

**MINUTES
PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

Held at Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room #2
APRIL 9, 2015

Present: Chair: Councillor Haynes

Members: Bill Mumford, Blair Echlin, Suzanne Bartel, Jeremy Krogh, Andrea Mercer, Travis Lee, John Schmuck, Mayor Atwell (Ex-officio)

Staff: Elizabeth van den Hengel, Committee Clerk

Guests: Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director, Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness; Rob Wickson, Community Advocates for Reduced Speed; Dave Ferguson, Community Advocates for Reduced Speed; Paul Johnson, Bob and Katie Etheridge, Marsha Henderson (SCAN), Mark Vogel, Leslie Laird, Haupt Irenc, Raymond Boucher, J. Bennett

Absent: June Klassen

MINUTES

MOVED by J. Schmuck and seconded by B. Mumford, "That the minutes of the Planning, Transportation and Economic Development Advisory Committee meeting held March 12, 2015 be adopted as circulated."

CARRIED

GREATER VICTORIA COALITION TO END HOMELESSNESS

The Chair introduced Mr. Andrew Wynn-Williams, Executive Director, Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness. Mr. Wynn-Williams provided the Committee with an update on Housing and Homelessness in Greater Victoria and the following was noted:

- There is fluidity within the homeless population. There are four categories of homelessness:
 - Unsheltered: Absolutely homeless and living on the streets or in other places not for habitation.
 - Emergency sheltered: Overnight shelters for the homeless and those impacted by family violence.
 - Provisionally accommodated: Refers to those whose accommodation is temporary.
 - At Risk: Housed precariously or unsafely.
- Significant housing shortages exist in Greater Victoria for those with lower incomes.
- The shortage of affordable housing is the key driver of homelessness in the region. The shortage of affordable housing is also referred to as the structural driver of homelessness.
- Since 2006 cost of bachelor suite has increased by 30% and the shelter rate from the government has remained unchanged at \$375 per month.
- Cost of providing affordable housing will be less than the cost of managing homelessness as a crisis.
- Investing in affordable housing could potentially generate a per person savings of 41% per year.

- Federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments could commit to funding the minimum 250 units of supportive housing required to address those most at need in Greater Victoria.
- Federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments could commit to funding an additional 500 units of supportive housing that could be converted into subsidized, affordable housing should further supportive housing not be required.
- Federal, provincial, regional and municipal governments could implement coordinated affordable housing strategies that increase the market supply of both non-market affordable and market affordable housing in Greater Victoria by 1,500 units.

Committee discussion occurred and the following was noted:

- A supportive community is a vital link in creating additional affordable housing. Education is needed to combat the NIMBY concerns that neighbourhoods frequently bring forward when an affordable housing project is proposed in their area.
- It has been shown that the closer a neighbourhood is to an affordable housing development; the lower the crime rate, and property values often increase as affordable housing developments are frequently built in tired areas and the neighbourhood is revitalized with addition of the affordable housing project.
- Funding reductions in 1989 by the Federal Government has negatively impacted the housing crisis.
- Vancouver Island Health has a successful program called Assertive Community Treatment (ACT). This program utilizes intensive case management team supports to assist the homeless with mental health and/or substance abuse issues.
- The homeless with chronic mental health issues and/or substance abuse issues are the most visible homeless demographic.
- Greater Victoria is the fifth worst community in Canada for rental unit vacancies.
- Should the Island Health Authority be responsible for some of the homelessness housing cost as many homeless have medical/mental health/addiction issues which contribute to their homelessness?
- United Way currently the major funder for middle level supports.
- Long-term projection for housing needs is to first deal with the housing backlog and then the turnover of 10-15%. Goal is to have no one sheltered for longer than a couple of weeks.
- Salt Lake City, Utah and Medicine Hat, Alberta have the best supportive housing programs.
- Within Saanich many are wondering what is happening within the municipality with respect to densification and infrastructure.
- Some very successful private affordable housing projects. The Traveller's Inn project is tremendously successful and was built without any public money.
- Capital investment tends to go to the municipality/region with the least resistance to development. If Saanich could offer developers more certainty and have permitting process completed in a timely manner more capital investment could be attracted.

Mr. Wynn-Williams was thanked for his presentation.

TRAFFIC FLOWS AND SAFETY ON RESIDENTIAL ROADS

The Chair introduced Mr. R. Wickson, Community Advocates for Reduced Speed. Mr. Wickson gave a presentation on reducing the default speed limit in residential areas to 30 km/hr. The following was noted:

- Approximately 85% of the roads in Saanich are residential roads.
- Currently Saanich has a 50 km/hr default speed limit for residential roads.
- The 50 km/hr default speed limit is better suited to rural roads.
- Currently 220 km of sidewalks are needed within Saanich.
- Sidewalks often allow for faster vehicle speed as it removes pedestrians from the road. This results in vehicles travelling at even greater speeds.
- CARS is advocating for Saanich to reset the default speed limit on residential roads to 30km/hr. The new lower default speeds can be posted with a traffic sign as illustrated by the Highlands District and the Town of Sidney.
- On main arterial roads the speed limit could remain at 50 km/hr. This would encourage cars to remain on the main arterials and not be driving at high speeds through residential neighbourhoods.
- The University of Victoria could be approached to assist with a study of reducing Saanich default speed limits within residential areas.

Committee discussion occurred and the following was noted:

- Streets for speed reduction pilot studies should be identified.
- Reviewing the results from the speed limit reduction project undertaken by the City of Victoria should be done once the outcomes of the project are available.
- Representatives from the City of Victoria, The Highlands and the Town of Sidney could be invited to present on their experiences with the speed limit reduction projects.
- Many people seem to be advocating for speed limit reductions on residential roads.
- Quadra Street has been mentioned numerous times as a possible road for consideration for a speed limit reduction.
- There are many issues in the Gorge Tillicum area with excessive speed and limited enforcement.
- Saanich bylaws require vastly overbuilding of car parking stalls/spots.
- Unbundling parking from development requirements should be investigated by Saanich.
- Saanich should revisit parking and bicycle parking bylaws.
- If the default speed limit is reduced it will take time for a shift in public behaviour.

The Committee thanked Mr. Wickson for his presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 6:35 pm

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is scheduled for May 14, 2015.

I hereby certify these minutes are accurate.

Committee Secretary