MINUTES of the Workshop of the Council for The Corporation of the District of North Vancouver held in the Committee Room of the Municipal Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, B.C. on September 17, 2007, commencing at 6:40 p.m.

PRESENT:

Mayor: Richard Walton

Councillors: Janice Harris, Robin Hicks, Mike Little, Doug MacKay-Dunn, Alan Nixon

Staff: Mr. J. Dioszeghy, Director of Environment, Parks & Engineering Services
Ms M. Eckenfelder, Director of Sustainability, Planning and Building
Ms S. Dal Santo, Manager - Corporate Planning & Projects
Mr. B. Dwyer, Manager-Development Services
Ms S. Rogers, Section Manager-Parks Planning
Mr. R. Boase, Environment Protection Officer
Mr. A. Vander Helm, Environmental Control Technician
Ms L. Brick, Council Clerk

Absent: Councillor Lisa Muri

1. OPENING BY MAYOR

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting and advised that the purpose of this Workshop was for Council to receive information on the proposed Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw and the Lynn Valley Master Plan Charrette Process. Mayor Walton clarified the procedures for the Council Workshop and invited members of the public to engage Council in discussion after the presentations by staff.

2. TREES

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Ms Margaret Eckenfelder introduced Mr. Richard Boase, Environment Protection Officer, who will be discussing the science and protection of trees and Mr. Andrew Vander Helm, Environmental Control Technician, who will be discussing the proposed changes to the Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw.

Mr. Boase spoke to his September 17, 2007 PowerPoint presentation entitled “Trees in the District of North Vancouver; Protecting a Legacy or a Legacy of Protection?”

Trees provide a positive influence on health and property. The North Shore is experiencing significant residential re-development and an increasing number of healthy trees are being removed which may have an impact on our communities forested character. Mr. Boase and staff feel it is time to again ask the question of our residents “What type of forest canopy and tree protection will the District require to help protect the community from changing weather patterns.”

A 2002 study of rainfall extremes and climatic trends across metro Vancouver including the North Shore predicted a significant change in North Shore rainfall patterns; the study indicates there will be a decrease in summer rainfall and an increase in winter rain storms. A larger forest canopy
on both public and private properties will help to buffer North Shore lands from the impacts of a climate predicted to change. These climatic changes could lead to increased levels of flood, debris flow and other slope related hazards, and an increase in erosive stream flow in the winter. The study also predicted hotter, dryer summers which could lead to increasing water shortages, decreasing baseflow for streams and declining air quality.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- tree canopy research data suggests smaller trees (40 cm in diameter) are just as important to our community as larger trees (75 cm or greater) from a water perspective.
- staff will engage public by building upon the 1998 tree survey; discussion to include at what point does the public view a tree as a community asset vs. private property asset.
- possible amendment to Council Policy 13-5280-1 to change Section 3 from unanimous consent to the consent of the majority of stakeholders.
- more authority to be given to staff to decide on trees permits were the work meets certain economic or environmental objectives.
- tree permit applications denied by staff to be possibly forwarded to the Board of Variance to determine hardship further investigation will be done.
- current trend is towards the redevelopment of single family lots and there is now a greater and more rapid loss of significant trees to make way for newer and larger houses.
- trees are a legitimate source control tool to limit the water volume and intensity of runoff entering the storm sewer system.
- trend is towards removing smaller trees before they reach the permit size, in some cases leaving single permit size trees susceptible to blow down.

Mr. Vander Helm spoke to his September 17, 2007 Power Point presentation entitled “Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw”.

The current bylaw:

- difficult to find tree regulations in the Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw.
- terminology and definitions are outdated.
- compliance is difficult to enforce under current system.
- does not provide a clear definition of when a permit is to be issued.

The proposed Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw:

- will be separate from the current Environmental Protection and Preservation Bylaw.
- to include a “Critical Root Zone” to ensure the safety and health of tree during construction.
- protect birds and nests during the nesting season.
- will include separate tree, soil and aquatic area sections – a family of bylaws for ease of reference.
- will provide staff the ability to deny an application for tree permit under certain conditions; will also provide members of the public a route for reconsideration in hardship cases.
- will remove the heritage stump permit requirement on private property only.

Mr. Vander Helm advised staff is investigating the possibility of establishing an exceptional tree inventory in the GIS database. Development of this database would establish criteria for designation to the inventory then locate and document the characteristics of exceptional trees such as old growth or heritage trees. A provision would also be provided to add new records (trees) to this database in the future.
Mr. Vander Helm discussed recent changes to the treatment of trees during development and provided 3 options to consider improving protection.

- Covenants – used historically, currently not in use.
- Retained tree category for inclusion into the bylaw.
- Reduce size of tree in the Tree bylaw to cover smaller trees (possibly designating important species.)

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

- Rainstorm protection can be offered by smaller trees as well as hedges and bushes
- Critical root zone protection is required to ensure the continued good health of trees after development has taken place
- Consultation with and education of homeowners should be done before construction begins near trees
- Clarifying existing bylaw will simplify procedure and improve protection of trees and compliance by homeowners
- Guiding statements included in bylaw to assist in interpreting actions in the field

DIRECTION TO STAFF

Staff was directed to move forward with the proposed bylaw and the provisions therein. Staff was further requested to update the previous tree survey and incorporate tree questions into the Lynn Valley OCP review. Proposed bylaw will be compared to the Natural Steps Principles.

Mayor Walton thanked Mr. Richard Boase and Mr. Andrew Vander Helm for their presentations to Council.

At this point in the proceedings the Mayor called for a five minute recess. The meeting resumed at 9:20 pm.

3. LYNN VALLEY MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Ms Margaret Eckenfelder introduced Ms Sarah Dal Santo, Manager - Corporate Planning & Projects, who spoke to her September 17, 2007 PowerPoint presentation entitled “Update on the Lynn Valley Town Centre Charrette Process”.

Ms Dal Santo advised that the upcoming Lynn Valley Master Plan Charrette process will be taking place on September 27, 28 October 1, 2; there will be a public open house on September 29 and a public presentation of charrette results is scheduled for October 2.

To ensure multistakeholder constitution and productivity the teams have been limited to small groups of approximately 8-10 participants per focus group.

The team focus areas are divided up as follows:

- Go Team will focus on transportation, transit and road network, pedestrian and bicycle systems, parking;
• Home Team will focus on housing types and form, affordability and community services and ways to integrate into existing community;

• Green Team will focus on public open and gathering spaces, low impact infrastructure designs and green buildings and infrastructure network;

• Work Team will focus on mixed use retail, office, service and facilities, and most efficient way of integrating new uses with surrounding neighbourhood.

COUNCIL DISCUSSION

• Object of process is to meet the needs of the residents of the community closer to home.
• This step in the planning process will be critical to tying all the recent changes of the community together
• A balance must be maintained between providing lower income and affordable homes and low to mid density housing in neighbourhood
• Part of the charrette is to test the feelings of the community regarding density and height of new developments
• Staff feel this process will govern what happens on private property and will be developer driven

Staff will bring forward a report requesting funding for implementation in the 2008 budget process once an assessment has been done regarding the next steps in the project.

Mayor Walton thanked Ms Sarah Dal Santo and staff for their presentation to Council.

4. ADJOURNMENT

The workshop adjourned at 9:49 p.m.

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Committee Clerk