



Corporate NO: L008

Report COUNCIL DATE: December 3, 2001

REGULAR COUNCIL – LAND USE			
TO:	Mayor & Council	DATE:	November 30, 2001
FROM:	General Manager, Planning and Development	FILE:	2104-001
SUBJECT:	Update on Provincial Licensing for Alcohol and Drug Recovery Houses		

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council receive this report as information.

INTENT

The intent of this report is to update Council on the Provincial Government's intentions, regarding the licensing of alcohol and drug recovery houses and is further to the information provided in Corporate Report No. L007, a copy of which is attached as Appendix I, considered by Council on November 19, 2001.

BACKGROUND

At the Regular Council meeting of Monday, November 19, 2001, Council considered a report from the Planning and Development Department, advising Council of the pending changes to the *Community Care Facilities Act*, with respect to the Provincial licensing of alcohol and drug recovery houses and to advise Council of the potential implications for Surrey and other local governments seeking to effectively accommodate such facilities in their communities.

In view of the potential community impact of the proposed changes in Provincial licensing, Council requested that the Mayor, on behalf of Council, write a letter to the Province outlining the City's concerns and proposing the implementation of a graduated licensing structure for alcohol and drug recovery houses. Council, at that same meeting, tabled rezoning application No. 7901-0226-00, to permit a 17 bed alcohol and drug recovery house at 984 - 160 Street, pending a response from the Minister of Health Services to the letter from the Mayor and further information from the Province on the Province's intentions related to licensing of alcohol and drug recovery houses.

DISCUSSION

Letter to the Minister of Health Services

On Wednesday November 21, 2001, a letter signed by the Mayor, on behalf of Council, was forwarded to the Honourable Colin Hansen, Minister of Health Services, by fax and courier, with the request for an immediate response, no later than November 30, 2001. A copy of the letter is attached as Appendix II. Copies of the Mayor's letter were also distributed to the Regional Medical Health Officer and the Chief Licensing Officer for Community Care Facility Licensing Branch of the South Fraser Health Region.

At the time of writing this report, no response has been received from the Province, either acknowledging the receipt of the letter or responding to the proposal for a graduated licensing system.

Meeting with Representatives of the South Fraser Health Region

Concurrent with the letter to the Minister, staff arranged to meet with representatives of the South Fraser Health Region, including the Regional Health Officer and staff of the Community Care Facilities Licensing Branch to discuss the issues outlined in the letter to the Minister of Health Services and in the Corporate Report to Council and to receive any further information, regarding the Province's intentions related to the licensing of alcohol and drug recovery houses.

At the meeting, held Wednesday November 28, 2001, the Regional Medical Health Officer confirmed that the Province is currently completing a review of the *Community Care Facility Act*, Adult Care Regulations and that the specifics of the type of care that will be regulated have not yet been finalized. He also indicated that while the anticipated changes are to be finalized shortly, no specific time frame or date was available. As noted in the report to Council, South Fraser Health Region Community Care Facility Licensing staff further confirmed that it is anticipated that when the review is completed, most alcohol and drug recovery houses in Surrey that were previously eligible for licensing will be deemed to be providing support and accommodation only and not "care" and will probably no longer qualify for community care facility licensing.

While the Regional Medical Health Officer was receptive to the idea of a system of licensing that responded to a wider range of supportive care, including a graduated licensing system for alcohol and drug recovery houses, as proposed in the Mayor's letter to the Province, he was not encouraged that such a concept would be supported by the Province, given the current focus on reducing regulations and finding efficiencies in all areas of government, including health services.

The Regional Health Officer further indicated that, in addition to the changes to the *Community Care Facility Act*, Adult Care Regulations, the Province is proposing to transfer the current outpatient alcohol and drug programs provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to Regional Health Boards. The Regional Medical Health Officer indicated that the challenge of providing outpatient services to alcohol and drug clients would then fall to the South Fraser Health Region. No specific directions to address the anticipated responsibility have been developed. However, the Regional Medical Health Officer advised that the Minister of Health Services is developing an addictions plan for the Province, which will include a review of all residential services.

Overview of Existing Community Care Facilities Licensing Requirements

Until the initiation of the Provincial review, alcohol and drug recovery houses were eligible for community care facility licensing if the facility provided on-site care and support as regulated under the *Community Care Facility Act*. The *Community Care Facility Act* and, specifically, with reference to the Ministry of Health Adult Residential Care Regulations, requires the operators of alcohol and drug recovery houses to address the requirements as outlined in the legislation, which primarily includes the following:

- Adequate physical structure, including compliance with Building Codes;
- Qualified staff that are assigned responsibilities consistent with their experience, competence and training;
- Admission screening procedures that ensure accommodation for only those persons for who safe and adequate care can be provided;
- Provision of nutrition and meal plans;
- Provision of care plans for individual clients;
- Procedures for dispensation of medication; and
- Provision of emergency policies and procedures.

Further, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, Addiction Services requires:

- Provision of structured on-site programs.

There are presently four licensed facilities in Surrey, including Path to Freedom in Cloverdale, the two Phoenix House facilities in Newton and Whalley respectively and Liz's Place in Fleetwood, a six-bed Provincial facility. All of these facilities had to achieve and, demonstrate, their capacity to satisfy Provincial requirements in the process of achieving community care facility licensing.

With respect to the application for community care facility licensing by The Launching Pad, Community Care Facility Licensing staff indicated that, based on the information provided by the facility as part of their application for licensing, it was deemed not to qualify as a care facility as defined under the current *Community Care Facility Act*, Adult Care Regulations. The applicant had been advised that the facility would not qualify for licensing based on the information provided. This was based, in part, on the reasons outlined in general terms in the table below. At the same time, it should be noted that given the current Provincial licensing review, the application cannot be pursued further.

Examples of Community Care Facilities Licensing Criteria	Initial Review of Launching Pad's Application for Licensing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of paid, qualified staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is primarily on a volunteer basis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of structured <u>on-site</u> programs for resident clients, assessed by Addiction Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clients attend <u>off-site</u> Alcohol Anonymous meetings • Some life skills training provided by volunteer counsellor(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provision of written policies and procedures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Client admission criteria - Nutrition and meal plans; - Individual care plans; and - Emergency procedures and policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No formal documented operational standards submitted

CONCLUSION

Since Council's consideration of the Planning and Development report on November 19, 2001, outlining the pending changes to the Provincial licensing of alcohol and drug recovery houses, action has been taken to advise the Province of Council's concerns and to solicit additional information on the status and direction of the Provincial review of community care facility licensing requirements. On November 21, 2001, a letter was forwarded by the Mayor to the Minister of Health Services requesting a response to Council's proposal for a graduated licensing system. However, no response has been received to date. A meeting between City staff and representatives from the South Fraser Health Region Community Care Facility Branch, provided an opportunity to discuss the issues identified in the letter as the basis for this report to Council.

Murray Dinwoodie
General Manager
Planning and Development

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Appendix I Corporate Report L007

Appendix II Letter dated November 21, 2001, to the Honourable Colin Hansen, Minister of Health Services.