

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2021-SEP-27, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: E Hemmens, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. D. Armstrong (joined via Zoom 1:03 p.m., disconnected 2:01 p.m.)
Councillor D. Bonner (joined electronically 1:03 p.m.)
Councillor B. Geselbracht (arrived 1:01 p.m.)
Councillor Z. Maartman
Councillor I. W. Thorpe

Absent: Councillor T. Brown
Councillor J. Turley

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
B. Corsan, Director, Community Development
L. Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning
F. Farrokhi, Manager, Communications
D. LaBerge, Manager Bylaw Services
K. Robertson, Deputy City Clerk
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
K. Gerard, 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.

Councillor Geselbracht entered the Shaw Auditorium at 1:01 p.m.

2. INTRODUCTION OF LATE ITEMS:

- (a) Agenda Item 5(a) – Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning – Add the Governance and Priorities Committee Matrix.

3. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

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

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

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

4. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES:

It was moved and seconded that the Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee Meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2021-JUL-26, at 2:00 p.m. be adopted as circulated. The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

(a) Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda Planning

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding the upcoming Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Dates included on the matrix and status of items
- Discussion regarding the development opportunities for newly acquired city owned property at 6, 10 and 14 Commercial Street
- Public feedback on the options for the property at 6, 10 and 14 Commercial Street

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, advised the Committee that feedback from the community has been occurring and there is intent to further develop ideas based on community and Council feedback.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee direct Staff to add the Downtown Hub Project to a future Governance and Priorities Committee meeting for further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

6. REPORTS:

a. GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT EXCELLENCE:

(a) Political Signage Regulations

Introduced by Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services.

Presentation:

1. Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk, provided the Committee with a PowerPoint presentation. Highlights included:
 - Reviewed the current regulations regarding election signage in the City of Nanaimo (the City)
 - Changes to current bylaws could include restricting signage by location or number of sign allowed per candidate
 - Current signage is regulated through:
 - “Sign Bylaw 1987 No. 2850” (public property)

- “Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000” (public property)
 - Parks, Recreation and Culture Regulation Bylaw 2008 No. 7073” (public property)
 - Provincial Policy T-03/18 – Highway Rights of Way
- Current regulations are inconsistent with no clear date regarding the removal of political signs
- Local governments do have the ability to regulate signage but freedom of expression rights under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms must be taken into consideration when setting limits
- Staff looked at other municipalities in BC where sign regulations have been put in place and found a variety of approaches including full prohibition on signage on public property, signs only permitted in certain locations and/or limiting the amount of signs per candidate
- Regulating the location or number of signs may be acceptable under environmental considerations as it would limit the amount of materials used such as wood, plastic and metal
- Any regulations imposed by the City would not apply to private property or highway rights of way which includes some of the busiest most popular intersections for installing election signage
- City Staff would like to simplify and add clarity to political signage by creating a new bylaw which will ensure consistency with the Provincial policy

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Complaints regarding election signage during campaign periods from members of the public
- Limiting the number of signs and locations throughout the City due to environmental concerns
- Signage ban on all public property
- Designating sign locations and limiting signage to one per property
- Restricting the distance between two signs from the same candidate

Karen Robertson, Deputy City Clerk, advised the Committee that Council does not have jurisdiction over highway rights of way.

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, advised the Committee that there are potential legal issues with banning political signage on all public property as it may conflict with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct staff to draft amendments to “Sign Bylaw 1987 No. 2850” and “Traffic and Highways Regulation Bylaw 1993 No. 5000” to remove references to political signage and incorporate the regulations into a single comprehensive Political Signage Bylaw. The motion carried unanimously.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Adding strict regulations around election procedures will require more staff and volunteer time for people working for each campaign
- Ministry guidelines apply to the highway rights of way and difficulty enforcing the removal of signs the day after the election

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services advised the Committee that the City currently allows for sign removal to occur within 30 days after election day.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council include the following provision within the new Political Signage Bylaw:

“Election/political signage, as authorized by the Corporate Officer, may be placed on public or private property 30 days prior to an election or referendum and must be removed by the next working day following the electoral event.”

The motion carried.

Opposed: Mayor Krog, Councillors Maartman, Thorpe

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Adding environmental requirements to political signage such materials used must be recycled or repurposed
- The City's ability to regulate the type of materials to ensure signs can be recycled or reused

Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works, advised the Committee that locating a recycling centre that takes the plastic type material used may be difficult and the Staff time involved to collect and package the signs would be significant.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to retain the status quo of not limiting the number of political signs per candidate. The motion carried.

Opposed: Councillor Geselbracht

Councillor Armstrong disconnected from the meeting at 2:01 p.m.

b. REIMAGINE Nanaimo

1. REIMAGINE Nanaimo Update

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, provided the Committee with an update regarding REIMAGINE Nanaimo. Highlights included:

- The Phase 2 online survey closed on September 23rd
- Phase 3 will focus on concurrent land use scenarios and land use policies
- 476 people completed the foundations survey and 1500 people completed the online survey
- Very good participation and feedback throughout the online workshops
- 67% of participants have taken part in some form of planning before and over half of participants had heard of REIMAGINE Nanaimo
- Staff held workshops for youth throughout Nanaimo and for City Staff
- Key group workshops included students in the planning program at Vancouver Island University (VIU), Nanaimo and Area Land Trust (NALT), the development community, Green Thumb and Sandstone
- Outreach included 37 pop-up booths, art kits, spirit team, Tik Tok, project videos, flyers and information at the COVID-19 clinics at Beban and promotional at kiosks around Nanaimo

Committee discussion took place regarding the youth workshops and engaging the City's Leaders in Training.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, continued her presentation. Highlights included:

- Staff plan on integrating the following documents into one master document with supporting action plans and strategies:
 - The Official Community Plan (OCP)
 - Parks, Recreation and Culture Plan
 - Climate Action Plan
 - Active Transportation Plan
- The integrated city plan will include the framework and goals based on feedback from the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process, a high level coordinated policy document using the existing OCP with additions from supporting action plans and policies
- The action implementation plans enable Council to make informed decisions around strategic planning and budgets
- The draft visuals include layering to show how future city structures (town centres) will develop based on the five goals set out in the REIMAGINE Nanaimo process:
 1. A Healthy Nanaimo
 2. An Enabled Nanaimo
 3. An Empowered Nanaimo
 4. A Connected Nanaimo
 5. A Green Nanaimo

- The illustration shows how town centres will look and what services, accommodations and employment opportunities will be included in each centre
- A green Nanaimo shows layers of connectivity between green areas and how these would fit within the town centre model
- Healthy directions include a vibrant mixed-use core, affordable and supportive housing options and building height transitions from high-rise in the core areas to low level in the outlying areas
- Enabled directions include retail streets and employment areas all within a short distance of residential properties
- Empowered directions include wellness and cultural hubs, parks and indoor/outdoor celebration sites
- Connected directions include car free access to daily needs, transit exchange, active transportation network and walkable blocks
- Next steps:
 - Engagement input analysis and summary expected late October 2021
 - Draft policy review, gap analysis, new draft policy development (Committee and Staff review)
 - Recommended land use scenario
 - Drafting of integrated city plan and action implementation plans
 - Phase 3 Engagement – Winter 2021/2022

Committee discussion took place regarding feedback from the community on the downtown area.

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised the Committee that feedback from the community regarding the downtown area shows a strong desire for more investment, more vibrancy, better connections and access to the waterfront. The 1500 survey responses have not been compiled; however; based on results so far the community members would like to see a thriving downtown that is a destination for tourists and residents.

Committee discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Key strategic documents and action implementation plans
- Development permit areas (DPA's)
- Watercourse development permit areas
- Outcomes and implications of the action plans in relation to the doughnut economic model

Lisa Bhopalsingh, Manager, Community Planning, advised the Committee that:

- Phase 3 will include draft action plans and development area changes, which Staff will bring back to the Committee at a later date for discussion and feedback

- Integrated city plan document will be created to show how each plan relates to each other and how each plan will increase the likelihood of reaching the goals set by Council and the community
- Staff in all City departments have been identifying overlaps and gaps between departments in order to show where projects, plans and/or policies could be revised for better efficiency
- Elements of each land use scenario in the REIMAGINE Nanaimo workshops will be incorporated into one hybrid model based on Committee, Council and community feedback
- Engagement on this hybrid model will occur in Phase 3

7. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 2:31 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

CHAIR

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER