

MINUTES
GOVERNANCE AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE MEETING
SHAW AUDITORIUM, VANCOUVER ISLAND CONFERENCE CENTRE,
80 COMMERCIAL STREET, NANAIMO, BC
MONDAY, 2023-JUN-12, AT 1:00 P.M.

Present: Councillor B. Geselbracht, Chair
Mayor L. Krog
Councillor S. Armstrong
Councillor T. Brown (joined electronically)
Councillor H. Eastmure (joined electronically)
Councillor E. Hemmens
Councillor P. Manly
Councillor J. Perrino
Councillor I. Thorpe

Staff: J. Rudolph, Chief Administrative Officer
D. Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy Chief
Administrative Officer
R. Harding, General Manager, Parks, Recreation and Culture
B. Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works
L. Bhopalsingh, Director, Community Development
B. Corsan, Director, Corporate and Business Development
J. Holm, Director, Development Approvals
K. Ing, Director, IT/CIO (joined electronically)
L. Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning
L. Rowett, Manager, Current Planning
M. Squire, Manager, Water Resources
T. Webb, Manager, Communications
C. Horn, Planner, Current Planning
C. Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner, Community Planning
C. Wood, Social Planner, Community Planning
S. Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services
N. Sponaugle, Communications Advisor
A. Chanakos, 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) Agenda Item 6(b)(3) Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection:

- Replace – Attachment A – 2023 Neighbourhood Association Priority List
- Add delegation from Barry Lyseng
- Add delegation from Nancy Mitchell, Newcastle Community Association

- (b) Reorder Agenda Item 6(b)(3) - Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection to precede Agenda Item 6(b)(1) – Housing Needs Report.

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 following Minutes be adopted as circulated:

- 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, 2023-APR-26, at 9:00 a.m.
- Minutes of the Governance and Priorities Committee meeting held in the Shaw Auditorium, Vancouver Island Conference Centre, 80 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, on Monday, 2023-MAY-08, at 1:00 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA PLANNING:

1. Upcoming Topics and Initiatives

Sheila Gurrie, Director, Legislative Services, spoke regarding topics and initiatives scheduled for upcoming Governance and Priorities Committee (GPC) meetings, and noted that the 2023-JUN-26 GPC agenda is full, and if any topics are moved to the 2023-JUL-17 meeting, that agenda will also be full. As the next GPC meeting is not until October, a special GPC meeting may be added in July.

6. REPORTS:

a. GREEN NANAIMO:

(1) Water Supply Strategy

Introduced by Bill Sims, General Manager, Engineering and Public Works.

- The Water Supply Strategy (WSS) was completed along with the City Plan, and is replacing the previous WSS implemented in 2007; and,
- The replacement value of the City's drinking water is \$1.5 billion.

Presentation:

1. Mike Squire, Manager, Water Resources, provided a presentation. Highlights included:

- The City's main source of water supply was previously the Old Reservoir No. 1, but changed to the South Fork Water Treatment Plant in 2015;
- The WSS is a supporting document for the City Plan to plan for continued population growth, protect the environment, manage aging infrastructure and build resilience to climate change and emergencies;
- Staff worked with a consulting team to look at the City's water demands and population growth, and have forecasted water demands out to the year 2061;
- Water consumption per capita has gone down compared to the mid 1990's, and is primarily due to tiered rate increases and staged watering restrictions;
- The City's daily water use is lower than both the Federal and Provincial Governments, and due to decreased water use, the City has already exceeded its 2035 water use target;
- The Jump Lake Dam currently holds enough water to supply the City for one year;
- The Jump Creek Reservoir has sufficient storage to sustain extreme drought conditions with climate change for the next 20 years, if demand management practices are in place; and,
- It was recommended that a second intake be added at the South Fork Dam, as well as adding seismic upgrades.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding additional water supply needs for upcoming future development projects.

