



MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held at City Hall in
Conference Room A and Electronically (Hybrid),
141 West 14th Street, North Vancouver, BC on January 10, 2024

The City of North Vancouver respectfully acknowledges that this meeting is held on the traditional and unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Səlilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

Members Present

C. Dempster
K. Balcom
S. Luce
M. Mathieson
D. Anderson
A. Rahbar
S. Tornes
Councillor D. Bell (participated electronically)

Absent

Councillor T. Valente
A. Rahbar
S. Luce
Y. Al-Nakeeb

Staff Present

Renee de St. Croix, Manager, Long Range & Community Planning
Emily Macdonald, Planner 2
Anu Garcha, Planning Assistant
Shreeya Tandon, Committee Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 6:15pm.

Land acknowledgement.

1. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**

The Agenda for January 10, 2024 was adopted as circulated.

(Carried unanimously)

2. **ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on November 11, 2023 were approved as circulated.

3. **BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES.**

Nil.

4. Council Update

We haven't met since early December so no updates. Councillor Back has been appointed to this committee.

5. Staff Update

- Report to Council on changes mandated by the Province will be discussed during the February 5th Council meeting and will soon have an update for the panel.
- Updates on zoning bylaw discussed: community well-being, environment, and economic strategy nearing finalization, incorporating fall consultations.
- New building code released; adjustments underway in building department, more work expected this year.
- June 2024 deadline set by the Province are considered realistic; adjustments to be made based on information as and when provided.
- The Province's unexpected release of people plan in February last year have a particularly surprising extent of changes, including allowance for 6 units.
- Concerns raised regarding infrastructure capacity to accommodate rapid population influx without corresponding funding, impacting sewer, water, recreation, parks, and transportation.
- Building capacity questioned - developers are facing challenges and seeking premiums due to high mortgages and rates.
- Supply chain issues identified, legislation is heavily reliant on municipal action. An analysis of OCP work is required to understand integration of components.

6. Zoning Bylaw Update

The Phase 1 of the project commenced on April 3, 2023 when staff brought forward a report to initiate Community Engagement.

On November 27, 2023, staff presented to Council a summary of the activities and outcomes of Phase 1 of the Zoning Bylaw Update Project.

The consultants undertook an audit of the existing zoning bylaw to understand its composition and identify challenges and opportunities. The Audit found there are 81 Use definitions, 155 general definitions (many of which are outdated), 36 standards zones, and 583 Comprehensive Development zones which are the result of site-specific rezonings.

E. Macdonald reported the following updates:

A zoning bylaw video was played on YouTube.

- The project began a year ago, currently in Phase 2 drafting the zoning bylaw, aiming for completion by end of 2024.
- Audit findings: 81 use definitions, 155 general definitions, 36 standard zones, and 583 Comprehensive Development Zones (CDZ).
- CDZs account for 73% of the bylaw count, mostly minor tweaks for specific sites, 96% based on standard zones, 49% on duplex and apartment residential zones.
- Zoning bylaw spans 1,200 pages which are challenging to navigate and require City staff assistance.

- Overlapping use permissions, outdated definitions, and numerous site-specific zones provide an opportunity for consolidation.
- General definitions are outdated and many terms are obsolete, reflecting outdated regulations pre-1967.
- Aim for more flexibility to achieve specific outcomes, identified areas for improvement such as Development Area Permit for streamside development and inclusion of coach houses.

There is no allowance for commercial space; we want this area to be a walkable community.

Emerging Practice Reviews:

- Consultants looked at 11 municipalities which were selected based on how they solved key challenges that we are trying to resolve. The first practice: the shift to two form-based zoning which focuses more on the form exterior, with emphasis on a high quality public realm.
- Trying to meet daily needs in a walkable distance.
- Alignment with municipal objectives.

Consolidation of Zones:

- Clear communication of requirements
- Improved Document Navigation- making it a more accessible document.
- Graphics and Illustrations
- Web-Accessible Document Design and Online Tools.

Phase 1 – Engagement:

Summer 2023 from June to August. Focus was on IIP2 Principals, with a strong focus on getting information out and having people understand what it is and build awareness.

Along with the video, there was a “Let’s Talk” webpage and a print, visual and network outreach. In terms of consultation, there was a survey (website and in-person), pop up events, and some targeted interviews. A lot of time and energy went into these, so if you have time, check them out.

Zoning for well-design city, sustainable city, economic development, transportation or prosperous city. Pamphlets provide key insights as to how they bylaw impact our daily life such as health, sustainability, and housing.

Outcomes: spoke to 600 people during public events and conducted 12 different presentations. The survey had 226 responses submitted on the “Let’s Talk” website, which had 900 website visitors.

Key themes which emerged include: Housing near transit and amenities, increased housing options, housing affordability, supporting car free or car light areas, allow neighbourhood areas to use for commercial spaces, promote and protect employment and industrial landed uses, protect and enhanced tree canopies.

Phase 2 – Key Directions and Next Steps:

Modernize and consolidate standard zones, enable diverse housing options, updating residential prepaid for near-term changes. It has helped us become well positioned on what the Province is asking us which is - simplification. Emerging benefits of this process is that we are already a step ahead of the Province's request.

This will mostly continue until summer 2024 and be completed by end of 2024 with monitoring and evaluation to follow. Staff will develop document and graphic language, prepare for phase 2, and return to the public in the spring.

Notable Comments and Questions by Commission Members:

Any consideration given to decouple for parking that is more dynamic needs more updating, and could possibly be updated more often than bringing the bylaw to council which is slower. There are a lot of requirements where it is not up to the City to provide requirements but rather the applicant as to how much parking they want on site.

With the Province coming in with small scarce multi units, it makes a real difference with parking.

Why has it been so much time since the 1967 updates? Would we have to wait for another 60 years for another update? A: We didn't update because we had zoning activities; it allowed us the flexibility to accommodate development without having to update. The challenge was also technology evolving as quickly as it is now, for example how things have changed in working from home. Things are different now, technology is moving faster. When we have a more manageable bylaw, we will be able to incur more changes. There are people who do futurism and sense pandemic, and we are having those conversations so that we are prepared. We do moderate updates on occasion, because doing a full scale update would require a lot of time and money. There are numerous aspects, and they stay away from that. However over the last number of years, it has really struggled and so we are actually trying to fix it rather than put a band aid on it. The Province has mandated that we need to update it every 5 years, ensuring we are in alignment with OCP and housing requirements.

Port Moody stripped their parking bylaw for example which is a bit of a cautionary tale.

How about digitizing the new bylaw so that applications can be done online?

Research method for public engagement for Phase 1 and Phase 2: for visitors that went online, were they fresh or repeats? Are there community groups you think are harder to reach for the next round? A: We were not collecting personal info, but we did send it out to organizations representing various groups, hoping them to provide honest feedback. The questions weren't about the individuals specifically, but about what the City can do for these people to be comfortable and just gave feedback.

Asking for your judgement in it, spoke to people who don't typically get involved.

Was there a diversity in the responses? A: There were themes like housing from seniors, single people, and parents with young children

It is important to get the correct information out, important to get a balance on getting the info out and getting feedback from a properly informed person. We could probably add more material to a school gymnasium, or town halls. This used to happen before.

We have done social media like reels on Instagram and a lot of outdoor facilities post-pandemic.

There is a faction who don't use internet a lot, they are a group that we also need to target.

Language: Would it be just in English or in English and Indigenous? Would suggest if there could be Squamish version since we are dealing with land versions.

British Columbia is the last province to be presenting its document in French.

Hopefully the zoning bylaw will help capture vulnerable groups which perhaps has the greatest interest. Getting the right stakeholders is a lot more important. It has captured a wide collection of interests.

What is your priority in the next stage of development? A: We have to come up with a small multi-family size by June.

7. Urban Forest Plan – State of the Urban Forest Report:

Purpose: To update the ADP on the Urban Forest Plan and review the State of the Urban Forest Report within the scope of the ADP mandate.

Staff seeks feedback on the following points:

- Concerns about the urban forest today or about the future of the urban forest?
- What role do trees play in your vision of the City?
- How can development support tree plantings and tree retention in the City?

Urban Forest: All of the trees and supporting vegetation in the community. The urban forest is an interconnected ecosystem that also includes the soil, water and air that nourishes trees.

Staff have begun with background research and information gathering, and have now completed the first stage of analysis: the State of the Urban Forest report. This report was the first public step in the planning process. Staff went to Council on November 27th, 2023 to present it and receive comments. Further, staff will be use the findings from this report to help engage with the community and to ensure developing data informs recommendations as staff build detailed policy and actions. Now, we are entering our first phase of public engagement on Monday, January 15th, 2024.

The State of Urban Forest report uses mapping, LiDAR, staff interviews, and analysis of City processes, policies, and regulations to provide a fulsome assessment of the status and trends that are affecting the City's urban forest. It also sets the baseline for the staff to measure future progress.

The Urban Forest Plan aims to develop a 30-year vision for the urban forest through a combination of data analysis and community engagement. It will propose actions to achieve an expanded and sustainable urban forest which is aligned with the Official Community

Plan's direction. The plan recognizes the diverse benefits of trees beyond their visible parts, encompassing ecosystem services like habitat provision, rainwater management, and urban cooling. The State of the Urban Forest report informs the plan, indicating steady canopy cover at 20% since 2007, alongside challenges like increased stress on trees. The report also highlights the distribution of trees across the city, emphasizing the importance of private property in the urban forest. Future steps involve public engagement to develop the plan's vision, values, and priorities, followed by the plan's development and further community feedback. The plan aims to integrate community visions for the urban forest into the city's policy framework and strategic planning, ensuring a resilient and equitable urban forest for the future.

Comments from the Panel:

Emphasis on the history of the forest plan: it's noted that the previous plan from 2007 primarily focused on parks, whereas the new plan aims for holistic City integration.

Suggestion for municipalities to aim for increasing tree coverage, as seen in the differences in canopy coverage between municipalities like New Westminster and the City of Vancouver.

Emphasis on the strategy of retaining mature trees while also aiming to increase street trees, noting the challenges young trees face, especially with changing climate conditions.

7:58 Celeste Dempster left the meeting.

A question was raised about the potential impact of provincial regulations on local tree protection bylaws, emphasizing the need to ensure local efforts to protect trees are not overridden.

Clarification requested regarding the categorization of tree sizes to ensure consistency in planning and development efforts.

Emphasis on the importance of addressing pest control issues affecting trees, particularly with the increasing challenges from pests like moths.

Suggestion for leveraging technology to monitor tree health and provide targeted support, especially in combating the effects of climate change.

Emphasis on pest control being crucial in forest management, particularly in combating issues like tree loss from pests such as moths. Perhaps prioritizing the preservation of mature trees could be beneficial, given the challenges of nurturing young trees into maturity.

Discussion on storm drains getting covered with branches and trees prompts consideration of their relationship with water management.

Discussion on utilizing technology, such as drone scans, to assess tree health and identify those suffering from climate change, could inform targeted support efforts.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting to be February 14, 2024.

9. ADJOURN

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:18pm.

“Certified Correct by the Chair”

Meghan Mathieson
Chair