Director, A Rocha Canada 604-542-9022 markku.kostamo@arocha.org
- Union Gospel Mission, St. James Community Services were there.
- At the Saturday evening closing – Michael Brown spoke about land trusts as an idea and strategy for affordable housing.
- Debra Litman, conducted a workshop on Living Wage - a strategy/program done in London UK. She could be invited to do a presentation to this committee as she is based in Vancouver.

2. Surrey Association of Sustainable Communities

Karen Kreis provided a presentation on the Surrey Association of Sustainable Communities’ Newton project:

- Karen is the Community developer for Surrey ASC is an over arching umbrella organization for all community organizations within Surrey
- Karen is tasked with coordinating a community-building project within Newton.
- Want to create more community pride and identity in Newton. Newton is huge with many communities and areas within.

The Chair notes that there is a good core of people within Newton who have worked hard to make Newton Days and other events happen.

- Planning to hold a few community neighbourhood meetings to flush out issues and to determine how to access other resources, festivals, issues for asset mapping.
- Renate Gepreags, the City’s Beautification Coordinator, is linking up with this project.

H. CORRESPONDENCE

I. OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS

Quick impressions from new members:

- Devinder Chattha - this meeting opens up a vision of the City and shows there are many avenues to help, issues to resolve and to bring to forefront. Is happy to be here and to be able to provide input. Doing many new projects related to settlement services in Surrey.
- Linda Coyle is very interested in inclusiveness and multiculturalism. Has been actively involved in Richmond for years but since she has lived in Surrey for 35 years and feels it is time to be getting involved here on her home turf.
- Merlin Chatwin is involved with the School District 36 as a Community-Schools Partnership Coordinator, works with the Food Action Coalition and several other community service organizations.

The Chair noted that there are a lot of skills around this table. She encouraged members to bring forward any items or issues to be included on the agenda of Committee meetings.

J. NEXT MEETING

Next meeting of the Social Planning Advisory Committee is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2009.

K. ADJOURNMENT

It was

Moved by Kuldip Ardawa
Seconded by Gurtej S. Gill
That the Social Planning Advisory

Committee meeting do now adjourn.

Carried

The Social Planning Advisory Committee adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Jane Sowik, Acting City Clerk

Chairperson, Councillor J. Villeneuve
Social Planning Advisory Committee