

MINUTES

Development Advisory Committee

File: 360-20 (DAC)
Date: June 26, 2014
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Location: Planning Room 1,
Surrey City Hall

Members:

Ted Dawson
Adam Donnelly
Jeff Fisher
Nathan Hildebrand
Brad Jones
Chris Kay
Mark Sakai
Charan Sethi
Kevin Shoemaker

City Staff:

Jason Arason
Philip Bellefontaine
Jaime Boan
Megan Fitzgerald
George Fujii
Nicholas Lai
Jean Lamontagne
Sam Lau
Judith Robertson
Fay Keng Wong

Regrets:

Councillor Bruce Hayne

1. Previous Minutes

The notes of the May 22, 2014 meeting were accepted as distributed.

2. New City Hall Payment Parking Options for Consultants/Contractors and Transit Presentation Follow-up (Jaime Boan, Manager, Transportation)

- Jaime Boan provided an update on New City Hall payment parking options for consultants and contractors and a follow-up on his transit presentation from the last DAC meeting. A copy of his presentation is attached.
- The FlexPass is a virtual parking account. License plate numbers are used in place of tags, decals, access cards, or tickets. There is online registration and payment. "Top-up" reminders are provided via text message. Originally designed for part-time City staff, the FlexPass is now available to consultants, contractors, and developers.
- There are license plate recognition cameras on ramps at the parking entrances and exits, which capture the image of each license plate and vehicle movement. At entry, the license plate number is compared in real-time to the database of permit holders. Payments are made at pay stations. A parking ticket is issued if the license plate does not have a valid permit or is not paid or registered at the pay station. The FlexPass account is debited based on time-on-site and the corresponding value of parking time.
- The FlexPass is applicable to City Hall business hours only (Monday to Friday, 6:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The automated day rate is based on a maximum charge of \$7.00/day per vehicle. After 5:00 p.m., payment must be made at the pay station, which has the option of \$1.50/hour or a \$3.00 evening rate (5:00 p.m. to midnight).
- Jaime Boan demonstrated how to register for a FlexPass. The website address is <https://concordparking.com/permits.php>. From the dropdown menu, select "Surrey NCH DAC – Flex pass" and click "Continue".
- Tokens can be purchased up to \$250. Up to 4 license plates can be registered. More than that would require additional registration (e.g. registering twice).

Comments:

- Jeff Fisher commented that additional pay stations should be placed on P1. He also asked if there was any news on the transportation referendum. Jaime responded that there will probably be a lot of to and fro in the next couple of months.

3. Tandem Parking Study (Philip Bellefontaine, Transportation Planning Manager)

- Philip Bellefontaine provided an update on the Tandem Parking Study. A copy of his presentation is attached.
- There have been recent development applications where Council was unclear on the potential impact of tandem parking on neighbourhood parking. There was also a delegation for an application in Fleetwood, which prompted Council to ask staff to develop policy on tandem parking.
- The purpose of the Tandem Parking Study is to ensure:
 - consistency of application;
 - enhance ease of interpretation;
 - formally incorporate ad-hoc updates; and
 - elevate the role of parking to support the City's overall transportation and development goals.
- This study is part of a broader parking review where all types of parking will be looked at. As there are multiple land uses in the Zoning By-Law, the review will take some time to work through. 2 components are being reviewed earlier in the process:
 - tandem parking; and
 - parking in locations with high levels of transit, such as City Centre.
- Tandem Parking Guidelines were first introduced in 1995, including a Development Variance Permit (DVP) requirement. These initial guidelines limited tandem parking to 20% of all units and doubled the visitor parking requirements for units with tandem parking (i.e. 0.4 spaces per unit).
- Current requirements were adopted in 1999 as part of the last major Zoning By-Law update. The DVP was removed. Tandem parking is permitted for townhouses, condominiums, apartments, and the RF-SD Zone. As with all previous guidelines, there are a number of conditions relating to: proximity to arterial roads, requirements to be enclosed and attached to each dwelling unit when the dwelling units are ground-oriented, ownership by the same owner, distance from entrances/exits/drive aisles, and size of stalls. There is no consideration of geographic location (e.g. adjacent land uses, transit, etc.) or extent (percentage of stalls that are tandem parking).
- Tandem parking has some parallels with RF-9 Zone small lots. The benefits of this include better use of the land base and affordability for consumers. Some potential disadvantages are the poor functionality and use of parking for storage, leading to higher on-street parking demands and resident frustrations.
- The City has engaged Bunt & Associates to conduct on-site and on-street parking surveys at a dozen "clusters" of sites with tandem parking in Fleetwood, Cloverdale, Newton and South Surrey. The number of cars on the surrounding street and the number of cars on unenclosed tandem spaces (drive pads) and in visitor parking were recorded. It was noted that:
 - unenclosed tandem spaces were not fully utilized for most sites;

