

MINUTES
HOUSING STRATEGY TASK FORCE
Saanich Municipal Hall, Council Chambers
Via Electronic Communications
February 11, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

Present: Chair de Vries and Vice Chair Harper

Staff: Cameron Scott, Manager, Community Planning; Current Planning; Nadine Kawata, Planner, Community Planning; Matt Blakely, Planning Technician, Community Planning; and Tara Da Silva, Senior Committee Clerk

Facilitators: Lani Brunn, Lead Facilitator, CitySpaces; Julia Bahen, Facilitator, CitySpaces

Members: E. Dahli; S. Dutchak; C. Forester; E. Gibson; G. Gillespie; M. Holland; R. Kelley; L. Mari; M. Poirier; D. Posavad; J. Reilly; L. Spalteholz; K. Wiseman;

Regrets: E. Dahli; C. Friesen; J. Tarbotton; V. Wynn-Williams

CALL TO ORDER

Chair de Vries called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

CHAIR'S REMARKS

- A reminder was given that the meetings are being webcast and about Saanich's Respectful Workplace Policy. This meeting's focus is Uptown Douglas Plan, focus areas, principles and strategies, and consolidated actions.

UPDATED PRINCIPLES

- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**
Current and future residents should have access to safe, secure, and affordable housing across the District. Encourage equity, diversity, and inclusion when addressing housing needs. Foster the right mix of housing to support resilient communities with strong connections between people, places, and the broader community.
- **Environmental, Economic, and Social Sustainability**
Access to suitable and affordable housing should align with and support equitable access to jobs, education, community amenities, and opportunities for economic prosperity for people of all ages, incomes, abilities, and backgrounds. Housing solutions should support climate action, reduce risks associated with a changing climate, and improve quality of life for residents.
- **Well-being and Security**
Housing is first and foremost about homes, the security of tenure, while also providing a foundation for a sense of belonging in the District. A healthy housing spectrum is a benefit to all residents. When the supply of housing is insufficient there are negative consequences felt across the health, social services, education, and justice systems.
- **Resilience and Innovation**
Embrace adaptability when responding to housing needs and emergent housing issues, both expected and unexpected. Base housing actions on best practices and analyze outcomes to ensure that the intended purpose is achieved. Support the housing sector's commitment to innovation, creativity, and new approaches to housing.

- **Responsiveness**
Support the housing development process through timeliness and responsiveness to applications and through policies to support increased certainty. Create and update policy frameworks in order to adapt to dynamic housing needs. This responsiveness is an essential component for Saanich to build a community with diverse housing opportunities that meets the needs of current and future residents.
- **Partnerships**
Partnerships are essential for achieving these guiding principles. Work towards improving housing outcomes through a collaborative approach with the non-profit sector, community partners, private sector, local organizations, all levels of government, and the community at large.

MOVED by J. Reilly and Seconded by L. Spalteholz: “That the Task Force endorse the updated Principles as presented.”

CARRIED

UPDATE ON THE PRIORITIZATION AND SURVEY RESULTS

- The Task Force was presented with an updated Prioritization spreadsheet and the survey results.
- Regarding homelessness being a new focus area, three were in support, seven replied in the negative and five were unsure.
- For this strategy, affordability is defined as spending less than 30% of your income on housing; this will be outlined in the strategy.
- Top 10 Actions identified:
 - Amend the Zoning Bylaw or pre-zone to allow ground-oriented infill housing such as duplexes, tri-plexes, four-plexes, and townhouses in single-family residential areas within the Urban Containment Boundary.
 - Complete a Development Process Review (DPR) that will assess Current Planning Division’s practices and procedures to implement improvements to the approval process, with a key goal to reduce application processing times. The review will focus on Rezoning, Form and Character Development Permits, and Development Variance Permits and account for the needs of all parties involved in these important land use processes.
 - Review and amend the Official Community Plan (OCP) to support the Housing Strategy’s implementation, aligning policies and Development Permit Guidelines with Housing Strategy objectives.
 - Identify potential surplus Saanich-owned properties that partners could utilize for the development of affordable or supportive housing.
 - Identify and develop tools – such as policies, zoning amendments, or design guidelines – to make it easier to build ground-oriented infill through a Missing Middle Housing Policy and Zoning Amendments.
 - In alignment with the DPR, develop a clear and transparent program to prioritize affordable housing projects by reducing approval times for applications that met a defined list of criteria and simplifying processes.
 - Undertake a comprehensive review of the Zoning Bylaw's parking requirements to reduce barriers to the development of affordable housing, rental housing, and infill/multi-family housing.
 - Create opportunities for small apartments on single-family lots by establishing a new zone.
 - When implementing the DPR, consider streamlining the development application process with an online “one-stop-shop” approach that provides self-serve functions, includes online applications and plan submission, and delivers an open

- data format with schedules available for public viewing.
- o Facilitate affordable housing development by clarifying and creating new financial incentives such as grants, reduced permitting fees, Affordable Housing Fund and property tax exemptions.

UPDATE ON NEW FOCUS AREA

MOVED by L. Spalteholz and Seconded by R. Kelley: “That the Task Force endorse the revised new focus area on Understanding Housing Demand and Addressing Land and Speculation the associated actions as amended.”

CARRIED

MOVED by M. Holland and Seconded by G. Gillespie: “That the Task Force endorse the revised new focus areas and strategies as circulated.”

CARRIED

MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by L. Spalteholz: “That the Task Force adopts the revised actions and priority levels as amended.”

CARRIED

MOVED by M. Holland and Seconded by R. Kelley: “That the Task Force endorse the Top 10 Priorities as presented.”

CARRIED

MOVED by G. Gillespie and Seconded by D. Posavad: “That the Task Force recommends a district-wide approach to housing issues and implementing the Housing Strategy that includes but is not limited to updating Saanich’s planning framework through an update to the Official Community Plan and a district-wide approach to local area planning.”

CARRIED

MOVED by M. Holland and Seconded by E. Gibson: “That the Task Force recommends that the Housing Strategy be a living document with a yearly review.”

CARRIED

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 pm.

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY