

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission  
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.  
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, July 10th, 2013**

---

**MINUTES**

---

Present: B. Curtis  
J. Jensen (Chair)  
P. McCann  
B. Phillips  
J. Plato  
M. Robinson  
B. Watt

Staff: S. Smith, Planner, Community Development  
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests: None

Absent: D. Farley  
M. Rahbar  
C. Sacre  
Councillor Bell  
Councillor Buchanan

---

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

**1. Minutes of Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013**

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2013 be adopted.

**Carried Unanimously**

**2. Business Arising : None.**

**3. Staff Update**

S. Smith reviewed items that from the June 17<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and July 8<sup>th</sup> Council meetings.

There was a question on who pays for studies requested by Council. **A:** The City paid for the heritage assessment report as it was requested by Council, but typically an applicant would pay for a study if heritage retention was a key part of a redevelopment proposal.

#### 4. CityShaping OCP Update

S. Smith reviewed the report that went to Council on June 24<sup>th</sup> 2013 which described the collective inputs from Stage 3 relating to growth and land use. Council directed staff to begin drafting the new OCP.

Members were asked for their comments on the structure of the proposed Table of Contents.

Staff are now thinking about how to track progress over time with indicators and thinking about how the OCP comes together in terms of structure and measurability.

#### **Questions and comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:**

- Regarding the word “utilities” in Chapter 6, be more specific. Make sure people understand what the chapter headings mean.
- I like the grouping; it is easier to zero in and find what you are interested in.
- There are broader issues relating to sustainability; what exactly does it mean?  
**Staff:** The City’s OCP includes a definition and that is our official description.
- Some of the pieces are subcomponents to larger issues.
- I think sustainability applies to everything because it applies to the long term; sustainability needs to be considered even if we do not have measures for them. Build a community that will last on economic, cultural and environmental front.
- It is easier to define things by what they are not rather than what they are. It is difficult to define in terms of social cohesion e.g. crime rates etc.
- **Staff:** The goal is to integrate the concept of sustainability into everything e.g. addressing social, economic and environmental issues. Maybe we should flip the word around sometimes.
- How do communities remain successful? Cities grow and change. You need a dynamic control mechanism.
- **Staff:** We have a Sense of Place chapter which is a tricky term for some people. Does the grouping work? We have also seen the term “placemaking” used.
- Sense of Place encompasses more than just the physical realm. **Staff:** Does the location in the Table of Contents have an impact? **A:** It is difficult to put into its own chapter so I think it is ok to merge it have a broad description and understanding of it. It makes sense to put it further down the list.
- The goals of community etc. “here is the place we want to be” should be earlier in the TOC; transportation etc. supports the goals.
- What makes North Vancouver City distinctive? This contributes to the Sense of Place e.g. there is a good Sense of Place in Whistler and Steveston.
- The chapter is good; the sense of place discussion paper was very well written.
- Landscape and the variety of people are critical; how do you capture that? It should be moved to the top; it is part of the big picture.
- Start with visions and outcomes in mind and then work everything else from that.
- Where do schools show up? We should not be silent on it; schools are part of our sense of community. Just because you do not control does not mean you cannot try to improve it.
- It is not just schools and libraries.

- **School Trustee:** Public assembly lands in North Vancouver District have become a big issue. It is important because the public sees them as public property; people believe they should have control.
- **Staff:** Schools influence where people live. We reference schools in land use and in relation to youth in the community well-being section.
- **School Trustee:** Schools have other resources e.g. daycares, gyms for the community.
- Are seniors integrated with schools? **School Trustee:** Not for space but some schools have partnerships with senior groups.
- The OCP would be a good place to talk about it.
- **School Trustee:** There are many rumours about future uses for properties like the Lucas Centre e.g. soccer fields,, community gardens, etc.
- The City needs a plan in place for those lands and to recognize that public lands are not just City lands.
- Under Chapter 6 “Services and Infrastructure”, would the financial status of the City be addressed in the indicators? **Staff:** It is grouped under Chapter 10.
- Make it a bit more exciting so that people are drawn to it.
- Talk about some of the decisions e.g. pay parking, revenue mix, the costs and benefits of moving to a more mixed tax base. The fact that the City is dependent on property taxes affects the way the City has developed. We can change the way the community grows and changes by changing the way we manage and grow revenue. It is completely different in the US; there are very few community centres in towns. The philosophy of the way the City funds itself is important e.g. density bonusing is a tool available for amenities outside the tax base. The community decided to do that but they could have decided to go into debt.
- **Staff:** There is a phrase in the current plan: “ensuring that within the financial constraints imposed on the city that property taxes shall not fluctuate...”
- The financial aspects are seen as what past behaviour has led us to: the result of decisions; making the rationale more apparent is important.
- Some of the success is due to the size of the City e.g. there is one fire hall.
- **Staff:** The idea is to have one or two overarching goals per chapter. The current OCP has about 50 goals and 100 measures.
- I would like more than one goal per chapter.
- **Staff:** They could be very high level and refer to other plans e.g. the Parks Master Plan; which is included in full in the current OCP.
- I had difficulty with the formatting and readability of the last OCP. It would be better to have a theme with a general description; all the bullets make it too broken up and analytical.
- With regard to TIMS it seemed to me that staff struggled to come up with metrics for them and constantly and consistently measure them.
- **Staff:** It would make sense to have a couple of goals per chapter linked directly to indicators.
- Master plans could filter up to key indicators.
- As a taxpayer I would like to know how we did; e.g. square metres of park space per resident – has it gone up or down over time?
- It is important to have tangible goals.
- What is a good number of goals per chapter? What would be the minimum? I like the idea of a structure and framework tied to verification side.

- Do the indicators have to be explicit in the OCP? **Staff:** The indicators are intended to track the progress of the OCP. They will be integrated and directly linked.
- The measurements did not work for the last OCP? **A:** We set them after the OCP was adopted and tied them in. We will have to pick the indicators carefully.
- You have to be careful with measurements e.g. the master plan for parks says one of the goals is to acquire more parkland; are school lands included in the parks figures? If they are sold it can lower the figure.
- **Staff:** Data should be straightforward and easy to collect on a regular basis. We have learned lessons from the past.
- You should make it clear that the OCP is not a forever thing; it is not cast in bronze. **Staff:** The idea is to paint a vision for residents; we have a legal obligation to update it every 10 years. Metro plans look 30 years out. How do you do it so that people are comfortable with it?
- Is there a point at the end of talking about future trends e.g. sea level rise, climate change, things which were talked about in the 100 year vision.
- Maybe there is a place to comment that it is something that evolves and continues to evolve. The city has an obligation to stand behind the reality of what it is. We need to define it in broad terms. It is not the "bible"
- If Council were amending it every week it would not be a good plan.
- You adjust to things as you move along.
- You must not come up with a rigid document that cannot change.
- **Staff:** We have heard that section 5.12 of the current plan is too ambiguous. The density bonus study will help bring clarity.

## 5. 2013 APC Work Plan

S. Smith reviewed the proposed 2013 APC Work Plan which is in the form of an Information Report to Council. The agendas have been dominated by CityShaping and the group has not seen as many development proposals only those that are more than 10 units or do not meet guidelines/involve an OCP amendment.

### **Questions and comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:**

- Walking tours e.g. Harbourside, the connections around Gostick place, Bewicke, Operations Centre.
- Russ Davis did a good presentation to the LLBA about the BIA, he formed the 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue BIA, and the different dynamic to the character of communities and how businesses and shops contribute to it. There are lots of mixed use buildings being approved. Business people on Lonsdale are losing parking spots and are not happy.
- Residents are not happy with parking either.

## 6. Sustainable City Awards

S. Smith reminded the group about the Sustainable City Award program. Last year Loutet Farm was the winner. The award is given based on the integration of economic, environmental and social considerations. It will be advertised in September, seeking nominations for projects, community groups, and individual

community-based programs. In October the APC will review nominations and make a selection. Award winners have to meet all of the criteria.

The Commission agreed that members would think of nominees over the summer. The nomination form is on the City website.

**Action:** The Committee Clerk to remind members before the September 11th meeting.

## 7. Information Items

S. Smith updated members on the status of the Density Bonusing Study. A Council workshop was held on June 17<sup>th</sup>. A consultant was engaged to review and assess the density bonuses granted over the past 30 years, to look at categories, whether the City received good value, and to look at what other municipalities have done. The summary report was reviewed at the workshop. It seems that, overall, the City has received good value for density bonusing agreements. The summary report was presented at the June 17<sup>th</sup> workshop – advising that the City received good value but the process was not transparent enough. The consultant has no concerns with the categories for bonusing e.g. environmental, heritage, employment, affordable housing, community space.

The consultant will report back to Council on July 22<sup>nd</sup> with recommendations. These will provide direction to the draft OCP which is due to return to Council October 7<sup>th</sup>.

A member asked if there would be a separate public meeting on the topic. **Staff:** This is to be determined; it needs to be integrated into the OCP. It will be Council's decision. The draft OCP will include open houses, Town Hall meetings, and focus groups e.g. youth and seniors scheduled for the fall, as well as online surveys.

A member mentioned that he attended the workshop. Many municipalities are using density bonusing to help pay for amenities. The City has a very flexible system; some programs are quite restrictive.

## 8. Other Business

A member reminded the group about the Party on the Pier on July 14<sup>th</sup> and recommended that members check out at the newly-renovated spires on St. Paul's Church.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2013.

Chair 