- vehicles were observed parked illegally on-site, e.g. on strata roads;
 - visitor parking stalls appeared to be used by residents (> 50% at some sites); and
 - some sites experienced 85-100% on-street parking occupancy.
- A residential survey was also undertaken using the City's online engagement platform, City Speaks. 2,100 households with tandem parking were invited to participate in a tandem parking survey. Of the 220 responses, 60% of respondents indicated that they "disliked" or "strongly disliked" tandem parking, and 58% said they would not buy another home with tandem parking. Key themes were:
 - tandem parking is "inconvenient" for users;
 - neighbours use their garages for other purposes; and
 - lack of on-street parking becomes a livability issue.
- Four potential changes to the Zoning By-law were presented and subsequently discussed:
 - restrict tandem parking to ground-oriented townhouse units only;
 - re-introduce DVP requirement if the proportion of tandem parking exceeds 50%;
 - permit a maximum 70% tandem parking through DVP process; and
 - increase the visitor parking ratio (currently 0.2).
- Next steps include a Council Shirt Sleeve session, presentation to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and a By-law update with an accompanying Corporate Report.

Comments:

- Kevin Shoemaker estimated that there is a \$110,000 premium to have a side-by-side parking garage. For townhouses, common garage widths are 12 ft with the entry outside on the side, 15 ft with the entry on the inside, 20 ft, or 24 ft. The townhouse layout and price point is determined by the parking arrangement. Philip Bellefontaine responded that the Bunt survey found that 2 vehicle households are using the on-street parking supply to meet their needs. That supply is very fixed as there are such things as fire hydrants, etc., that have to be kept in mind. In this way, tandem parking can have an impact on livability. Kevin Shoemaker summarized the discussion that took place at a previous meeting with UDI regarding tandem parking, and provided additional cost estimates: Using the "best case" scenario of 70% tandem parking (as per the proposed changes) on a 1 acre site with 21 units per acre, there would be 14 units with tandem parking and 6 units with side-by-side parking. It was noted that more side-by-side units would affect the average unit price. Kevin Shoemaker will send his calculations to the DAC.
- Kevin Shoemaker indicated that developers have bought land with the assumption that they would be able to build up to 100% tandem parking.
- Kevin Shoemaker suggested that the 70% cap on tandem parking was not appropriate near future Light Rail Transit (LRT) stations because many people who live by LRT stations only have 1 car and/or use transit. Philip Bellefontaine responded that the City needs to be able to look at such locations and have a different attitude. Philip added that the City is also looking at parking requirement near frequent transit corridors as part of the broader parking review. There is currently a 20% relaxation for developments in City Centre, which is well-served by SkyTrain and bus service. Where there is good access to transit, there is potential to allow the cap for tandem parking to be exceeded, as another option. Kevin Shoemaker further commented that the immediate action should be grandfathering and no cap.
- Jeff Fisher commented that restricting tandem parking to ground-oriented townhouse units only does not seem to make sense.

