

MINUTES
MAYOR'S STANDING COMMITTEE ON HOUSING
AFFORDABILITY AND SUPPLY
Saanich Municipal Hall, Committee Room No. 2
Monday, October 21, 2019 at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Mayor Haynes and Councillors de Vries (8:37 a.m), Mersereau and Plant
Staff: Paul Thorkelsson, Chief Administrative Officer; Sharon Hvozdzanski, Director of Planning; Cameron Scott, Manager of Community Planning; and Lynn Merry, Senior Committee Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Haynes called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Potential Discussion Topics for the Committee

With respect to the memo dated October 15, 2019, Councillor Mersereau made the following comments:

- This could be the opportunity for staff to apprise the committee of any work currently underway in terms of housing-related priorities.
- The committee could explore opportunities to improve housing affordability and supply.
- It may be a useful exercise to have a wide discussion on potential topics of interest.

The Director of Planning made the following comments with respect to the list of Potential Topics of Discussion:

- Initial reports regarding “inclusionary zoning practices and policies” and “community amenity contribution practices and policies” are underway and will be brought to Council in approximately Q4 2019/Q1 2020 requesting Council’s input and direction if/how they wish to proceed.
- A report on the proposed options to improve the development review process was brought forward to the previous Council and a second report is forthcoming in Q1 2020 for consideration and direction; with respect to the forthcoming report, Council may wish to pursue items that the previous Council did not and there will be additional items that could be considered.

The CAO stated:

- There may be interest in amending the Delegation Authorization Bylaw but there are statutory decisions that cannot be delegated.

Discussion ensued with members of the committee making the following comments:

- Authority could be delegated for the approval of garden suites.
- The Province’s new Development Approval Review report may be a useful resource and could help to clarify what can and cannot be delegated.

The Director of Planning continued reviewing the list of options and made the following comments:

- As a result of a significant amount of community consultation, and as a part of the Local Area Plan and quarterly plan updates, the Cadboro Bay and Cordova Bay Local Area Plans and the Uptown Douglas Corridor Plan will come to Council in early 2020.
- The Capital Regional District’s (CRD) Housing Needs Assessment could be considered a resource.

- The role of the Community Associations beyond the development application referral process, is not something the Planning Department would typically address.
- Public engagement is done at the community planning level; the community typically has a better sense of buy-in to projects in which they have consulted on.
- A Service Delivery Review for Current Planning could look at whether or not community consultation is done throughout the development process.
- The Terms of Reference for the Service Delivery Review could be brought to the Committee/Council in early 2020.
- The key group to provide information on population growth projections and housing type trends/forecasts is the CRD; once that information is received, a gap analysis could be prepared; in terms of the gap analysis, staff can provide further information at the November committee meeting on how the data will be collected and how the project will be undertaken.
- Currently, in the Official Community Plan (OCP), there is the ability to density bonus.
- Information on what is currently being done with respect to facilitating increases in height and density in designated zones will be brought forward for the November committee meeting.
- Although there have been significant changes to the Zoning Bylaw over the years, the documents where you see the biggest changes in terms of height and density, are the OCP including the Local Area Plans (LAPs).
- Changes to the Zoning Bylaw may result in properties being legal non-conforming; if there was significant damage to a building that was legal non-conforming, there could be issues with insurance and what a property owner may have the right to rebuild.

The Manager of Community Planning stated:

- A structured amenity system would provide clarity to developers on how they could build to the maximum height for the zone based on the community amenities provided.

The Director of Planning continued reviewing the list and made the following comments:

- A pre-zoning pilot study will be proposed as part of the Uptown Douglas Corridor Plan. Relationships exist with BC Housing and the non-profit community.
- Options to increase the housing supply within existing single family footprints have/are being considered such as garden suites, secondary suites, small lot zoning, and lock off and micro units.
- Although maybe not financially viable for a property owner, creation of smaller strata units within an existing home could be considered.

MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: "That public input be permitted at this time."

CARRIED

A. Cooper, Sea Wood Terrace stated:

- Increased density should be considered on major collector roads and close to major centres; those corridors play a critical role in public transit and are generally in close proximity to schools and parks.
- It may be difficult to dislodge existing commercial space in a village centre to build housing.

The Director of Planning stated:

- In addition to "Centres" and "Villages", key corridors designated through a formal planning process such as the Shelbourne Valley Corridor Plan and the upcoming Quadra Corridor Plan are already accounted for in the OCP.
- If we don't keep the projected population growth focused we risk not achieving sustainable, cost effective and vibrant "Centres", "Villages" and designated corridors.

V. Sanders, Stan Wright Lane stated:

- Because of the age of some of the larger homes, they may not be suitable for suites.

The Director of Planning continued reviewing the list and made the following comments:

- Amenity contributions do take into consider neighbourhoods' needs.
- The City of Victoria has a beautification fund that looks at the green features to make the development an interesting and dynamic place to live.

Discussion ensued with committee members making the following comments:

- The committee could send a letter to the University of Victoria and Camosun College to encourage them to look at additional on campus housing.

The Director of Planning continued reviewing the list and made the following comments:

- "Planning 101" and "Q & A" sessions with Community Associations and other groups are undertaken by staff as time permits.

Discussion ensued with committee members making the following comments:

- It is important to educate the public that LAPs are guidelines that inform the Official Community Plan.

A. Cooper, Sea Wood Terrace stated:

- It may be appropriate to consider an amendment to the OCP that contemplates up to six storeys; now that wood frame is permitted, six storeys is considered mid-rise by the development industry.

Discussion ensued with committee members making the following comments:

- Although there may not be land to build new rental housing stock, there may be the opportunity to renovate old buildings.

MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: "That it be recommended that the memo from Councillor Mersereau dated October 15, 2019 be received and that the minutes reflecting the discussion around this memo include the tentative dates identified by staff that the reports would be brought to Council."

MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: "That the motion be amended to add "understanding that these dates are estimates."

The Amendment was CARRIED

The Main Motion, as Amended, was CARRIED

2. A Saanich Housing Strategy: Discussion Questions and Possible Resources

Discussion ensued with committee members making the following comments:

- Pursuing a Saanich Housing Strategy, which would capture ideas and policy initiatives, would be worthwhile.
- It may be appropriate to wait until the Strategic Plan is complete as there may be interplay between the two documents.

The Director of Planning stated:

- Planning staff resources for a Saanich Housing Strategy would be available. There would be a need for some funding for production of materials, advertisement, Open House venues, etc. for the work to be undertaken.

MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: "That it be recommended that the memo dated October 15, 2019 entitled "A Saanich Housing Strategy: Discussion Questions and Possible Resources" be referred to a future committee meeting."

CARRIED

NEXT MEETING

Monday, November 4, 2019 at 8:30 a.m. in Committee Room No. 2

MOVED by Councillor Plant and Seconded by Councillor Mersereau: "That the meeting be adjourned at 9:52 a.m."

CARRIED

CHAIR

I hereby certify these Minutes are accurate.

COMMITTEE SECRETARY