

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER
Regular meeting of the Social Planning Advisory Committee
Held in City Hall, Conference Room 'A'
On Wednesday, January 27, 2016 at 6:00pm

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Mary Tasi, Chair
Steve Tornes, Vice Chair
Nick Bryant
Cassandra Buckley
Tomoko Ito
Jasreen Janjua
Jullian Kolstee
Ray Moore
Stephanie Snowden
Holly Back, Councillor

ABSENT:

STAFF:

Paul Penner, Community Planner
Susan Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

GUESTS:

Alison Dudley, NSMS/NSIIP

9 members – quorum = 5

1 Councillor (non-voting) 2 staff (non-voting)

1. WELCOME NEW MEMBER AND INTRODUCTION

Paul Penner welcomed Jullian Kolstee to the meeting. Everyone introduced themselves.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as circulated with a break added after the guest speaker.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of November 25th, 2015 were adopted as circulated.

4. PRESENTATION

a) Alison Dudley, Partner Liaison & Support North Shore Multicultural Society / North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership gave a presentation on the North Shore Immigrant Inclusion Partnership (NSIIP).

Key Points

- NSIIP is a coalition of community agencies and institutions focused on improving the settlement outcomes of new immigrants on the North Shore (NS). The coalition includes municipalities, libraries, school districts, and Vancouver Coastal Health. The group meets every two months. They are currently working on building a strategic plan which should be ready in March.
- There are three main NSIIP activities: they produce fact sheets; hold consultations with immigrants, service providers, and employers on immigrant needs; and lead research projects. Details can be found on the website: www.nsiip.ca
- NSIIP has an Immigrant Advisory Council which consists of recent and longer term NS immigrants. The Council provides input to NSIIP and its work, acts as a resource for NS community service providers and leaders, and reaches out to ethno-specific communities to disseminate NSIIP info and encourage participation in its work.
- Approximately 2,100 immigrants move to the NS each year.
- The top five source countries for recent immigrants are Iran, Philippines, China, Korea and the UK according to 2006-2011 data. There are 21% from other places with small numbers from over 40 countries.
- Now days ethno cultural groups are considered “super diverse” i.e. complex with individuals sharing some characteristics but not others e.g. different faiths, circumstances and position in the labour market.
- 22.5% of immigrants in 2011 were recent (five years or less) and a large proportion is well-educated. 55.4% of recent immigrants are in the 25-44 year age group.
- NSIIP did an informal immigrant survey of over 400 people; most felt welcomed and included; although some thought the question should be separated as they felt welcomed but not included.
- The three most important factors to feel welcomed are: a good place to live, connecting with people, feeling welcomed and included by people in the community.
- Respondents felt it was important to have connections with people who are not from their cultural group.
- Around 43% have joined groups or organizations, mainly sports teams, religious groups, PACs, professional associations, youth organizations, etc.
- To better help immigrants settle and integrate communities could offer: more opportunities to connect with local residents for business, employment purposes, more language classes, more opportunities to connect with local residents for social/recreational purposes, more volunteer opportunities.
- The NS Leaders’ forum priorities included putting more effort into civic education campaigns on available services and increasing public awareness of immigrants; offering more support for immigration as a whole. They will look at how to expand sports and recreation opportunities to build cross cultural interaction e.g. focus on community events to bring people together across cultures. The library is offering grants to encourage cross-cultural interaction.
- The leaders are also interested in looking at the composition of committees, boards etc.
- They will continue to advocate for more funding from the Federal government.
- Update on the Syrian refugee crisis: there were 916 arrivals between November 4th and January 15th; the NS can expect around 2,000. 730 are Government-assisted refugees. All supported by “Welcome House” in downtown Vancouver run by the Immigrant Services Society. Regular updates are available at www.issbc.org.

- There are three privately sponsored families settling on the NS. Most will settle in other municipalities with larger Syrian communities and lower housing costs. Government-assisted refugees are given one month's stipend and cannot afford the North Shore.
- There are a variety of local initiatives to support Syrian refugees who will live elsewhere e.g. Operation Clean Start, North Shore United Church Collaboration, Bowen Island etc.

Questions / Comments from SPAC included:

- I am surprised by the high number of Christians? **A:** That is because the biggest groups are from China, Korea and the Philippines which have large Christian populations.
- Are there any programs to bring faith groups together? **A:** Not many on the NS.
- There was a really nice event a few years ago with local restaurants hosting immigrants telling stories. **Staff:** I attended one; the NS Welcoming Action Committee (the precursor to NSIIP) organized it.
- We like to hear stories. **A:** The Federal Government does not fund projects; they fund planning. We will be looking to the community to take on projects potentially with the City or through the library grants.
- What percentage of population growth does immigration make up on the NS? **Staff:** It is a tough question to answer because population growth is made up of many factors. I am not sure if an analysis has been done. The NS Multicultural Society says one of the problems is that immigrants enter Canada through Quebec but then move to the NS but it counts as Quebec.
- The difference between the District and City is probably because there are more rental buildings and better transit in the City.
- We tend to think that immigrants are all poor, but some are not, do we charge for English courses for those who can afford it i.e. fee for service? **A:** The NS Cultural Society has fee for service. The Federal Government funds free classes; there are 20 free classes with 700 on the waitlist. There are 10 fee for service classes. There are lots of private language schools downtown but no big providers on the NS. Some people go to ESL at Capilano University.
- Everyone, not just immigrants, is struggling with the housing situation.
- If anyone is interested in getting more involved, how would they do it? **A:** It depends on what people want to do. Our main issue is that we have many volunteers: 150 but we do not have many refugees. We have not hit the critical mass. The ISS is also asking for volunteers and over 1,000 people have signed up so they are overwhelmed. They are setting up a program assigning six "buddies" to a refugee. People on the NS often do not want to go over the bridge.
- Mentors are really important. **A:** We are also telling people that there are a lot of new immigrants, who are not Syrian, on the North Shore who would like to connect to people.

Action: Paul to distribute the presentation to SPAC members.

5. UPDATES

- a. Councillor
 - Appointments for the committees have been taking place.

- The daycare situation in North Vancouver is in a bit of a crisis situation. Staff is working on a report. **Member:** Is there still a need for 30 more daycares? **Staff:** It is always a tough question to know what is needed. All the really good centres have really long waitlists. For every 100 children 0-12 there are 25 spaces.
- Attended a conference in November on Affordable housing; it was one of the most interesting conferences I have attended. The City of North Vancouver is a leader in so many things. It was referenced in many of the ideas. We are leading with coach houses and suites. I was proud to represent the City; we are creating purpose-built rental buildings and multigenerational housing. Many people want to rent longer. The City is creating a lot of walkable centres so residents can live and walk to entertainment, groceries, public transit. Moodyville will be for families.
- At last night's meeting the vote to put the museum at the waterfront was voted down. The museum's plan did not show sustainability; they could not afford to keep it going. The museum had to stay open for 10 years or the federal money would have to be paid back. They did not show comparisons to successful projects. There will still be a museum, just not at the waterfront.
- **Member:** What will go in to the pipe shop? **A:** It has a lot of public events. It is a very popular venue and could be booked solid.
- **Member:** Has council received input from Lower Lonsdale businesses as to what they want? **A:** The Tap and Barrel has greatly improved the business for the small restaurants even doubled it in some cases. The businesses want an active centre down there which will help them.

b. Staff

- The Lower Legacy Fund recommendations were approved at Council on January 11th.
- Childcare with regard to Information Items a and e: The Grand Boulevard Parent Participation Childcare lost their lease at Queensbury School and asked the City for help with a portable in Loutet Park. Instead staff will be reporting to Council on a comprehensive study of what is needed in terms of the number of facilities, priority programs and locations, building costs and community partners.
- There will be a forum in the City on Healthy Communities for Vancouver Coastal Health senior staff and elected officials.
- On January 18th the Alzheimer's Society presented to Council on dementia-friendly communities i.e. how can we make our community more receptive and inclusive. They have produced a toolkit. Council resolved it should be pursued on a North Shore-wide basis. There will be a kickoff event in April with a keynote speaker. The program has been successfully implemented in New Westminster.
- Look in the information package at the Vancouver Regional Affordable Housing Strategy report. Metro Vancouver owns four of the housing coops in the City. There is a risk that they may be demolished but it may be possible to add housing. The City has the Affordable Housing Reserve Fund to help projects; we are hoping to leverage this with Metro Vancouver Housing Corporation.
- A play "Still/Falling" exploring the difference between "teen angst" and mental illness and the ways young people can start to find their way out of the dark will be presented at Centennial Theatre on February 3rd. There will be two shows: one in the afternoon for schools, and one in the evening for parents and their children grade 8 and above.

- Talk at the Top took place at City Hall on January 23rd. It was organized by North Shore Youth for Mental Health and CMHA, partially funded by the Bell “Let’s Talk” campaign. There was live music from four different bands and North Shore youth hung out and chatted with the musicians about their lives, inspirations and favourite pie.
- The City will be taking applications for the Child and Youth grants and nominations for Youth Awards starting mid-February.
- The City is printing 3000 copies of the Youth Cards.

Action: Paul to bring Youth Cards to next meeting.

There was a short break at 7:05 pm.

The meeting reconvened at 7: 11 pm.

6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. City of North Vancouver Cultural Diversity Policy

Members were asked to review the policy. The policy was developed at the same time as the Social Plan. Goals and objectives are reflected in a chapter in the Social Plan. The Cultural Diversity Policy is from 1998; it may not need to be as comprehensive due to other groups now active e.g. NSIIP.

NSIIP has been very successful in obtaining Provincial and Federal funds to pursue goals.

b. 2016 Round One Community Grants – Revised Grants Review Process for SPAC

The process has not changed a lot from last year. There will be a second intake in September. There will be an accountability form. With the combined fund there will be about \$185,000 to disburse over the two intakes. We will have to hold some funds back for the fall session especially as the other two municipalities do not offer a second session.

Action: Members to review the revised processes. Call Paul or Edytha with any questions.

Grant applications will be distributed at the February meeting.

There will be elections for Chair and Vice Chair at the February meeting.

The Committee needs to start preparing the SPAC annual report.

Member: When we look at our funds they span all cultures e.g. single moms; we have assimilated the cultural diversity aspect. We do more fundamental funding. Our discussions are in context.

Member: There are so many aspects of the constituents that make up diversity. How can we expand the notion to include different ages, women? Diversity is not only cultural, it is much more. Can we expand this notion to include what makes the richness of the

community? How can we nurture it? **Staff:** It is important but we need a policy for people coming to settle here.

Member: I agree. I talk to many immigrants; they do feel not included. How can we make existing immigrants feel more included?

Member: The numbers on the website are so out-of-date. There will be a census this year.

Staff: We will get superior information on this census compared to 2011. 2016 census results will not be out to 2018. Many of the grants that we make recommendations on will serve the entire community but we also make recommendations on very specific programs.

Member: We look after the disadvantaged.

Member: It would be nice to add stories to a report.

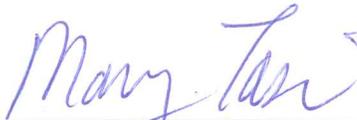
Action: Paul to bring "From Far and Wide" document to next meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

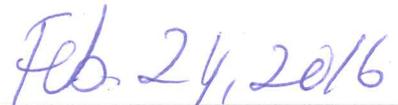
None.

6. ADJOURNMENT - 7:35 p.m.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – February 24th, 2016



Chair



Date