

MINUTES OF THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD IN THE BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL,
ON MONDAY, 2004-JUL-12, COMMENCING AT 10:30 A.M.

PRESENT: Councillor T. K. Krall, Chair

Members: Councillor M. D. Brennan
Councillor C. S. Manhas
Mayor G. R. Korpan, Ex-Officio

Others: Councillor R. A. Cantelon
Councillor W. J. Holdom
Councillor L. D. McNabb
Councillor L. J. Sherry
Councillor D. Tyndall

Staff:	G. D. Berry	T. McQueen
	B. N. Mehaffey	A. Tucker
	B. E. Clemens	J. T. Bowden
	E. C. Swabey	C. Hambley

1. ADOPTION OF MINUTES:

- (a) Minutes of the 2004-JUN-21 Meeting of the Economic Development Standing Committee held in the Board Room, City Hall at 10:08 a.m.

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Councillor Krall advised that Mr. Edward Calb, Cape Developments, was in attendance and wished to address Council as a late delegation regarding the rezoning application for 38 Front Street.

It was moved and seconded that Mr. Calb be permitted to address the Committee as a late delegation with a five-minute time limitation. The motion carried.

3. RECEIVING OF DELEGATIONS:

It was moved and seconded that Mr. Calb be permitted to address the Committee. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Calb was previously authorized to address the Committee.

Mr. Calb stated that:

- they are very aware of the impact this project will have on Nanaimo's downtown.
- they have had many hoops to go through and things are starting to come together.
- very shortly they will acquire the property and will proceed with their plans.
- when they first saw the property they were overwhelmed by the view and the potential of the property.
- this will be a residential project as they believe the key to downtown revitalization is to increase the population in the downtown area.
- the building will have a view corridor so people walking along Front Street will still be able to see the beautiful ocean view.
- there will be landscaping along the sidewalks in front of the building on Front Street.
- they will ensure the ocean side of the building remains pedestrian-friendly and they will take advantage of the views and the seawall.
- they have completed negotiations with the Nanaimo Port Authority and have determined that they will be completing the sidewalks on Front Street.
- there will be a large courtyard on the ocean side of the building that will lead to the townhouses.
- every unit will have terraces and there will be an access point between the buildings.
- each unit will have its own driveway and private entrance from a gated pedestrian laneway.
- the Port Authority has asked that the property be used for residential purposes with no commercial space as it would compete with the current businesses along the seawall.
- in Vancouver, townhouses are selling before they are built; they are in high demand.
- there will be a total of 157 units with 26 townhouses.
- the remaining 131 units will be lofts which will be designed to act as residential / home-office use.
- the lofts will be affordable one bedroom units; with penthouses above.
- this building will offer something for everyone, from retired people to first-time homebuyers.
- the Port Authority is concerned with security and other public / private conflicts.
- to address this issue, they propose to have a 3 foot wall between the seawall and the 13,447 square foot area they are leasing from the Port Authority.
- 7 feet behind the wall, they will install a 4 foot fence that will be heavily landscaped to ensure it is not visible to pedestrians using the seawall.

It was moved and seconded that the presentation be received. The motion carried unanimously.

4. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT:

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES:

COMMUNITY PLANNING:

(1) Approval of Re-Allocation of DNP Capital Funds to Façade Grant Program and for LED Lights

The Downtown Nanaimo Partnership (DNP) has a five-year capital plan in place but Council's approval is required for any expenditure in excess of \$5,000.

At its Regular Meeting held 2004-JUL-06, the Downtown Nanaimo Partnership passed the following motions:

1. to recommend that Council approve the re-allocation of \$20,000. from the 2002 Residential Conversion Tax Reserve Fund to the Heritage Façade Grant Program for 2004; and,
2. to recommend that Council approve the expenditure of \$25,000. from the 2004 DNP Capital Budget for LED lights to be placed on trees on Front Street and other appropriate Downtown sites.

Heritage Façade Improvement Program

Response to the Partnership's Heritage Façade Improvement Grant Program has been strong since its creation in the Spring of 2003. Over the past year, five heritage façade grant contributions, based on a 50 percent cost-sharing arrangement, and totalling \$28,036., have been made.

Due to high demand and diminishing funds, the most recent heritage façade grants were based on a 25 percent cost-sharing arrangement as the DNP sought to stretch their limited funds to assist the greatest number of projects. Three grants totalling \$16,500. were made.

Two of the grant recipients who received 25 percent grants have expressed disappointment over the reduced funding and are considering phasing their projects over two years in order to qualify for additional funds in 2005. In addition, the DNP has had preliminary discussions with four property owners who are considering applying under the Program.

Recognizing the popularity of the grant program and the program's dwindling resources, the Partnership requested and received Council's approval on 2004-APR-19 to increase the annual budget of the program by \$10,000. for 2004.

The Partnership is now requesting an additional \$20,000. to be transferred from the Downtown Residential Conversion Tax Reserve Budget, bringing the total funding of the Heritage Façade Improvement Program for 2004 to \$50,000. and lowering the remaining tax reserve fund to \$100,000.

Christmas Decorations

The other motion related to the Capital Budget which was passed by the DNP on 2004-JUL-06, is in relation to Christmas decorations. The DNP Capital Budget identifies \$25,000. to be spent on Christmas decorations in 2004. The DNP has reviewed various approaches to Christmas lighting and are recommending that the funds be used for LED lights in trees Downtown. This has three advantages:

- The lights may be used 365 days.
- The lights are more appropriate to a multicultural society.
- The lights will improve the overall level of lighting Downtown.

The DNP is requesting Council authorization to use the Christmas Decoration funds identified in the 2004 Capital Budget as noted in the recommendation.

Recommendations: That the Economic Development Standing Committee recommend that Council approve:

1. the re-allocation of \$20,000. from the 2002 Residential Conversion Tax Reserve Fund to the Heritage Façade Grant Program for 2004; and,
2. the expenditure of \$25,000. from the 2004 Downtown Nanaimo Partnership Capital Budget for LED lights to be placed on trees on Front Street and other appropriate Downtown sites.

It was moved and seconded that the recommendations be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) Rezoning Applications for 20 Front Street (Insight) and 38 Front Street (CAPE)

At its Regular Meeting of 2004-JUL-06, the Downtown Nanaimo Partnership (DNP) considered the rezoning applications for 20 Front Street (Insight) and 38 Front Street (Cape).

20 Front Street

The DNP reviewed the proposed design of the building as shown on two renderings of the project. Staff noted that the proposal is for a 24-storey building of up to 84 dwelling units. The building, which is entirely residential (no commercial space), will have a narrow profile due to a small building footprint (approximately 5,000 square feet). This will minimize the impact on views.

The DNP passed the following motion:

“MOVED by B. McGuffie, SECONDED by J. Pink to support, in principle, the land use concept and density of the proposed residential tower at 20 Front Street. CARRIED. (D. Backhouse abstained from voting.)”

38 Front Street

The DNP reviewed the building elevation drawing, cross-section and site plan. It was noted that the townhouses along the waterfront walkway will total four storeys in height (two units, each two storeys high). The tower will be 13 storeys when viewed from Front Street. There was discussion about setting the upper townhouse units back to reduce the impact of the street-face on the pedestrian walkway.

There was considerable discussion about the green space between the townhouses and the waterfront walkway. This area is leased from the Port Authority and is private space for residents of the building. The Committee felt that although it is private, it should be accessible to the public. Instead of fencing it off from the walkway, it was suggested that grade separation and landscaping was more suitable. One Committee member expressed the concern that making the terrace area public would diminish the value of the units on the waterfront.

The Committee also discussed the density of the project in relation to public amenities. The Committee felt the developer should provide a public access through the site to allow a connection between the waterfront walkway and Front Street.

The DNP passed the following motion:

“MOVED by D. Brennan, SECONDED by C. Tang that the proposed project at 38 Front Street be supported, in principle, with the following provisions:

- that landscaping and not a fence, be used to differentiate the private and public space in front of the townhouses (e.g. Cameron Island);
- that a civic amenity of a connection between Front Street and the seawall be provided; and,
- that the upper two storeys of the stacked townhouses be set back. CARRIED.”

Recommendation: The Committee’s direction is sought.

It was moved and seconded that the report be received for information. The motion carried unanimously.

5. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 11:20 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

SENIOR MANAGER,
CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION