

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

**Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission  
Held via Webex on Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

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**MINUTES**

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Present:	Y. Al-Nakeeb K. Balcom S. Huber M. Mathieson M. McCorkindale M. Tasi Baker S. Tornes  Councillor Hu
Staff:	R. de St. Croix, Manager T. Huckell, Committee Clerk
Guests:	L. Lensink, Planner 2, Environmental Sustainability A. Garcha, Planning Analyst, Environmental Sustainability K. Montgomerie, Planner 2, Long Range and Community Planning
Absent:	C. Castro A. Rahbar A. Wilson  Councillor McIlroy

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A quorum being present, the meeting was called to order at 6:09PM. M. Mathieson agreed to preside as Acting Chair.

**1. Acknowledgement of Unceded Territory**

**2. Approval of Agenda**

The agenda of November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 was adopted as circulated.

**3. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021**

It was regularly moved and seconded

**THAT** the minutes of the meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission held September 8<sup>th</sup>, 2021 be adopted.

**Carried Unanimously**

#### **4. Business Arising**

None.

#### **5. Staff Update**

R. de St. Croix informed the group that public consultation on the Wellbeing Strategy has concluded. A summary of the feedback will be presented to the Advisory Planning Commission in an upcoming meeting. The duplex special study recently reviewed by this group will be considered at a Public Hearing next Monday (November 15).

#### **6. Council Update**

None.

#### **7. Climate and Environment Strategy**

L. Lensink and A. Garcha presented on the Climate and Environment Strategy (CES). The main points included but were not limited to the following:

- The Strategy has been launched for public feedback. Would like the Commission's feedback and initial impressions on the draft visions and goals.
- This is one of three strategies the City is currently preparing (with the Mobility Strategy and the Community Wellbeing Strategy). The three strategies are following similar processes and timelines.
- The CES is in the second phase of development (building the strategy) and will be finalized for Council consideration in early 2022.
- Our main source of feedback from the public at this point is via webpage content. The Let's Talk webpage hosts the public survey. Also hosting pop-up tables and visiting recreation centres. Have had stakeholder meetings with industry and business groups, and listening sessions with equity groups who are typically underrepresented.
- The CES is meant to serve as our "playbook" to cut carbon pollution and promote a healthy environment over the next 10 years. Will provide direction for our city's health in an urban environment.
- The goals needed to achieve our vision are:
  1. We act with urgency to end carbon pollution.
  2. We live in reciprocity with nature.
  3. We are influential and accountable together.
- There are 21 strategies developed to help us achieve those goals. These are "high level" at this point; we want to ensure we're not missing anything and thinking about the considerations of our actions. The four strategies to achieve these goals include consideration of:
  1. Our pathway to net zero.
  2. Resilient ecosystems and City
  3. Empowered choices and awareness
  4. Leading by example

## Questions and Comments from the Commission included but were not limited to:

- Where does resilience and risk management fit? Would suggest making resiliency and adaptation a little more clear in the goals. The tools for adaptation often have less to do with nature and more to do with monitoring and the frequency of maintenance. **A:** Mostly captured in our second and third goals; looking at our relationship with the natural environment, and opportunities to improve resilience with systems and infrastructure. Risk management is definitely innate in our desire to be accountable leaders.
- Could you go into a little more detail about reconciliation in the vision and goals? **A:** Something we are really hoping to do well in this strategy. Equity and reconciliation are actually part of the four shared principles used to develop all three of the new strategies. Recognize that solutions and impacts are felt differently by different groups. We know we can learn from indigenous knowledge keepers. Trying to be intentional in this part of engagement with underrepresented groups in our listening sessions.
- Any consideration of increasing the efficiency of buildings beyond their heating system? **A:** Yes; energy conservation goes hand in hand with all this; we are focusing on the fuel aspect. We are following the energy step code; the highest step will be required by 2032 but we plan on achieving that prior to that date.
- The watershed graphic has two similar colours side-by-side; consider making them more contrasting.
- Recommend including some comments about parking; not seeing it addressed from any perspective sends a message.
- There are temporary grants for heat pumps; consider making them permanent. Also the messaging from the industry for heat pumps is very inconsistent. Would recommend publishing standard recommendations/guidelines for heat pumps.
- Consider helping organizations subsidize their employees to take transit.
- Data sharing on inventory would help with the goal of leading by example, and providing information to the public.
- Consider numbering the 21 strategies (e.g. 1.1, 1.2, 2.1 etc.). Found it a little overwhelming otherwise.
- When discussing carbon reduction targets, consider including statistics (e.g. instead of referring to 80% below 2007 levels, indicate what the 2007 levels were). Also clarify whether those are for the City, or represent a broader spectrum.
- May also be helpful to see a projection of what levels could be if we don't take action.
- Pleased to see embodied carbon in the strategy; there is a distinction between embodied carbon and operational carbon. Sometimes when the ultimate goal is to reduce emissions, you create a much higher carbon intensive building. The conversation should include how to balance these concepts.
- Metrics are important to confirm progress. Government (at all levels) strategies and goals to improve the resiliency of our buildings are important, but we need to be able to measure so we know if we are succeeding or failing.
- Strongly suggest requiring developers to take a workshop/seminar before they can undertake any major development in the City. Speculate that without it, they will read a bare minimum of the CES.

- Many members of the public will also only read a minimum; suggest making some really high level summary points that people will read.
- Don't see enough in the CES about indigenous knowledge; there is a rich traditional ecology knowledge in the City that should be made use of. Really important to reach out to an environmental knowledge keeper.
- Great policy but we should focus more on the urban design, e.g. describing solar power/community gardens/permeable surfaces. Suggest a summary document with a lot of good visuals of existing precedents. Policy documents get approved but don't necessarily translate into action down the line.
- Agree that high standards for developers are important.
- Suggest emphasize the "thriving" aspect more; illustrate that we're doing this not only because we have to, but good things will come of our actions. Emphasize how people in the City will benefit.
- Agree that data collection important, particularly around LEC; can help to illustrate the impact of transitioning district energy to hydro instead of natural gas.
- Appreciated the overlap of the different strategies; given that all these issues are interconnected, the impact of housing affordability should be considered. People commuting to work because they can't afford to live in the City contributes to the carbon footprint.

*L. Lensink and A. Garcha left the meeting at 7:17pm.  
The Commission recessed at 7:17pm and reconvened at 7:22pm.*

## **8. Housing Policy Update**

Staff presented on the Housing Policy Update. The main points included but were not limited to the following:

- The Housing Policy was a key component of the Wellbeing Strategy that the Commission reviewed earlier in the fall. Have been continuing to look at housing from a very broad perspective.
- Launched the Housing Needs Report in April; every municipality is legislated by the provincial government to have such a report published by 2022 and renewed every five years. Will be a robust document that looks at demographics, housing stock, what policy levers the City needs to apply, etc.
- Our current responses to improving housing adequacy in the City include the incorporation of housing into the Community Wellbeing Strategy, the review of an inclusionary zoning approach to affordable housing, and refining mid-market rental eligibility criteria.
- The current draft of the Housing Needs Report considers affordability (is a household paying more than 30% before tax on shelter costs?), adequacy (is the home in good repair?), and suitability (does a home have enough bedrooms?).
- For current needs we are using figures calculated by the CMHC using census data. The City has completed an additional affordability gap, taking into account both renter and owner households. A lower proportion of owners are in core housing need, but we still know that for many, owning is far out of reach.

- Understanding future housing needs is a more straightforward data driven exercise; we project how many new households will form and the type that are forming. Still acknowledge that projections are a “best guess”.
- Our key components in understanding housing need (“key statements of need”) are:
  - Affordable housing
  - Rental housing
  - Housing for seniors
  - Housing for families
  - Housing for Indigenous households
  - Special needs housing
  - Homelessness
- There is an increasing interest in mid-market rental (MMR) properties and how tenants are selected for those units. We are proposing enhanced eligibility criteria to meet priority needs. The City doesn’t have a housing allocation function, but we are finding residents approach us. Considering initial suggestions on how to prioritize multiple applicants.

**Questions and Comments from the Commission included but were not limited to:**

- Appreciate the data driven approach. Once the 2021 census data is released in 2022, will the housing document be updated? **A:** We did use the 2016 census data and Metro Vancouver’s 2050 projections. When the 2021 data is released, we will probably make a decision with respect to updating at that time.
- Any housing data/projections need to be shared our sooner rather than later, to give school boards time to plan.
- Will the updated housing policy provide any recommendations regarding what kind of housing the City should consider, or is it more updates of the current status? Would appreciate recommendations on how the City can help residents with next steps. **A:** Most immediately it will be a report of what the current evidence is telling us. Recommendations will follow on the directions the City should take to address priorities. This is an evidence based piece of work, but the work going forward will need to focus on how we will address the needs of our residents.
- Interesting to see the key statements of need. With so many different types of housing, should think about how to prioritize those that cover more than a single need; for example, the supportive and community focus of co-housing allows a more affordable, sustainable life for a variety of residents with different needs.
- With respect to the MMR eligibility criteria, consider that that dependents may be children or aging parents.
- Appreciate that eligibility criteria discourages tenants who own or have an interest in property the household could otherwise occupy. In terms of prioritizing current residents, could there be a way to consider people who are not current CNV residents but who want to live here? Many work here but live far away.
- Consider the equity of people applying for such a registry, and ways to ensure applicants are diverse. People who might be more well off might be more likely to have the time to go through the registry and understand how to use it. Ensure that everyone can truly access this. **A:** Agreed. We’ve also learned from our legal team that we need to consider protected characteristics under

human rights legislation; place of origin is a protected characteristic. In practice it can be challenging to enforce some equity considerations. If these eligibility criteria are introduced, we will monitor closely.

- Can a neutral third party monitor the process? **A:** It will take time to find a third party non-profit organization who is interested in doing that process. What this proposal can do fairly quickly is introduce more transparent eligibility criteria that will apply regardless of who is doing the screening. The idea isn't that the City itself is doing the screening, just that the City would be supporting the notification. Having additional criteria in the housing agreement would be a legal obligation on whomever is selecting the tenants.
- Information provided by potential tenants would need to be confidential; some people might hesitate to apply. **A:** The concept with the online registry would be that an applicant provides their name and email address. This would simply be an indication that you're interested in hearing about future MMR availability. The idea is that City itself would not take your name and has no role in assessing eligibility.

*M. Mathieson and M. Tasi Baker left the meeting at 8:30pm.*

- Would a person's eligibility be affected by working from home? **A:** Understand that COVID-19 has changed traditional arrangements. We are trying to consider the right balance.

Staff thanked the Commission for their participation and valuable feedback.

## **9. Adjourn**

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:37pm.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021.

*"Adrien Rahbar"*

Chair

*"January 12, 2022"*

Date