

DATE OF MEETING JUNE 15, 2020

AUTHORED BY Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk

SUBJECT Revised Public Hearing Schedule

OVERVIEW

Purpose of Report

To amend the Public Hearing schedule for the remainder of 2020 to accommodate public input on as many development applications as possible.

Recommendation

That Council support amending the Public Hearing dates from the first Thursday each month (except for August) to the following dates in order to accommodate public input on as many development applications as possible:

- July 23, 2020
- September 17, 2020
- October 22, 2020
- November 19, 2020
- December 17, 2020

BACKGROUND

As a result of the COVID19 pandemic, Public Hearings were temporarily put on hold. On 2020-MAY-01, the Province issued Ministerial Order M139 that provided options for receiving public hearing input electronically. Staff reviewed the Order and brought forward proposed guidelines for resuming hearings for Council's information on 2020-MAY-25. Due to this timing, the opportunity to host a public hearing the first week of June (as per Council's current Public Hearing schedule) was not possible and the hearing was re-scheduled to 2020-JUNE-18.

In response to the pandemic the Nanaimo News Bulletin circulation has been reduced from twice weekly (Tuesday and Thursday) to once weekly (Wednesday). This impacts the City's ability to provide two consecutive newspaper notices following bylaw introduction and prior to public hearing, as per statutory notification requirements. A revised public hearing schedule would allow staff to more efficiently schedule bylaws for public hearing considering the reduced newspaper circulation, statutory notification requirements and Council meeting dates.

To avoid delay of development approval considerations throughout the remainder of 2020, staff is proposing that the Public Hearing schedule be amended as follows:

- July 23, 2020 (currently scheduled for July 2nd)
- September 17, 2020 (currently scheduled for September 3rd)
- October 22, 2020 (currently scheduled for October 1st)
- November 19, 2020 (currently scheduled for November 5th)
- December 17, 2020 (currently scheduled for December 3rd)

DISCUSSION

To avoid delay of development approval considerations, staff is bringing forward the following revised public hearing dates for Council's consideration:

July 23, 2020
September 17, 2020
October 22, 2020
November 19, 2020
December 17, 2020

All public hearings would continue to be held at 7:00 pm.

OPTIONS

1. That Council support amending the Public Hearing dates schedule from the first Thursday each month (except for August) to the following dates in order to accommodate public input on as many development applications as possible:
 - July 23, 2020
 - September 17, 2020
 - October 22, 2020
 - November 19, 2020
 - December 17, 2020

Advantages – With the proposed dates, unnecessary delays of development approval applications can be avoided.

Disadvantages – none

2. That Council re-affirm holding its public hearings on the first Thursday of the month as previously endorsed.

Advantages – no additional advertising would be required.

Disadvantages - Retaining the existing schedule may result in unnecessary delays of development approval applications.

SUMMARY POINTS

- Point #1 – Amending the public hearing schedule would avoid unnecessary delays of development approval applications due to reduced newspaper circulation schedule.

Submitted by:

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Deputy City Clerk

Concurrence by:

Sheila Gurrie
Director of Legislative Services

Dale Lindsay
General Manager, Development Services