

THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF NORTH VANCOUVER

Meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission
Held at City Hall, 141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, B.C.
in Conference Room A on Wednesday, January 27th, 2011

MINUTES

Present: J. Carcone
B. Curtis (Chair)
J. Jensen
P. McCann
B. Phillips
J. Plato
Councillor Heywood

Staff: D. Mitic, Assistant City Engineer, Transportation
P. Penner, Community Planner, Community Development
S. Smith, Planner, Community Development
S. Kimm-Jones, Committee Clerk

Guests: None

Absent: H. Goodland
D. Olson
M. Rahbar
M. Tasi

A quorum being present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6 p.m.

The Chair initiated some discussion around the role of APC in possibly being more critical about projects being reviewed for example the proposed grade for parking ramps, the interior design. It was noted that building code and design-related issues are reviewed by Engineering staff and the Advisory Design Panel who have more expertise in those areas. It was noted that when projects return to APC, the main focus of the applicant's presentation should be to answer concerns raised in the motion passed at APC. Therefore the language used in motions is very important.

Staff added that APC's role in reviewing projects is challenging as some areas crossover with other advisory bodies as its scope is broad e.g. sense of place, transportation. In some cases there are some details that do not seem to work well together but the key for APC is to consider the impact of those at a step or two up in scale. The Advisory Design Panel will pick up the smaller design pieces. Staff will also continue to try to flag key issues relating to projects i.e.: this project please consider use, density, height etc., as well as what aspects of a project are supported by staff, prior to the applicant's presentation. On a related note around discussions of Sense of Place and the difficulty

in articulating it, perhaps there needs to be a discussion as part of the OCP update. This would include local architecture on sense of place.

Members felt that APC motions should be relayed to the Advisory Design Panel (staff note: all APC and ADP motions related to a project are provided to the Chair to share with their group at the appropriate meeting).

1. OCP 2021 & Beyond: Social Trends Discussion Paper

P. Penner gave an overview of social and cultural trends in the City of North Vancouver. The discussion paper is a starting point for a conversation on these issues. All discussion papers are available on the City website. Discussion papers have been forwarded to Council for their review.

This paper looks at policies, the City's response to social and cultural issues in the past, and forward to trends and issues. It considers the implications for OCP 2021 & Beyond and reviews indicators under TIMS and suggests other measurement standards for the future.

The City is not a frontline service provider but does provide funding to many of them. The City develops municipal policies and programs and provides land and facilities.

The City's 1998 Social Plan provides a framework to focus social planning programs and initiatives which are reflected in the Community Well Being chapter in the 2002 OCP.

One major trend is the age shift as the community becomes older and more gentrified. Other key elements include childcare and the complete community, youth trends, the need to be an age-friendly community, the increase in cultural diversity, housing affordability and density, lower income residents, the evolving non-profit sector and arts and culture.

Questions and comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- The first 5-6 pages of the paper could be condensed.
- There is not much of a discussion on how programming/content of arts and culture would be affected by changing ages, ethnic mix.
- There are social health measures missing e.g. crime rate, high school dropout rate. Is there a shortage of childcare or lower cost childcare? Staff: there are shortages for particular age groups and programs e.g. infant and toddler care, spaces in centres known for quality are in demand as well as affordable spaces. There are family providers that may have spaces. The recent global economic downturn has led to a trend where some people can no longer afford childcare which has created vacancies. In addition, many parents have been reluctant to put children in childcare due to uncertainty of when the province would move to all day kindergarten.
- How do we create a community that someone will stay in through all the stages of their life? How do we create housing for people to move into e.g. from condo to a three-bedroom house. How do we create an environment that attracts young families? How can we support age distribution and create tools for people to be

able to stay in the community where they have developed social connections? We need a variety of affordable homes. Staff: There is another paper coming forward called "Complete Communities" which may address some of your issues as well as a paper on "Housing Affordability". The City has been able to have a variety of housing types; whether you can afford it is another question.

- There is the issue of how to deal with pre-school children and school age children. There are 350 children at Queen Mary School. School; the school age population in Lower Lonsdale is growing but numbers are dropping at Queen Mary. The average family income is \$40,000; people in the City who can afford to are sending their children to other schools.
- Other measurements that should be included are: the crime rate and sense of security index from seniors, the fitness level of high school children and recreational opportunities. I would like to see metrics that point to gaps e.g. at recreation centres. The report should be hard-hitting on things that need to be solved over the next 20 years and should be consistent with the District's plan as well.
- A dense community has to provide socialized recreation opportunities.
- There could be a stronger emphasis in the trends segment on people working from home; there needs to some level of analysis. People are working in the expensive condos and townhouses which are functioning as work and live.
- Looking at the zoning map of the City, I think we need to pursue a multi-nodal model: more nodes/centres of social spaces that could be supported by the periphery. These could be areas with facilities for cultural spaces, dance, art, celebrations e.g. weddings.
- The co-housing development at 5th and Chesterfield is a perfect model for a way of allowing for aging in place and could be expanded to other buildings; think about how it is tied to the zoning map; take concepts and move into spaces.
- There is a lot of talk about housing affordability but business affordability is also important as it can be hard for local business owners to attract staff to work here as many cannot afford to live in the City.
- Age friendly communities need a node-type idea of transportation to make it easy for less mobile people to move around. We need parks with a senior focus.
- The report captured the essence of the big challenges.
- Communities should have an integration of all ages not just be 55 plus.
- I like the idea of supporting a variety of ethnic groups per our discussion last time about themed streets or areas; have spaces where different groups have some ownership and feel comfortable.
- Upper Lonsdale has affordable apartments on the street and million dollar homes a few blocks away. We need to fight gentrification and push for more multi-faceted communities.
- There should be a separate section on arts and culture in the OCP.
- There should be a section on how the non-profit sector complements municipal government e.g. Harvest, Outlook, Lions and Rotary clubs, church groups. Nodes invite the participation of non-profits.
- Affordable housing is a complicated issue; the general public needs to rethink what single family housing is all about.
- Very few young people live in North Vancouver because it is not perceived as an exciting place. We need entertainment zones.
- Think about what attracts young families

- Social spaces; artist live work studios can become a draw. The City should be encouraged to select one or two ideas/strategies e.g. artist areas, ethnic theme street, culture.

2. OCP 2021 & Beyond: Transportation Discussion Paper

D. Mitic gave an overview of transportation, mobility and access and how to create a sustainable, resilient transportation system to 2021 and beyond.

Transportation accounts for 49% of GHG. Traffic is increasing by 1.5% annually but is anticipated to slow to 0.5%. 23% of trips by City residents are to commute to work; the rest are discretionary. 70% of the City's trips stay on the North Shore; 80% of them are by car. The goal is reduce car trips by 10% and increase non-car transportation modes by 30%

The City will have to adjust the infrastructure to accommodate the aging population.

The 2008 Transportation Plan was developed to help achieve many of the long-term goals and objectives outlined in the 2002 OCP. For example, the link of land use and transportation on 1st Street changed the sense of place by narrowing the street and encouraging walking.

Since the 2002 OCP 3.5 km of greenways and 24.7 km of bike facilities, up from 2 km, have been built. There is increased bus frequency, transit priority measures, new bus stops, accessible bus stops have increased by 70%.

The movement of goods is a challenge and needs to be improved in conjunction with the Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy, the North Shore Area Transit Plan, the North Shore Trade Area Study.

Transportation Demand Management strategies are important in trying to reduce car trips e.g. rideshare, bike parking, contribution to transit passes.

More work needs to be done before measurable results are realized for example, LEV (Low Emission Vehicle) technology must be accompanied by lifestyle and behaviour changes, link transportation and land use strategies to create a sustainable community. We cannot just replace fossil fuel vehicles with low emissions ones.

The transportation infrastructure is shared by all road users and mixed land use requires reconciling competing interests and working with other agencies.

So the two questions I have for you this evening are:

What actions should the City take to help people change the way they move around in the community?

What are the biggest opportunities and obstacles facing the City when it comes to creating a sustainable, resilient transportation system that is less dependent on the single occupant vehicle?

Questions and comments from the APC included, but were not limited to:

- This is a very well written discussion paper. A mention of the state of our infrastructure was missing e.g. condition of the roads. Also a mention of trends happening in other communities.
- To what extent will gentrification affect the percentage of car usage?
- The future is natural gas powered cars; could the City have zoning for natural gas stations?
- More people are working from home.
- We seem to be at the mercy of Translink. West Vancouver have negotiated their own kind of deal; should we do the same?
- If things cost more e.g. parking, people may use it less.
- There was an attempt to get approval from Council for a free green shuttle. I encourage you not to give up. Perhaps we could have a slow speed natural gas vehicle going up and down Lonsdale for bicycles and passengers. The District of North Vancouver will have the first electric charging station.
- I have noticed how efficient the City is to get around; there are a lot of elderly people walking with canes, walkers, wheelchairs. It is a good baseline to start from.
- Educate people on effective driving strategies e.g. stopping and starting and rapid acceleration. Car dependency is huge.
- I am in full support of getting the street car system back in operation; any hope of it happening? Staff: An historical or modern streetcar? Modern ones are expensive.
- Is there new technology being developed for streetcars? Staff: Yes, with rubber wheels.
- Try to connect green spaces and create pedestrian pathways not using the road. Draw people away from the urban grid into nature.
- The Climate Smart program for businesses increased awareness. There should be an endorsement of that type of community involvement, to attract business and homeowners into using them.
- There is an increase in empty container traffic going through the City.
- I thought 70% of trips by car was high but you said it was good; what is the right number for us? We should be trying for more. I support putting a price on everything via taxes, rates or levies to help get us there.
- I did not see anything in the discussion paper about an east-west connector.
- We need to have a dialogue with First Nations.
- Pay parking would cripple a lot of businesses if it happened, especially as one can park for nothing at shopping malls. A vibrant street brings the community alive. Pay parking will come when people ask for it. In one respect time-limited parking is pay parking.
- At the Translink stakeholders session, Lonsdale Avenue was shown as the most important link. Discussion also included the growing significance of east-west connections such as along Marine Drive.
- Light rapid rail on the lower road is very expensive and the bus service gets starved. The Seabus and busses work well together.
- What about a rapid bus along Keith?

- Staff: The 100 Year Sustainability Vision is a vision carried out over time which could see phases e.g.: east-west connection noted in the plan (for waste to energy and transportation) between WV, DNV, City and Squamish First Nation along Marine Drive has regular bus service now; it could become rapid bus service in 10 years and, in the future, rapid transit. It evolves over time.

3. Other

S. Smith reminded the Commission that the APC 2011 Work Program will be discussed at the February 9th meeting.

An update on the OCP 2021 Community Engagement Strategy development – a consultant has been hired to work with staff on developing a more out of the box strategy on how best to engage the community. A staff workshop focussed on identifying groups that are often difficult to reach. Staff ensured previous comments from APC on this were included in the conversation. The Civic Engagement Task Force paper was mentioned by a member and staff advised that it had been forwarded to the consultants, Vince Verlan and Tracy Vaughan to consider those aspects that directly relate.

The Complete Communities Discussion paper was reviewed at APC at its last meeting; comments made at that review will be incorporated into the final paper.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Advisory Planning Commission will be held on Wednesday, February 9th, 2011.

Chair

