

MINUTES

Development Advisory Committee

File: 360-20 (DAC)
Date: September 25,
2014
Time: 2:30 p.m.
Location: Planning Room 1,
Surrey City Hall

Members:

Clarence Arychuk
Jeff Fisher
Steve Forrest
Dwight Heintz
Adrien Herberts
Roger Jawanda
Brad Jones
Jas Sandhu
Charan Sethi
Kevin Shoemaker

City Staff:

Tom Ainscough
Philip Bellefontaine
Jaime Boan
Megan Fitzgerald
Nicholas Lai
Jean Lamontagne
Sam Lau
Don Luymes
Fraser Smith
Fay Keng Wong

Regrets:

Adam Donnelly
Councillor Bruce Hayne

1. Previous Minutes

The notes of the June 26, 2014 meeting were accepted as distributed.

2. DAC Appointments to ADP (Tom Ainscough, City Architect)

- Tom Ainscough provided a brief update on recent DAC appointments to the City's Advisory Design Panel (ADP).
- Current ADP members have expired.
- The new DAC representatives on the ADP are Steve Forrest of Anthem Properties, who will represent the commercial perspective, and Marc MacCaull of Streetside Developments (a Qualico company), who will represent the residential perspective. Together, these representatives will provide a nice balance.
- The list of new ADP members will go to the November 3rd Council as an item.

3. Tandem Parking Study Follow-Up (Philip Bellefontaine, Transportation Planning Manager; Jaime Boan, Manager, Transportation)

- Philip Bellefontaine and Jaime Boan provided an update on the tandem parking review. Four potential changes to the Zoning By-law were presented and discussed at the last DAC meeting, including:
 - Restricting the proportion of tandem parking in underground parking facilities;
 - Reintroducing a DVP requirement if the proportion of tandem parking exceeds 50%;
 - Permitting a maximum of 70% tandem parking through the DVP process; and
 - Increasing the visitor parking ratio (currently 0.2).
- In discussion with members of Council, concerns were expressed about on-street parking issues in connection to tandem parking, and staff were asked to undertake further review, including a "hard cap" at a reduced percentage (i.e. less than 70% as previously discussed).

Comments:

- Clarence Arychuk asked if there were any projects or “test cases”. Philip Bellefontaine responded that Bunt & Associates had looked at on-street impacts to determine whether there was a relationship between parking issues and developments with a greater proportion of tandem units. Tandem parking was identified as a contributing factor in terms of on-street parking issues.
- Clarence Arychuk commented that even when developments have side-by-side parking, parking can still be an issue. Maybe it is a matter of the quantity of parking? Also, many people convert their garages to living space, not just tandem units. Side-by-side parking arrangements are not necessarily better. Jaime Boan responded that in the residential survey, the vast majority of respondents did not like tandem parking. Because of this, Council requested that Engineering investigate alternative parking arrangements.
- Roger Jawanda commented that the problem with tandem parking is the functionality. It is easier for people to park on the street. Philip Bellefontaine responded that it was found that a great majority of the people who have two cars make use of both parking spaces. Those with a single car are more likely to use their garage for storage because they do not need the second space for parking.
- Steve Forrest commented that there are cases where one parking space is in the driveway.
- Kevin Shoemaker commented that Polygon Homes surveys their homeowners after their purchase. People will quite often say that they do not like “this or that” if they are given the choice on a survey. Developers have to have tandem parking to allow affordability. Tandem parking seems to be only an issue in Surrey because he has not heard the issue in other municipalities, nor was it an issue at UBCM. Philip Bellefontaine responded that Maple Ridge is also looking at applying restrictions to tandem parking.
- Kevin Shoemaker commented that there are other forms of townhouses with double-garages (e.g. in an interlocking configuration) that can achieve similar densities as the tandem parking units; however, there are other issues associated with them. Kevin agreed to bring to the next meeting other options to avoid density loss with pros and cons of them.
- Jeff Fisher asked if tandem parking in other types of multi-family development (i.e. apartments) are still on the table. Jaime Boan responded that in apartment buildings and townhouse developments where underground parking is provided, tandem parking will be permitted but most likely limited to 10 percent.
- Jeff Fisher asked when City staff will be going back to Council with a Corporate Report. Jaime Boan responded that that is to be determined.
- Roger Jawanda commented that, in another municipality, Citiwest had a client who was originally planning for a lot of tandem parking but was required to provide a pad as well as tandem parking (3 parking spaces). The client changed to side-by-side parking.
- Steve Forrest commented that you cannot achieve density without tandem parking. It is a matter of compromise rather than taking it out altogether. Maybe, require a lesser percentage?
- Charan Sethi commented that if there is no parking available, people will adjust their transportation patterns. Sometimes these things get blown out of proportion. In Richmond, it was the third car that caused parking issues. Does Surrey have certain areas where tandem parking is an issue? Jaime Boan responded that in East Clayton, parking has been a problem since “Day 1”, but this is partly because the area is underserved by transit. There are also some complaints from parts of Newton and Fleetwood. Charan Sethi

commented that delays to transit service improvement should be considered in the development and planning phase.

- Clarence Arychuk asked if the grid system is a problem, and commented that the grid system takes away developable area so that higher densities cannot work. Are there opportunities to amend the Zoning By-law to create more room for parking in terms of the development permit guidelines, or maybe parking could be counted towards amenity space? Jaime Boan responded that East Clayton, which has a grid, has been very successful. You see a lot of people walking on the streets because it encourages walking, has easy access to transit, allows cycling, and provides parking with the ability to switch between queuing streets/parking on both sides and two-way travel with parking on one side. Don Luymes added that the parking issue in East Clayton was largely because houses had a secondary suite as well as a coach house, which put a stress on parking availability. Dwight Heintz commented that parking is also reduced when things that were previously stored in basements are moved to the garage when secondary suites are put in.
- Kevin Shoemaker asked if Council has been approached with examples of successful projects with tandem parking. Developments with 10 UPA seem to be fine and not have these issues. Are there other issues in these neighbourhoods that are causing the parking problem? It may not just be tandem parking. Megan Fitzgerald commented that it is not just on-site density, but also neighbouring uses which can have a cumulative effect.
- Roger Jawanda commented that in the past 12 years, the sidewalk has moved closer and closer to the property line so it takes away about 2 parking spaces. In the Clayton area, coach houses all have double suites. Jaime Boan responded that there is no question that suites are a factor and that a shift in the sidewalk location would not gain 2 parking stalls, it would also require a larger building setback which would affect house sizes. Don Luymes commented that this is not an issue in RF-12 neighbourhoods.
- Jeff Fisher asked about the rationale for a “hard cap”. Why implement it citywide? There should be a “soft cap” and then DVP criteria to help Council make adjustments to the maximum. The maximum can also be adjusted over time depending on what land is available.
- Kevin Shoemaker commented that at end of the day the industry will adjust.
- Jeff Fisher asked if UDI can have a discussion with the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (TIC). Jaime Boan confirmed this was possible. TIC often has delegations who speak at the meeting. Jeff Fisher will send a delegation request to TIC to Jaime.

4. New Staff Appointments (Jean Lamontagne, General Manager, Planning & Development Department)

- Mehran Nazeman is now Manager of the Building Division. George Fujii, the previous Manager of the Building Division, now works at the City of Vancouver.
- Fraser Smith is the new General Manger of the Engineering Department. Gerry McKinnon is the deputy General Manager of the Engineering Department until January 2015.

5. Comments on the Market (All Members)

- Steve Forrest. Everything is great. The market is very good, steady. August was a little slow. Everything is as scheduled. Seeing tightness on small properties due to people’s

affordability but surprisingly single family is doing better. Other markets, such as Calgary and Victoria, are also doing well.

- Jas Sandhu. The commercial side is still active. Was at the seminar about statistics in Canada. Vancouver has been very important for the retail market. There is a lot of investment from offshore.
- Brad Jones. Good summer. The market has been very good.
- Jeff Fisher. Good steady market.
- Roger Jawanda. There has been consistent work on the engineering side. Townhouses dropped off a bit so been focusing on single family.
- Clarence Arychuk. Townhouses have dropped. Continuing to do engineering work. Hunter Laird is in the process of changing its name. In January, its name will be WSP Consultants.
- Dwight Heintz. Been pretty solid. The phone is ringing consistently. Some small projects. A lot of enthusiasm in the market.
- Tim Bontkes. Infinity Group of Companies has a couple of sites that are selling single family. If they have lots available, there are lineups. All markets in the Lower Mainland, such as Prince George and Squamish, are doing well.
- Adrien Herberts. Mosaic Homes has a project, York. Some buyers are jumping to the larger townhouses. Steady market.
- Charan Sethi. Tien Sher Group of Companies does not have many units left. They are planning their fourth building at the Quattro site. Market prices are increasing as investment from China increases. One of his colleagues was offered \$28,000 per unit when the rate was \$20,000 per unit. Own a lot of land in City Centre, but this area is not as successful as Richmond.
- Kevin Shoemaker. The market is doing good. Vancouver's market is about \$83,000 per unit. On the construction side, it is difficult to get a deal going. Construction costs have increased. Steel costs have increased by 20%. Clarence Arychuk agreed, commenting that tenders for civil work and erosion and sediment control management have increased, but there are seasonal costs, too.
- Jean Lamontagne noted that there have been some changes to the Council Meeting Schedule. There will be only one Council meeting each in October and November.

6. Other Business

- Kevin Shoemaker commented that Letters of Credits are still a “nightmare” and he wants to focus on getting them accepted and getting them back. When his company does a development in riparian areas, there is a 5-year obligation. They have a \$2 million bond that the City is holding for 5 years. Is there a way to reduce this? Also, double bonding on riparian areas is an issue – the bond for riparian areas and P15 works. The length of the bond is definitely a problem. Sam Lau will look into the double bonding but does not think the City is double bonding for similar works. (After the meeting, Sam Lau confirmed with Kevin Shoemaker that there was no double-bonding. Sam Lau is following up with Parks and Realty.)
- Clarence Arychuk commented that the City will not allow partial security release. (After the meeting, Sam Lau requested Clarence Arychuk to provide information for follow-up. The issue is related to Erosion and Sediment Control and Jeff Arason provided Clarence Arychuk with an email response on October 6, 2014.)

- Brad Jones. There was a case where the city mailed the bond to Toronto. That is something that could be fixed and save 7 days. (After the meeting, Sam Lau requested Brad Jones to provide information for follow-up.)
- Jeff Fisher. Hoping there will be some news about the transportation referendum. Want to get an update when it comes up (the thought is that it will start running in January 2015).

7. Next Scheduled Meeting – October 23, 2014

- The meeting adjourned at 4:01 p.m.