Mike Squire, Manager, Water Resources, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Phase 1 and 2 of the Midtown Gateway Project are expected to be complete in 2024, followed by the Towers Reservoir Project beginning in 2025;
- The South Fork Reservoir Dam Intake Project is anticipated to start construction between 2030 and 2032; and,
- Phase 3 of the Midtown Gateway Project is anticipated to start construction in 2035.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The City supplies water to a portion of the District of Lantzville, and an agreement is in place documenting how much water is supplied and for how long;
- Non-revenue daily water demands include City practices such as practice sessions for the Fire Department and the Water Main Flushing Program;

- The Cassidy aquifer is a potential secondary water supply source that could be used in the future as a back-up supply of potable water; and,
- The current water reservoir is sufficient until 2060; however, if the City continues with a 5% reduction in water use per year, it could extend the sufficiency of the reservoir further into the future.

b. HEALTHY NANAIMO:

(1) Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/ Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

1. Chris Sholberg, Community Heritage Planner, spoke regarding the Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary. Highlights included:
 - The City Plan encourages engagement with Neighbourhood Associations, which includes an annual engagement event with Council;
 - All 14 recognized Neighbourhood Associations attended the engagement event on 2023-APR-26 and were asked to identify their top three priorities, as well as key actions to address each priority; and,
 - Staff summarized the priority actions that were received from the event, and most priority actions coincided with actions in the Integrated Action Plan.

Delegations:

1. Barry Lyseng, Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association, noted that when the Governance and Priorities Committee Agenda was published on 2023-JUN-07, Attachment A of the report dated 2023-JUN-12, titled “Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection” did not accurately reflect what was discussed at the Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event. An addendum was requested, and the revised version of Attachment A more accurately reflects the actions presented by the Stephenson Point Neighbourhood Association.
2. Nancy Mitchell, Newcastle Community Association, noted the priorities listed in Attachment A are not reflective of what was discussed at the Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event. It was requested that the three priorities listed for the Newcastle Community Association be replaced with the following:

1. Improve traffic safety on Stewart Ave;
2. Improve personal and neighbourhood security; and,
3. Promote the Newcastle neighbourhood.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Stewart Avenue is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI); therefore, the City cannot make any changes without approval from MOTI;
- The City is currently looking at creating a Neighbourhood Safety Committee;
- The Newcastle Community Association has spoken with MOTI regarding crosswalks across Stewart Avenue. MOTI installed the capability for flashing crosswalks, but have not installed any lights at this time;
- Attachment A is an attachment to the Integrated Action Plan. Due to the amount of actions listed, Staff will review the actions each year to determine what can be accomplished; and,
- Staff will hold a Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event each year to ensure the priorities are accurate and up-to-date.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council replace the proposed priority actions from the Newcastle Neighbourhood Association as outlined in Attachment A of the report dated 2023-JUN-12, titled “Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection” with the following:

1. Work with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to improve traffic safety on Stewart Avenue by undertaking a traffic calming study to lower speeds; fixing potholes; and adding push buttons to existing crosswalks at Dawes Street, Rosehill Street and Townsite Road;
2. Improve personal and neighbourhood safety by establishing a city-resident Newcastle Recovery Action Committee; eliminating sheltering opportunities along the Millstone River; expanding Bike Patrol and Community Safety Officers to Newcastle; increasing patrols on vacant residences and businesses; implementing a Vacant Property bylaw; managing visible signs of decay like graffiti, overgrown bushes; providing economic development business recruitment support to replace business closures and strengthen business retention; and moving forward with a master plan for 250 Terminal Avenue; and,
3. Promote the Newcastle neighbourhood by creating street banners specifically for Newcastle; installing heritage interpretation plaques and a welcome sign; and updating heritage walk brochures.

The motion carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council endorse the priority actions identified by the neighbourhood associations to be added as an attachment to the draft Integrated Action Plan as outlined in Attachment A of the 2023-JUN-12 Staff report titled “Neighbourhood Association Engagement Event Summary and Priority Action Selection”. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) Housing Needs Report

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/
Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

1. Noha Sedky, City Spaces, provided a PowerPoint presentation.

Highlights included:

- The Housing Needs Report is a way for communities to better understand current and future housing needs and identify supply gaps in the community;
- In 2019, the provincial government introduced legislation requiring municipalities to collect data and analyze trends, and present the findings in a Housing Needs Report;
- It is anticipated that the Housing Needs Report would require updating every five years;
- The Housing Needs Report compiles data from local census reports, BC Assessment, homeless camp data, and the City’s licensing and permit data;
- The City is facing steep price escalation for both home ownership and rental prices, with prices almost doubling for ownership, and rental prices rising 50-100%;
- Between 1991 - 2021, rental housing made up 29% of completions in the City; however, that number is beginning to rise;
- Core Housing Need is a metric from Statistics Canada used to estimate housing need, and measures suitability, adequacy and affordability. In 2021, 12% of all households were considered to be in Core Housing Need;
- Between 2017 - 2022, over 700 non-market rental units were added to the community;
- In 2022, 762 households were on the BC Housing waitlist, with seniors being the largest group on the list;
- Family-friendly housing is needed in a variety of forms, including ground-oriented units and apartments;
- The City Plan estimates the City’s population to reach 140,000 people by 2046, and 11,580 new housing units are needed by 2031;
- Low- and moderate-income households continue to face challenges with the increasing cost of housing; and,
- There is a growing need for seniors-focused housing.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council receive the City of Nanaimo's 2023 Housing Needs Report in accordance with Part 14 Division 22 of the *Local Government Act*. The motion carried unanimously.

The Governance and Priorities Committee recessed the meeting at 2:45 p.m.

The Governance and Priorities Committee reconvened the meeting at 3:00 p.m.

(3) Affordable Housing Initiatives

(1) Secondary Suite Regulations and Infill Housing in Existing Neighbourhoods

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

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

- Secondary suites became popular with the introduction of legal suites in 2005;
- In 2022, 65% of single family dwellings were constructed with legal suites;
- Based on current regulations, Single Residential Dwelling lots greater than 370m² can have a secondary suite, and Single Residential Dwelling lots greater than 800m², or on a corner lot, or a lot abutting a lane can have a detached suite;
- Proposed changes to the current Secondary Suite Regulations included:
 - Lowering the minimum lot size for detached suites to 500m², as well as removing the lot location requirements;
 - Allowing one attached suite and one detached suite on the same property for lots greater than 800m²; and,
 - Allowing secondary suites in side-by-side or detached duplexes and townhouses.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- Current regulations allow a secondary suite to be 40% of the building floor area, to a maximum of 90m²; however, Staff are proposing to increase the maximum to 100m²;
- The current 40% regulation is to ensure suites remain accessory to the main living area;

- The BC Building Code no longer limits secondary suites to be a maximum of 40% of the building floor area, so that can be changed in the future;

Caleb Horn, Planner, Current Planning, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Infill housing refers to housing within an existing neighbourhood without significantly altering its character or appearance;
- The R7 (Rowhouse) Zone allows for the construction of rowhouses, which are similar to townhouses, but constructed on fee-simple lots with shared walls and no strata;
- Recommended revisions to the R7 (Rowhouse) Zone would allow for both strata and fee-simple lots, and would fill gaps between the R6 (Low Density) and R8 (Medium Density) Zones; and,
- Staff are considering an option to provide bonus density provisions for the conversion of existing older homes into multiple dwelling units.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend that Council direct Staff to proceed with community consultation for the proposed regulations for secondary suites and infill housing in existing neighbourhoods, as outlined in the report dated 2023-JUN-12, titled “Secondary Suite Regulations and Infill Housing in Existing Neighbourhoods”. The motion carried unanimously.

(2) Family-Friendly Housing Regulation and Policy

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, provided a presentation. Highlights included:
 - Family-friendly housing refers to any unit with two or more bedrooms;
 - Increasing housing costs has made it challenging for families to find housing;
 - It is estimated that 1,150 new units will be needed each year for the next 10 years to keep up with demand. Of these units, it is recommended to have 775 one-bedroom units, 192 two-bedroom units, and 185 3+ bedroom units;
 - Currently, the two- and three-bedroom units being developed are primarily in single family dwellings, which are unaffordable to many families;

- Families prefer ground-oriented units, so apartments are not ideal;
- It is proposed to amend the Zoning Bylaw to require a development of 10 or more units to have a minimum of 30% of the units be two bedrooms and 10% be three or more units;
- Proposed amendments to Schedule D of the Zoning Bylaw would allow a density bonus for family-friendly units in a multi-unit development within 400m of a public school, if the family friendly units are ground-oriented; and,
- Amendments to the Parking Variance Policy would allow a parking variance for underground parking for developments with more than the base amount of 30% family-friendly units.

Committee and Staff discussion took place regarding concerns around reducing the amount of parking spaces provided and how that could impact the surrounding neighbourhood.

Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, continued the presentation. Highlights included:

- Next steps involve public consultation in line with the Secondary Suites Regulations and Infill Housing proposed amendments.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend Council direct Staff to proceed with community consultation for the proposed amendments to the “City of Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500”, and new parking variance criteria to create more family-friendly housing in Nanaimo as outlined in the 2023-JUN-12 Staff report titled “Family-Friendly Housing Regulation and Policy.” The motion carried unanimously.

(3) Adaptable Housing Regulation and Policy

Introduced by Dale Lindsay, General Manager, Development Services/Deputy CAO.

Presentation:

1. Lisa Brinkman, Manager, Community Planning, provided a presentation. Highlights included:
 - Adaptable units can benefit anyone who’s mobility is limited due to age, illness or disability;
 - Nearly 25% of BC’s population aged 15 or older identify as having a disability, and 47% of seniors aged 75 and older have one or more disabilities;

- The BC Building Code has standards for basic adaptable units, including wider doorways, room to maneuver at entryways and corridors, access to main floor bathrooms, reinforcement of walls for grab bars, and accessible doorhandles, switches and outlets;
- Between 2016 - 2021, the City's 65+ age group grew by over 4,300 people;
- Of the 1,075 multi-units constructed in 2022, approximately 20 adaptable units were constructed, excluding seniors housing;
- Proposed Zoning Bylaw amendments include:
 - requiring that 50% of units in multi-unit developments of 10 or more units meet basic adaptable unit standards;
 - requiring that 100% of units in a "Seniors Congregate Housing" development meet basic adaptable unit standards; and,
 - Amending Schedule D to increase the base amount of adaptable units to 50% to achieve the density bonus additional floor area.
- Next steps would include public consultation with the Design Advisory Panel, Advisory Committee on Accessibility and Inclusiveness, the development community and the general public.

Committee and Staff discussion took place. Highlights included:

- The BC Housing basic standard for adaptable housing doesn't require all modifications, just basic ones, as more can be added for certain units; and,
- Adaptable units are different than accessible units.

Gerry Mulholland, Mulholland Parker Land Economists Ltd., spoke via Zoom. Highlights included:

- Adaptable units require basic infrastructure in place to accommodate people with disabilities, such as larger door frames, and lower light switches and plugs, and can be easily converted for specific needs; and,
- Accessible units are accessible to an individual's specific needs, and consequently, are more expensive to build.

It was moved and seconded that the Governance and Priorities Committee recommend Council direct Staff to proceed with community consultation for the proposed amendments to the "City Nanaimo Zoning Bylaw 2011 No. 4500" to create more adaptable housing in Nanaimo, as outlined in the 2023-JUN-12 Staff report titled "Adaptable Housing Regulation and Policy." The motion carried unanimously.

7. QUESTION PERIOD:

No one was in attendance to ask questions.

8. ADJOURNMENT:

It was moved and seconded at 3:58 p.m. that the meeting terminate. The motion carried unanimously.

C H A I R

CERTIFIED CORRECT:

CORPORATE OFFICER