

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2021-APR-26, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Acting Mayor Armstrong, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor D. Bonner
Councillor T. Brown (joined electronically 1:03 p.m.)
Councillor B. Geselbracht
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe

Absent: Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
S. Legin, General Manager, Corporate Services
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
T. Doyle, Fire Chief (joined electronically)
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
J. Holm, Director, Development Approvals
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
F. Farrokhi, Manager, Communications
L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning
C. Horn, Planner
K. Kronstal, Social Planner
K. MacDonald, Parks & Open Space Planner
C. Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
S. Snelgrove, Recording Secretary

1. CALL THE GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING TO ORDER:

The Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Reorder the agenda as follows:
6(c)(1) Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement
6(c)(2) Affordable Housing Strategy - Annual Implementation Update
6(c)(3) Zoning Bylaw 'Schedule D' - Affordable Housing Amendments
7(a) Councillor Maartman re: Recreational Vehicle Permanent Accommodation
- (b) Agenda Item 6(c)(1) Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement – Add the following delegations:

1. Tim McGrath
2. Barry Lyseng
3. Sharon L. Kofoed
4. Robyn Winkler
5. Nancy Mitchell

(c) Agenda Item 6(c)(2) Affordable Housing Strategy - Annual Implementation Update – Replace PowerPoint Presentation.

(d) Agenda Item 7(a) Councillor Maartman re: Recreational Vehicle Permanent Accommodation - Add presentation from Jeremy Holm, Director, Development Approvals and Lainya Rowett, Manager, Current Planning.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

It was moved and seconded that the Agenda, as amended, be adopted. The motion carried unanimously.

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Special Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC on Monday, 2021-APR-12, at 1:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

Councillor Brown joined the meeting electronically at 1:03 p.m.

- May 10th is proposed as a transportation day
- Status column has been added to the matrix

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Adding Westwood Lake as a topic for discussion
- Capital planning process scheduled for May

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council add as a future Governance and Priorities Committee topic a staff update on issues related to Westwood Lake as a recreational facility specific to trail usages and parking issues. The motion carried unanimously.

6. REPORTS:

a. COMMUNITY WELLNESS/LIVABILITY:

1. Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Report is a follow up from discussion one year ago regarding how neighbourhood association engagement takes place
- Presentation has two key focus areas: Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review and Recognition Criteria and Expansion of the Partners in Parks (PIP) program into a Partners in Community (PIC) program
- Neighbourhood policy history and support for associations
- Various organizational structures of the neighbourhood groups and self defined boundaries, various capacity and activity levels and generally collaborative relationship with some occasional exceptions
- Some groups are formally organized as registered non-profits while others are issues based
- Neighbourhood association organization capacity questionnaire response summary highlights:
 - Responses confirmed wide range of organizational capacity with the majority having some form of organized structure
 - Top priorities provided by each group are useful in understanding where neighbourhood needs lay
 - Responses felt associations should be community building, community networkers, liaison with the City of Nanaimo, monitor progress and be social organizers
 - Lack of consensus on structure that should be in place for neighbourhood associations

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Methods to monitor criteria noted in staff report such as requesting minutes be required
- For grant purposes there needs to be an organizational structure
- Purpose to encourage community within community and provide Council with useful information and commentary about development proposals

- If Council formalizes neighbourhood associations other groups can still participate in the planning cycle process
- Recognizing and supporting neighbourhood groups even if they aren't neighbourhood associations
- Structure of the groups including an executive, regular membership and meetings
- The impact of Facebook neighbourhood groups and how they are recognized
- Staff encourage the connection between Parent Advisory Councils and Blockwatch

Kirsty McDonald, Parks and Open Space Planner, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Proposed a new approach to neighborhood engagement, support and priority implementation
- Potentially expand Partners in Parks program
- Partners in Parks policy developed in the 1980s
- Variety of group activities include building playgrounds, edible landscapes, productive food forests, maintaining parks, working with up to 700 volunteers to remove invasive plants in the community
- Volunteers adopt parks to help beautify the community and there are many recreational amenities that wouldn't be created without partnerships with service clubs and volunteers
- PIP program process includes an initial on site meeting, brainstorming session, proposal development and funding strategy, then idea implementation
- PIP participation is not limited to neighbourhood associations
- PIP is not a grant process but is a capital planning process where the City supplies funding
- Noted the benefits of the potential for a Partners in Community Program such as collaborative process to keep public spaces relevant to neighbourhoods and increase networking for neighbourhood groups
- Implications include long term capital investments that must be maintained and would require additional staff resources
- Proposed next steps are to develop a detailed PIC program and annual and operating budgets, engage with neighbourhood associations and PIP volunteers
- Community engagement on the PIC program will take place through the REIMAGINE Nanaimo phases

Council and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Partners in Parks is one of the most successful and positive programs the City has put forward, see results as neighbourhood groups create something they want to see in their neighbourhood
- Rethinking the budget process as currently it is a first come first served process

- Currently 50 projects on hold due to the pandemic
- Program increasing in popularity
- Funding goal is always 50/50 between the City and community

Delegations:

1. Tim McGrath spoke on behalf of the Harewood Neighbourhood Association and requested that the report be sent back to Staff, that the committee not act on the report and noted concerns with the timing for neighbourhood associations to respond and suggested that a workshop be held to discuss the topic in more detail before deciding on a method.
2. Barry Lyseng, Chair, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association, asked that a decision on the report be deferred and the report sent to Staff for corrections and refinement. He noted the Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association interacts with City departments other than Planning but the report does not mention other departments. He noted errors that affect boundaries and organizational capacity and requested it be sent back to staff for strategic revision and wider consultation.
3. Sharon Kofoed advised that the only option provided is a prescriptive set of rules which do not articulate how the City will support neighbourhood associations. She noted the format is a negative form of engagement which creates more bureaucracy and advised that conflict within associations is a rarity. She noted that for the past three decades residents of the Westwood Lake area have worked on initiatives, all without formal representation. She noted that not everyone wants to maintain a structure as for issues based groups, regimentation takes away time from their goals. She requested the report be set aside and Council engage when the pandemic is over.

The committee noted that one of the challenges is that Council is unsure when people are representing groups and how to legitimize those groups who represent a significant amount of people. Council is looking for a way to put weight on an organization as a reliable place to engage in the development process.

4. Robyn Winkler, spoke as a 30 year member of the Westwood Lake Neighbourhood Group, and advised that she viewed the group as flexible and issue driven which is a strength as there has never been a problem with formalized representation. She noted that formalization of neighbourhood groups is undemocratic and asked the Governance and Priorities Committee to reimagine this issue.
5. Nancy Mitchell, spoke on behalf of the Newcastle Community Association, and noted there has been problems between community associations and there is now an organization in the Newcastle area that meets the criteria with elections and annual general meetings. She noted concerns that the report does not address how to engage with the City on development applications. She asked for a better system and advised that often associations end up butting heads at Council when the community is not involved in a project from the beginning. She advised that there should

have been a discussion before the report came forward and thought there would be discussion on how groups would engage with the City.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The missing piece is the benefits for neighbourhood associations for using this proposed structure
- History of report and it being brought forward to answer Council's question of how they know who is representing which group
- Other options available such as referring the report to Staff and Staff requesting guidance on what areas they should focus on
- Expansion of Partners in Parks program for broader community development
- Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network and City not involved with their governance method
- Inability to give money to organizations that don't have society status
- Providing additional support to Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network so groups can build their capacity
- Options such as providing a stipend to neighbourhood associations that have a formalized level of organization in order to manage their affairs
- Further conversation that need to be workshopped and more inclusive process in making changes

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council refer the Neighbourhood Association Organizational Capacity Review, Support and Engagement topic to Staff to provide the minutes and a summary report to share with neighbourhood associations, asking them to provide further comment, and return to a Governance and Priorities Committee meeting at least two months following the April 26, 2021 meeting, potentially in September. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to develop a detailed Partners in Community program and annual budget for consideration. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting recessed at 3:17 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:32 p.m.

2. Affordable Housing Strategy - Annual Implementation Update

Introduced by Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning.

Presentation:

1. Karin Kronstal, Social Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
 - Affordable Housing Strategy is about what the City can do to move the needle on affordability
 - There are five objectives in the strategy
 - Vacancy rates currently at 1% in Nanaimo

- Between October 2019-2020 average price of rent went up 2.4% which is relatively low compared to previous years
- 8.8% increase in house prices from 2019-2020
- Key targets and measurements
- Housing targets are to increase supply of rental housing
- Support infill and diverse housing forms
- Through REIMAGINE Nanaimo process, determining how to offer different housing options
- City will start tracking by units and suggestion to track by square footage
- 60% of new homes had suites
- 2020 projects include the zoning bylaw update, Community Amenity Contribution Policy, Density Bonus Policy review, Health and Housing Task Force Action Plan, rent bank established, short term rental regulations, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with BC Housing
- Projects planned for 2021 include rental zoning, Land Acquisition Policy, updates to the Housing Legacy Reserve Policy, Family Friendly Housing Policy, continue work to deliver MOUs with BC Housing, implementation of Health and Housing Task Force Action Plan

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- How well the City is doing in terms of meeting goals in the affordable housing strategy
- Targets the City is reaching due to the policies in place such as allowing secondary suites, parking standards, MOUs
- Measurement between 2-3 bedroom units may be looked at more closely
- Rental zoning exploration and protecting rental buildings
- Land acquisition strategy in preparation and including funding strategies and staff actively looking for opportunities to acquire land
- Revisit targets with REIMAGINE Nanaimo
- Targets are grounded in fairly recent studies
- Cannot track suite occupancy, the City doesn't control rent and rental buildings will charge what the market will bear
- Cost of rentals and cost of housing driven by the market

3. Zoning Bylaw 'Schedule D' - Affordable Housing Amendments

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Caleb Horn, Planner, provided a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:

- Draft amendments to schedule D of “City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500” related to the Affordable Housing Strategy
- Zoning bylaw affects Affordable Housing Strategy objectives to increase supply of rental housing and to continue to support low income and special needs housing
- Schedule D is proposed to be revised to specifically include affordable housing as an amenity that can result in additional density in a new development
- Examination of proposed rental housing amendments and points associated with each amendment
- Affordable homeownership examples include:
 - Apartment unit no more than \$303,120
 - Townhouse unit no more than \$348,750
- Affordable rental category examples:
 - One bedroom renting for no more than \$1,009/month
 - Two bedroom renting for no more than \$1,263/month
 - Numbers may fluctuate once more data is gathered
- Non-market and Supportive Housing amounts:
 - One bedroom renting for no more than \$925/month
 - Two bedroom renting for no more than \$1,188/month
- Not requirements imposed on new developments but offered as incentives used to gain additional density and as incremental steps to allow flexibility
- All information comes from the Affordable Housing Strategy action items

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Two tiers to Schedule D and in order to achieve tier 1 must meet minimum amount of points in three categories
- Methods to incentivize density versus requirements for density
- Uncertainty regarding base densities at the right level
- Having a certain percentage of units be adaptable in each project
- Finding a balance so that projects are viable to build
- Items are weighted in terms of the points they grant and based on experience of what has and hasn't been attainable and stakeholder feedback
- Fine line between incentives and what building industry would find restrictive
- Engagement with development community and opportunity for them to respond
- Closeness in amounts between non-market housing and affordable housing

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council pass two readings to “Zoning Amendment Bylaw 2021 No. 4500.180” (To amend Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw to provide density bonusing points for rental and affordable housing developments). The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that future amendments to Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw be brought forward to a Governance and Priorities Committee meeting at a later date. The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee defer consideration of the topic “Councillor Maartman re: Recreational Vehicle Permanent Accommodation” to a future date and Staff will return with options for when to have this discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

b. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE:

1. 2021 Council Alignment Update

Introduced by Jake Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer.

- Council priorities section of the chart originated from Council’s workshop
- Noted high priorities for Council and how they cascade to staff
- Illustration shows how priorities are linked to various departments
- Intention is for GPC to agree these are the top items
- Once have consensus plan to revisit every quarter
- Have discussion on top five items

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Defer consideration of the 2021 Council Alignment Update to a future meeting for more in depth discussion

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, provided the committee with information regarding virtual meetings:

- All of May’s meetings will be held completely virtually to accommodate upgrades happening in the Shaw Auditorium
- Staff ran one mock meeting and will host another practice session on Wednesday
- Shaw Cable will still show Regular Council Meetings on TV
- Livestreaming of meetings will continue
- The public can expect to see Council on the screen and delegations will be able to hear and see Council

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 5:00 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER