

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, March 12th, 2014**

MINUTES

Present: J. Jensen (Chair)
D. Farley
A. Jamieson
D. Marshall
P. McCann
B. Phillips
M. Rahbar
M. Robinson
C. Sacre
B. Watt
Councillor Bell
Councillor Buchanan

Staff: S. Smith, Planner 2, Community Development
N. LaMontagne, Manager Long Range and Community Planning,
Community Development
E. Adin, Deputy Director, Community Development
M. Lynch, Manager, Development Planning
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Absent: None

A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Minutes of Meetings of the Advisory Planning Commission held February 12th, and February 27th, 2014

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the minutes of the meetings of the Advisory Planning Commission held February 12th, and February 27th, 2014 be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

2. Business Arising

E. Adin introduced Mark Lynch the new Manager of Development Planning, to the Commission.

3. Zoning Bylaw Comprehensive Phase 3 Supporting Green Buildings

E. Adin reviewed the proposed amendments to the Zoning Bylaw which would support the design and construction of greener buildings in the City of North Vancouver.

A comprehensive review of the Zoning Bylaw by staff has been ongoing since 2010. These proposed amendments are Phase 3 of the 4 phase process.

The 11 proposed amendments would apply to all new buildings constructed in the City; they are:

- A Gross Floor Area exclusion for exterior wall assemblies that are thicker than six inches;
- Exclusions as allowable side and front yard projections for cantilevered shading devices;
- Height exemptions for green roofs and renewables (including solar thermal collectors, photovoltaic modules and small-scale wind turbines);
- Setback exemptions for green walls and renewables (e.g. PV panels);
- FSR exclusions for passive ventilation features;
- Removal of exemption from floor area and permitted setback projections for bay windows, but they will still be permitted;
- FSR exclusion for green building systems in cellars and basements;
- Exemption for greenhouses up to a certain size in accessory building floor area calculations;
- Exemption for primary staircase if it is situated near the elevator and is designed to be highly visible; or for a secondary staircase;
- Mandatory minimum garbage and recycling space and access requirements for all multiple unit residential buildings;
- Maximum impervious surface limit.

Questions and Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- Aren't there some opportunities already to get higher density if you build to a higher energy standard? **A:** There is a small bonus for rain screening; nothing relating to the building envelope. The exemption for thicker exterior wall assemblies is new.
- There should be height exemptions for green roofs; ventilation and insulation could that be considered as a thicker roof area would be required. **A:** Good idea.
- Will the Provincial Government be introducing new guidelines? **A:** There are new guidelines concerning Community Amenity Charges. There is a willingness to consider optional higher standards if municipalities are willing e.g. solar-ready construction can exceed the Building Code.

M. Rahbar entered the room at 6:10 p.m.

- I have difficulty understanding the FSR exclusion for green building systems in cellars and basements; could it be rephrased? **A:** Depending on when the house was built, cellars are excluded as long as EnerGuide 80 is met. As an incentive

to retain older homes, basement floor area is not counted in homes built before 1960.

- Are coach houses allowed a cellar or storage? **A:** Not currently. A Level B coach house has to go to Council for approval so it could be included in the Development Permit.
- Is there a definition of greenhouses in the Zoning Bylaw? **A:** No it will have to be added. It will need careful wording.
- I like the whole thing. Why is a greenhouse exempted? **A:** It is a way to support urban agriculture.
- It is about time something was done about bay windows. They do not always match the style of the house.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the Bylaw Comprehensive Review Phase 3 Supporting Green Buildings proposed amendments and supports the initiative to amend the Zoning Bylaw to encourage green building construction.

Carried Unanimously

4. Staff Update

S. Smith reviewed relevant planning development, project and policy items from the February 17th, and 24th, and March 3rd and 10th meetings, and the recent Town Hall Meeting #1 of 4 on the draft OCP.

There was a discussion on the first Town Hall meeting. It was noted that Town Hall meetings are one way to interact with the community; it tends to be a different dynamic vs the mobile Open Houses, coffee house chats.

Questions and Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- The general public is not clear on terms like OCP zoning, density bonus.
- People are missing many other parts in the OCP when they focus only on density.
- LGH will not be building a much bigger facility; the way health care is provided will change in the future to address increasing demands on the system. It is impossible to maintain current illness care. There is a 30 year plan which hopes to transform lifestyles in order to deal with preventable illnesses which are the main demand on the system. There will have to be a commensurate social program for community infrastructure. People are afraid of bigger population because of a fear of lack of services.
- What about banning the sale of soft drinks; it happened in New York? **A:** We do not have the power to do that. The City is looking at design incentives to encourage people to take the stairs.
- The City should give awards for creative ideas. **A:** We would have to look at the ideas and their Code implications.
- It is important to deal with social isolation and provide opportunities for social interaction.
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5. CityShaping Draft Official Community Plan Final Resolutions

S. Smith reviewed the minutes of February 27th and the resolutions passed on aspects of the OCP. Commission members were asked for their comments on the overall OCP.

Questions and Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- Is this the last chance to review the draft OCP? **A:** Yes. There are Town Hall meetings scheduled for April, Council review in May with a referral to a Public Hearing in June, followed by approval by Metro Vancouver before Final Adoption in the fall.
- The OCP needs a holistic approach. You need to make sure that the interconnectivity of everything is discussed. The Plan's initial statement needs to demonstrate that.
- With density and land use discussed at the beginning of the Plan, people tend to forget about the rest. You should put more material at the beginning to talk about the overarching view.
- Is that a possibility; to change the structure? **A:** We need to focus on the document organization and make sure the introduction is clear.

It was regularly moved and seconded

THAT the Advisory Planning Commission has reviewed the draft Official Community Plan and supports the general direction, but recommends that the introduction better explain the overall comprehensiveness and interconnectedness of its scope.

Carried Unanimously

M. Lynch left the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

6. CityShaping Draft Official Community Plan - Indicators

S. Smith introduced the OCP indicators which will be used to track progress on the goals and objectives of the OCP. The strategy for monitoring has not been finalized. Each chapter has three indicators. What are the most effective indicators for each chapter? There could be 50 for each chapter but the City is trying to find the right balance. What should be dropped? What should be added? What is the best way to watch, track, learn and adapt from the OCP?

If something is difficult to measure or beyond the City's control, it is not useful to try to measure.

Questions and Comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- How are the corporate plans mentioned in each chapter measured? **A:** We have chosen indicators which best reflect the items we want to see the most progress on; sometime they are reflected in the plans and sometimes not. Some will already be in lower level plans e.g. The Parks Master Plan.
- Would the walkability index be measured citywide or by neighbourhood?

- They can be difficult to change in the future, so it is important to pick the right ones that will last. It is good to have open source tools.
- Metrics are not useful by themselves; you need a rate e.g. jobs per capita. You need a numerator and denominator.
- Perhaps a metric for the OCP itself, e.g. the number of amendments? **A:** A plan is something to guide decision-making; if you learn something then it needs to change.
- Perhaps put in a timeframe so people understand it is not static and will change.
- The challenge is that the public at large sees a plan and if it is constantly being changed they do not like it. After the new plan is adopted, the number of changes in the near future should be few. As the plan ages you make more changes. You need to get the message of what an OCP is out very clearly but also allow for change.
- What about the value of investment in the community e.g. parks, business, residential units?
- What are comparisons to other jurisdictions; based on an average of all municipalities?
- You have a set of metrics from TIMS; will they be continued? **A:** Some have been and some not; at least 25% have been retained.
- Metrics should be consistent e.g. the balance of labour force versus jobs lost 10% and this was called "steady." The metrics only have two levels: steady and good; you need more than that. The OCP should have some bite i.e. if we do not make the target, this is what we will do. **Staff:** it is good to report out on an annual basis and a five year basis with additional indicators.
- People ask why we compare ourselves to Metro Vancouver. Have a statement to show why.
- A lot of the objectives are sensitivity factors and can be put in an operative way.
- I do not think the Plan should be filled with statistics; it should be more of an overall statement of goals and high level objectives.
- One metric of a healthy community was how many of the population are between 20 to 28 years old.
- Is the amount of family housing increasing or decreasing? **A:** It is subjective.
- How do corporate policy and the OCP interact? **A:** The OCP feeds into the corporate plan.
- The Plan tends to speak very locally, but the world is becoming very global. We need to see measures in global context.
- When is the starting point of the OCP 2011 or 2014? **A:** Depends on what year it is adopted. Hopefully 2014.
- **Staff:** One of the outputs is going to be what do we measure internally? We need to add fields to our current systems.

M. Robinson left the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

- The discussion on housing in Section 2.8. What is the definition of affordable? **A:** Staff referred to the definition in the Appendix of the OCP.
- You need to measure the net loss of housing units. There are ways to track demolitions. **A:** We have not typically tracked the types of buildings lost; it could be built into the system.
- Are you fixed on three indicators per chapter?

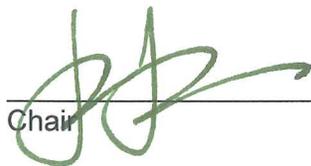
- Where is the metric for employment? **A:** It is in the Economic Development chapter but could be cross-referenced.
- What about the amount of commercial floor space? It should be comparative per job, per capita.
- In Chapter 3 you should change the term “share of trips”; it has to be understood by people.
- Does TransLink give you information about ridership?
- The walkability index should be specific.
- Can you use modes of transit like the “walking school bus? **A:** It will be captured in Section 3.5.1.
- You will need an index with definitions for the indicators. **A:** Yes, they need more context.
- Will the online version have links to the underlying documents? **A:** Yes, there will be hyperlinks to documents such as the Parks Master Plan.
- The order of chapters does not flow; the document needs to be reordered. Community is about people. Talk about people and well-being before talking about built environment.
- It should talk about strong social networks, I would like to see “happy” or “happiness” in the document; the UN and UNICEF are doing a lot around it. Asking people how happy they are is a strong indicator of a healthy community. **A:** A lot of the research that supports social networks is local.
- The OCP does not talk enough about childhood vulnerability. There could be more about childhood education, childcare and early education.
- In Section 4.5.3 what about other facilities? What about a community amenities list for Lower Lonsdale, the sq. ft. of community facilities provided, policing, rec centres, sq. ft. of park space per capita? We should have more spaces like John Braithwaite.
- Childcare should be licensed rather than unlicensed.
- Being able to walk to a local grocery store is a good indicator of a healthy community.
- What is included in community garden plots; would that include private, public, where does the data come from?
- You should update the Urban Forestry Tree Plan to show the number of trees planted is it as low as 200 or more? **Staff:** We can find out. We could add number of trees planted on public lands.
- Re: Section 6.5 – is three hectares per thousand residents the best practice? **A:** It is in the Parks Master Plan.
- Re: Section 6.5.1: a denser city has different needs. What are the trends around the types of open spaces? There needs to be a measure of intensity and diversity of use. You should have an index of usability. There is a lot of park space adjacent to parcels owned by the City. There are little places which could be pocket parks. Are we looking at the trends of smaller, compact communities? Is our definition of a park different? Measure usage of the trail system; how often are people getting connected to the natural environment? **A:** The Parks Department monitors this.
- Can we incorporate laneways e.g. have a goal of reviving so many lanes in a time period? **A:** Right Of Ways and boulevards could be incorporated.
- The wording seems tame e.g. frequent use of the word “seek” for targets; take it out.

- Section 7.5 - Arts, Culture and Heritage; change the number of visits to hours. How about counting artists? What about subsidizing artists' studios e.g. Granville Island. If you are being explicit, you should add everything else. What about private galleries?
- Section 8.5.2 – explanatory notes are needed. There may be an issue with the waterfront; there is a perception of property values going down.
- Section 8.5.3 - The nature of licences is changing; there are more home-based businesses. There is an issue with the loss of existing small businesses when upgrades happen. How do you address it? A possible indicator is vacancy of commercial space. Is that available? Light industry and retail
- Can we look at lease rates? **A:** The City of Vancouver has the highest and dominates the market.
- Retail mix is important; some work better than other.?
- Is the ratio of residential to commercial good?
- Section 9.5 usually breaks per mile? Perhaps the city is too small.
- The quality of the road network can be counted.
- Section 9.5.2 - use metres or square footage? Expand on the types of users of the network.
- Section 9.5.3 - tepid wording; articulate the 2015 targets.
- Increase capital assets and usage of capital assets.
- Talk about storm water diversion.
- We are not just local but are responding to regional and global demands and looking forward 20 years.
- You need to communicate the whole plan.

7. Other Business

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, April 9th, 2014.



 Chair