- Kevin Shoemaker commented that prohibiting tandem parking in apartment buildings does not make sense. In underground parking, there are often some extra, leftover spaces. Also, there are some cases where another level of underground parking cannot be done because the development is in a floodplain area.
- Ted Dawson commented that tandem parking is an issue in specific areas. Not having a maximum makes sense in some areas like East Clayton but may not be appropriate for the entire city. For example, Dawson + Sawyer commissioned ICBC to find out how many cars there are per townhouse. Cathedral Grove in Morgan Heights has 1.5 cars/home. Taylor in Fleetwood has 1.24 cars/home. All townhouses average between 1.2 and 1.8 cars/home. Homes that are close to transit seem to have fewer cars per home. Chris Kay commented that when Taylor was constructed there was a perception in the neighbourhood that it flooded the area with cars but Dawson + Sawyer's statistics that state that only 24% of the 61 homes at Taylor had a second car show that tandem parking at Taylor was not the cause of the problem.
- Ted Dawson will send the DAC a copy of the results from their ICBC study.
- Ted Dawson commented that parking near transit should be metered.
- Ted Dawson commented that using garage space for storage is not specific to tandem development.
- Ted Dawson asked where small car parking is permitted on townhouse sites. He suggested that the City consider side-by-side parking with one small car space and one regular car space to help maintain the affordability of townhouse units. Charan Sethi commented that the City of Richmond allows this arrangement.
- Ted Dawson suggested that the City consider allowing some townhouse units to have only one parking space. Jaime Boan responded that there is a risk of one household member parking in the garage and another on the street. Ted suggested having meter parking on the street.
- Kevin Shoemaker commented that what the City is proposing is not in alignment with the sustainability objectives that it is promoting. Jean Lamontagne responded that affordability is an issue and we no longer do coach homes.
- Charan Sethi commented that about 23-25% of the parking spots in his apartment developments located near a transit hub are empty. His developments also have micro-suites. Transportation is having a big impact. Jaime Boan responded that the City has to find the right balance in preparing for future transit accessibility and having enough parking until then. The City has data for population growth and vehicle growth, and vehicle growth rate is outpacing population growth. Yes, there are less youth who are driving, but the City has to be careful not to eliminate parking too quickly. We do not want to have a shortage of parking in case the demand for parking does not decrease fast enough.
- Jean Lamontagne commented that permitting a maximum 70% tandem parking through the DVP process could potentially vary depending on the area in Surrey. Kevin Shoemaker suggested eliminating it altogether. Jaime Boan responded that City staff will put some further thought into the maximum, but there is risk in putting no limit.
- DAC members commented that developers should be able to justify why they should have 100% tandem parking without a DVP.
- Brad Jones suggested removing the proposed 70% tandem parking maximum and replacing it with a 50% tandem parking maximum, with the ability to go above that if the developer can prove to the City that it would work.

- Ted Dawson commented that the increase to the visitor parking ratio will have a huge impact on the developable site. Chris Kay commented that the current 0.2 requirement makes a difference. For example, a developer cannot quite fit those last few parking spots and, consequently, may have to eliminate a couple of units.
- Kevin Shoemaker asked if vehicles can be parked in the setbacks. Judith Robertson responded, no, only through DVPs.
- Nathan Hildebrand asked if the City has consulted with other cities. The Township of Langley is doing something similar. The Township of Langley leaves the issue to the market. People bought the land thinking they would be able to get a certain number of units.
- Mark Sakai commented that the proposed changes appear to be encouraging poor behaviour. People are using their garages for storage instead of parking there, and then are parking on the street instead. It does not make sense to be planning for lower car use while at the same time perpetuating a land use/housing form that will not fit what is being planned for the future. It seems political. On-street parking is a limited resource. Create residential permits for people to purchase if they want to park on the street.

4. Green Surrey Program (Jeff Arason, Utilities Manager)

- Jeff Arason provided an update on the Green Surrey Program. A copy of his presentation is attached.
- The City is in the process of delivering over 50 environmental initiatives that are aligned under the Environmental Pillar of the Sustainability Charter. Examples include: District Energy; Walking Plan, Cycling Plan & Greenways Plan; Street and Park Shade Tree Management Plan; Stewardship Programs: Eco-Rangers, SHaRP, SNAP and Operation Save H2O; and Density Bonusing Opportunities in the West Clayton NCP area.
- Given the number of environmentally related activities, with the nearing adoption of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy, Council has recently instructed staff to establish a delivery program called the Green Surrey Program. The delivery will be: a strong brand that can be used to promote and educate the community on the City's actions, and the identification of opportunities for community participation.
- Actions under the program will be categorized under 3 themes: Conservation, Investment, and Engagement. Actions under each theme can then be sub-categorized by their status: New, In-progress, and Completed.
- Conservation:
 - *New*: Biodiversity Conservation Strategy (Plan & Mapping); Riparian Area By-law; and Riparian and Environment Sensitive Development Permit areas.
 - *In-progress*: Density Bonusing Opportunities in the West Clayton NCP area; and Walking / Cycling / Greenways Plan.
 - *Completed*: Ecosystem Management Study; and Alternate Fuel Infrastructure at Service Stations.
- Investment:
 - *New*: New lands to be acquired for conservation in support of the Biodiversity Conservation Strategy.
 - *In-progress*: District Energy; Organic Biofuel Facility; Planting of the 75,000th street tree; Research Chair in Energy Systems for Smart Cities; and Fergus Creek Conservation Area.

- *Completed:* Acquisition of over 725 acres of Parkland in the last 10 years; Electric vehicle charging stations.
- Engagement:
 - *New:* Facilitating Eco-Gifting and Donations with non-governmental organizations.
 - *In-progress:* Annual Party for the Planet – Earth Day Celebrations; Stewardship Programs: SHaRP, SNAP and Operation Save H2O; and Surrey Nature Centre Educations Programs.
 - *Completed:* Broadening the Erosion and Sediment Control to the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Committee; EnergyShift; and Rethink Waste (Surrey’s Waste Action Program and Green Bricks B10cks).
- Rize’s Wave and Bosa’s University District are the first to hook up onto City’s District Energy system.
- Jeff Arason asked if there is anything the City can do in terms of a branding program that would be of interest to the DAC.

Comments:

- Kevin Shoemaker commented that in the early part of this decade, there was a real focus on “green” communities at builder trade shows, etc. However, it is really hard for developers to sell green homes. It is great that people will see that Surrey is a green community through its branding, but he does not see any link to developers. Jean Lamontagne responded that promoting Surrey’s Green Surrey Program will ultimately benefit development because it allows development to happen. Green space has historically been lost as a result of development, but green initiatives will allow development to happen more sustainably and, hence, gain more support from the community.
- Mark Sakai commented that he was on a committee that looked at getting carbon neutral. He agrees that the public does not see the economic value of a green home because the payback value is pretty long term. If you get public interest, then the builder will build it. Until the public values it, it is something that should be publicized. If the public gets to the point where they value energy efficiency, the industry will definitely build it. It will be an uphill battle. Jean Lamontagne responded that the building code also has green requirements.
- Charan Sethi commented that in Richmond, there was interest in the development of solar panel homes, but people would not pay \$1000 more per unit. Jeff Arason responded that could be because electricity is a cheap energy source.

5. Comments on the Market (All Members)

- Chris Kay. Seen a bit of an uptake in the past two weeks – about 2 sales/week. Units with tandem parking are some of the most popular homes.
- Ted Dawson. All the units with tandem parking are doing well. There is a market. Noticed that there are different buyers for different areas in Surrey.
- Nathan Hildebrand. Canadian Horizons does not have any projects in Surrey, yet. A project in another municipality is being delayed because of the upcoming municipal elections.
- Adam Donnelly. Wesgroup does not currently have any residential projects in Surrey, but it has industrial projects along South Fraser Perimeter Road.

- Mark Sakai. The Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association's survey is scheduled for release in September.
- Jeff Fisher. The Urban Development Institute breakfast is on September 16th. No update on the market.
- Brad Jones. There is a bit of a small uptake in the market. Supports tandem parking.
- Kevin Shoemaker. Sales are steady but marginal. In Delta, Polygon's Sunstone development will go weeks without selling anything and then sell like 5 at once. Nothing is really predictable.
- Charan Sethi. Tien Sher does not have much on the market now, just a few in Surrey. Financing is a challenge for buyers. About 60% are not able to get financing.

6. Next Scheduled Meeting – September 25, 2014

- The meeting adjourned at 4:29 p.m.