

Meeting Notes



Citizen's Advisory Committee Meeting 4

Date/Time: Thursday, September 30th, 5:30-8:00
Place: Sunnyside Hall (1845 - 154 St, Surrey, BC)
Next Meeting: 5:30 PM, October 25, 2010
Attendees: Anthony Hepworth
Avtar Johl, CAC Member
Brad Lambert, CAC Member
Chuck Brook, CAC Member
Cindy Lighthouse, CAC Member
Eric Chen, CAC Member
Mike Proskow, CAC Member
Nadine Adams, CAC Member
Norm Porter, CAC Member
Paul Fenske, CAC Member
Prit Pal Sandhu, CAC Member
Vena Sandhu, CAC Member
Bharghav Parghi, City of Surrey
Don Luymes, City of Surrey
Fay Wong, City of Surrey
Mira Petrovic City of Surrey
Doug Merry, City of Surrey
Ileana Kosa, City of Surrey
Stephen Godwin, City of Surrey
John Steil, Stantec
Siobhan Murphy, Stantec

Absentees: Arnold Fenrick, CAC Member
Delmar Robertson, CAC Member

Distribution: All in attendance + absentees

Welcome: John Steil welcomed CAC members to the fourth CAC meeting.

Agenda: The agenda for the meeting was reviewed, John, added several things to the agenda:

- meeting update with Paul Fenske and Chuck Brook
- update on IAC Meeting #2
- update on EAC meeting

Minutes: The **CAC #3 meeting notes** were late getting circulated. If there are any comments, please contact Siobhan.

Binder: no new additions.

Meeting with CAC Member Nadine Adams:

John told the CAC that the purpose of the meeting was process-oriented. Nadine wanted to get clarification on terminology, etc., as she had not been part of this kind of process before.

Meeting with Paul Fenske and Chuck Brook:

John told the CAC that Paul and Chuck asked for the meeting to see how they can help. They were encouraged to participate and give feedback as much as they can like any other CAC member. They made the point that the CAC makeup has been discussed at length, and they want to focus on contributing to the discussion that feeds into the development of the next iteration of the Land Use Concepts.

Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC) Update: (Don Luymes)

Don gave the CAC some context about advisory committees in Surrey, and the EAC: committees have elected members and appointed members. The EAC is very interested in this NCP. Bob Bose is the elected Councilor who sits on this committee. The EAC has been given the Vision and Principles as well as the 3 Alternatives. Comments from the EAC were:

- They want to know how the land use options overlay with the wildlife hubs and corridors.
- They do not see a lot of opportunities for wildlife.
- Transition areas from urban to agriculture are not pronounced enough, not much different in percentage of greenspace from one to another.
- Did not like location of commercial at intersection of 24 Ave and 176 St.
- EAC wants to stay apprised of the development of this NCP.

IAC update:

John said the CAC that there were several main points that came out of the second IAC meeting, and others would be discussed during the review of alternatives:

- Fraser Health submitted a letter on healthy planning principles.
- Ministry of Transportation (MoT) clarified issues relative to Hwy 15. Transportation upgrade on Hwy 15 is potentially the next priority after Gateway and Hwy 99.

Tony referred to Fraser Health's (FH) submission, which mentioned phasing which caused him concern. John told the CAC that phasing is not an issue-- Council has approved NCP 4 going ahead with Stage One of the NCP process. Fraser Health's point was that this community is fairly isolated and they are concerned about transportation linkages, numbers to support transit, walkability, access to services, etc.

John also referred CAC members to the ALR buffer on the northeast side of NCP 4. On the alternatives provided to date, nothing has been shown that complies with existing policy. We should do that on one alternative. Bhargav explained the City's interpretation of its ALR policy, also known as Policy O-23. (this can be found on the City of Surrey website at: <http://www.surrey.ca/files/O23.pdf>)

Bharghav showed the CAC a map that interprets the Policy O-23. The 400m adjacent to the ALR is intended as a transition area to the ALR. The first 200 m next to the ALR (Outer Ring) allows for a gross density of a maximum of 2 units per acre subject to a row of 1-acre lots provided at the ALR edge. When the ALR is separated by a road or natural feature, a row of ½ -acre lots may be placed near the ALR subject to providing of a minimum of 15-m wide buffer between the ½-acre lots and road. In this

case, there is no road separating the ALR but there is the existing rail r.o.w. Further, while this policy does not require a 15-m buffer when a row of 1-acre lots interfaces with the ALR, under the DP Guidelines of the OCP the buffer is still required. Within the next 200 m (Inner Ring), a gross density of up to a maximum of 4 units per acre is permitted comprising a maximum of 10,000 sq. ft. lots.

Brad asked how firm the ALR policy is saying the alternatives do not currently align with the City's residential buffering adjacent to the ALR boundary. Don responded, saying there is a lot of discussion about this policy, and it also appears in the OCP. He said he will be going to Council to get some more clarification on this issue. He cited a precedent in Anniedale where there was a tradeoff on densities on parcels near ALR, with a much wider buffer next to ALR. The GLUP shows a dotted line around the area at the ALR edge, which implies that this area requires a detailed study and there may be some flexibility in how transition is achieved. .

Paul said that from a design point of view, topography is going to play a larger role. The former rail-line is a 30m buffer already for part of the interface, which is a fairly significant transition space. John said that at the IAC, the Ministry of Agriculture said it wants a barrier/fence between the ALR and greenway. The representative from the Ministry added that conflict is often coming from the area up slope (noise travels easily uphill). John said the next iterations will show different approaches to provide barriers and mitigate disturbances.

Next, Avtar spoke to the report he submitted to the CAC about transitions from residential use to agriculture. The report presents an argument for hard edges between agricultural and urban development. Paul said he thought Surrey's policy on agriculture buffers was all-encompassing, and that the edges between residential and agriculture where the elevation begins to drop away may be a big opportunity and a starting point for innovation. Nadine said she was surprised about the noise issue and that it's an important part of NCP4. Chuck said he would like to see one of the next options that show an alternative to buffers. John said that in the next round, this can be addressed 3 ways: application of existing policy, clustering, and density closer to the ALR land. Then it can be taken to the public, to get feedback and then work can begin on the preferred option.

Next John asked for comments on the principles he rewrote and had re-circulated. Tony said there was nothing that refers to equity for greenspace and referred to one of the scenarios, in which one piece of Eric's land was all greenspace, and therefore not equitable.

Mike Proskow asked if the developers group had thought about forming a land corporation that could sell shares, so that the equity issue could be resolved. Tony said they talked about it, but could not resolve some details. Avtar said the group discussed an environmental levy, but that it would have to be integrated with the NCP and work with the 5% for parkland as well. Don Luymes said a decision needs to be made on which mechanism to use.

- Either do nothing. It is Council's prerogative to approve changes to land use and it can deny rezoning, or
- Acquire the green space using DCC and 5% for parkland, or
- Through density bonusing.

John told the CAC that other municipalities are struggling with this issue as well. He referred back to the Planning Principles and how they need to be the foundation for the scenarios, but also that an Implementation Strategy was needed. Don explained the importance of maintaining large contiguous spaces to biodiversity. He emphasized not only size, but also location will be an important factor.

Stephen agreed, and added that there were opportunities for restoration to work in tandem with development.

BREAK at 6:40 p.m.

Paul brought up the Madrone Environmental Report for discussion. He said it was a fairly broad assessment of environmental features, but it did not provide much information on what to manage for in the future. Stephen said any commissioned study is limited by the amount of money allotted and that while general, the identification of wildlife hubs are areas of interests. The wildlife corridors represent known links between these areas, or they are a line of least resistance. Stephen said there was lots of potential to do good, restorative resource management alongside development. He also mentioned that the City currently does not have a biodiversity strategy.

Going forward, John wants to take a more focused approach in the CAC meetings. Currently, he is in the process of developing alternatives. The next step is to develop preferences. John emphasized the importance of considering how things are treated in each scenario. He also wrote a rationale to support the alternatives which had been previously circulated by email. He passed out a handout, with 10 variables that need to address the scenarios. These topics should be considered in terms of the principles as well.

John led the CAC through the variables starting with the commercial variable. He emphasized that the orientation of commercial areas is important to consider. Should they be on both sides of the street for a main street or on one side of the street? When thinking ahead, for a lot of the issues, it is important to think about form and character, placemaking, etc. Chuck asked how the Coriolis Report informed the location of the commercial centres. Coriolis looked at all of Grandview Heights. The report recommended a larger centre to the west, possibly at 168 St or 176 St with a floor area of 200,000 sq ft. John said his interpretation was based on the assumption that the centre of Grandview Heights is currently rural suburban (yellow on the GLUP map), but will redevelop over time, and that the commercial area in GH4 should be at a neighborhood scale.

Norm said he thought considering the large number of employees that will be working in Campbell Heights; a bigger commercial site might be warranted. Paul said the commercial area provided a lot of opportunities for placemaking and that it's important to ask questions like: What do you think about walkability? What uses would you expect to see in a neighborhood? How far would you walk and what kind of uses?

Mira said that people will, on average, walk five minutes to services and amenities. She thinks NCP 4 might benefit from two neighborhood commercial areas. John said it is important to also consider driving accessibility as well as walkability to make commercial areas viable and it would be good for encouraging a wider range of services. Nadine said she liked the idea of a High Street, citing Dundarave in West Vancouver as a good example, but thought 24 Ave might be too wide. Paul said it would be good to expand on the commercial and make it mixed use, and that it is important to think about the characteristics that make a great commercial area. Don reminded the CAC that it is important to think of the temporal aspect of NCP 4. For example: the commercial area(s) may be smaller at the beginning, and bigger at build-out.

Next the CAC discussed the school location. In Alternative 3, it is adjacent to a greenway, in Alternative 2 it is near the commercial area. In Alternative 1, neither. In terms of accessibility, it is closer to

commercial, and he reminded the group that the school size needs to be about 5.6 ha, which will be a joint school/park site. Brad said he thought elementary schools are better separated from commercial areas. Both John and Don referred to the recent IAC#2 meeting and comments made by the School District representative, when asked about whether a school site could be located near a commercial area as represented in the alternative 2 drawing. At the IAC #2 meeting, Umur Olcay of the Surrey School District provided a qualified answer with respect to the preliminary drawing, indicating that it would not be inconceivable to locate an elementary school in the proposed location provided appropriate buffering is provided between the school and the commercial site. However, it was indicated that this location may not be the school district's first choice.

Mr. Olcay indicated that elementary students are well supervised and are generally not allowed to leave the school site during the school day to go to a nearby store. It was noted that it was more likely that secondary students would access nearby commercial areas. From that perspective, the distance of commercial uses from an elementary school was not as much of a factor in more urban environments as buffering between uses and linkages with the neighbourhood.

Mr. Olcay also commented that an elementary school location with frontage on 24th Avenue in Alternative 3 may be difficult to support if 24th Avenue became a truck route. Mira Petrovic, who was also present at the IAC 2 meeting, said that even if the school site is on 24th Ave in Alternative 3, it would only be accessible through a local road.

John mentioned that in terms of proximity to wildlife, he tried to designate the school outside of the wildlife hub. Stephen said that schools can be next to a hub, but that kids often do not have access to those areas. Don made another suggestion for Alternative 3: that the school could be moved north from 24th another block. Paul said it is good to make schools central because they are also important centres and used a lot in the evening. Don said 178 St might be better as a central crossroads than 180 St, because more people will be living south of 24 Ave at 178 St, and 180 St is closer to the rural area.

John then referred to green spaces on the alternatives, and also identified the proximity of Redwood Park, which is a major activity area. He said that the City is also in the process of more acquisition to add onto the Park. Tony wanted to know how much green space the landowner has to contribute. John said that the issue of green space contribution will have to be resolved. Active and passive green space will be identified in the next iterations. Paul wants to see more context of what is around the study area for the next iteration. He wants to see more east/west connectivity for recreation activity beyond the confines of Area #4. Don said that the highest densities will be on the west side of the centre. He added that Surrey is discussing the potential of having mini-parks very close to where people live. One alternative should show mini-parks.

John said that MoT likes the street grid because people can move around the neighborhood without getting onto Highway 15 and/or 24 Ave. He described the street grid, which is signalized at 800m, with intersections at 400m, and Right In/Right Outs at 200m. The grid is designed to maximize access, and distribute traffic throughout the neighborhood. What is not present in these alternatives is the road hierarchy of the past: with arterials, collectors, and local roads. He also said he has talked with Mira about how to integrate transit, but needs to do more work on this issue.

Tony said he did not like all the access off 176 St. He thinks it would be good to isolate this area from Hwy 15. Mira referred to City of Surrey Council, which supports the grid for increased connectivity and safe communities. Tony said a fine grid and greenspace will be a big loss of potential developable land

for developers. Mira said this kind of scenario has been tested historically and is adaptable. Example: in Vancouver, there are 100m blocks, and that all the traffic cannot be put on a few roads; people often do not walk more than 400m.

Avtar requested clarification on MoT's plans for 800m, 400m, and 200m access points on Hwy 15. Nadine pointed out that Vancouver streets and Hwy 15 are quite different. Norm agreed, saying that there is a lot of traffic management in Vancouver. Mira assured the CAC members that Surrey can do well-planned neighborhoods with traffic management techniques that will make it pleasant and safe. Eric agreed with the other CAC members, saying he thought more access on 176 St was not safe. John assured the group that options will be shown in the next iterations.

Mira described the City's Strategic Transportation Plan, which has design criteria that specifies a street grid. She also described the roads, which usually have 20m Rights-of-Way, half of which are made up of green space and paths, half for vehicles. Avtar echoed Tony's point about street grid systems conflicting with the preservation of green space. Mike said if roads are opened up, people race through them, which is not wanted in NCP4. Public transit will need to be planned for this area as well.

Tony asked Don about the ranges for all 3 Alternatives. Don said that in terms of density, the housing types will likely be wood frame apartments, and town housing, with 4upa on the low side. John said the next iterations will have different levels of population in each. Nadine asked if the scenarios at the next Public Open House are going to be presented as completed entities, or are there going to be components from each. John told the group that the alternatives are to show choices now (later a preferred scenario will be mix and match), with explanation about the key choices order to get feedback.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

The foregoing is considered to be a true and accurate record of all items discussed. If any discrepancies or inconsistencies are noted, please contact the writer immediately.

STANTEC CONSULTING LTD.

Siobhan Murphy
Planner
Siobhan.Murphy@stantec.com