



Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee

Date: Tuesday, January 11th, 2005
Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall
Present: Councillor Harold Steves, Chair
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Bill McNulty
Absent: Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt, Vice-Chair
Also Present: Councillor Rob Howard
Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MINUTES

1. The minutes of the meeting of the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee held on Tuesday, November 23rd, 2004, were referred to the January 25th, 2005 Committee meeting.

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES DIVISION

2. **TRAM ROUTING OPTIONS**
(Report: November 5/2004, File No.: 10-6510-05-01/2004-Vol01) (REDMS No. 1351855)

Mr. Carl Hibbert, a Richmond resident for 30 years, spoke in support of the tram, and the opportunity to connect the wonderful heritage sites in the Steveston area. Mr. Hibbert said that he felt it would be selfish to block access to that experience, and he spoke about the inclusion of the tram in the overall plan for the area. Mr. Hibbert asked Council to live up to that commitment and make the tram a reality.

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Ms. Gail McLeod, 4388 Bayview St., spoke in opposition to the proposed tram. Ms. McLeod, a Nelson resident for a number of years, cited the differences between the Nelson tram and the proposed Steveston tram, and in particular that the Nelson tram did not run through residential areas. Ms. McLeod also spoke about possible liability and loss prevention issues that could be associated with the tram.

Mr. Alan Williams, #224-12639 No. 2 Road, read a written submission, a copy of which is attached as Schedule 1 and forms a part of these minutes.

Mr. Dana Westermark, 13333 Princess St., spoke about the planning issues of Steveston in general, including the proposal for the redevelopment of the Maritime Mixed Use lands and the addition of significant commercial space in the Steveston core, and noted that although existing businesses in Steveston do well during the summer months, they suffer during the rest of the year. Mr. Westermark felt that by linking the heritage sites and promoting familiarity with the area, visitors would be more inclined to return to the area outside of the peak season, which would have a positive effect on the viability of the community; that parking during peak periods would be alleviated by the tram; and, that routing options other than along the waterfront existed.

Mr. Westermark then, in response to questions of Council, elaborated on various aspects of the costing for the project, and the commitment of the Richmond Railroad Heritage Society in securing funds to build and operate the tram.

Ms. Monique Thompson, 4500 Westwater Drive, said that she was opposed to the proposed route for many reasons, but in particular because it would be unsightly and noisy, and would result in safety issues due to the proximity of the proposed route to residential areas. Ms. Thompson also spoke about the responsibility that would be undertaken by the volunteers that would operate the tram, and questioned who would own the tram, and be responsible for its maintenance. Ms. Thompson expressed her concerns regarding the 2004 survey, which had provided a choice of route, but not a yes/no to the tram in general. Further to this, Ms. Thompson indicated that 80% of residents had said no to the tram, including one petition of 1200 names, and that this had been ignored at the last meeting. Ms. Thompson felt that as density continued to increase along the waterfront and in downtown Steveston the downtown businesses would benefit and would not need to cater to tourists. A small ferry from Cannery Row to London Farm was then suggested as an attractive option that would be more in keeping with Steveston's heritage as a fishing village. In conclusion, Ms. Thompson said that the Steveston waterfront was the only safe place to walk and bike, and for children to play, and she asked that Council leave it that way.

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Mr. Sean Lawson, 11660 – 6th Avenue, a Steveston resident and business owner, a past member of the now defunct Parking Task Force, and a past Director of the Steveston Historical Railroad Society, spoke about the history of the rezoning of the BC Packers lands, and the number of references within that history to the tram. Mr. Lawson said that now that the density is in place it would be unfair to strip the amenities out of the plan. Mr. Lawson felt that the tram would be well used, and would that it would take the ambience of the Steveston Village to a new level and that the connection of the heritage sites would raise the profile of those sites. Mr. Lawson then spoke about a parking utilization study, and he cited capacity figures for the Steveston downtown core.

Ms. A. Coblin, 12531 Alliance Drive, spoke about the costs to build and maintain the tram, and the negative affect the proposed route would have on a peaceful area, and she questioned how the proposal fit within the shared vision that Steveston remain a peaceful and scenic community. Ms. Coblin agreed that boats such as those used at False Creek and Granville Island in Vancouver would accomplish the needs of the community and businesses alike, as well as address the needs of tourism.

Mr. R. Coblin, 12531 Alliance Drive, a Steveston resident for 5 years, said that the beautiful view he currently enjoyed of the Britannia Heritage Shipyard, and the peacefulness of the area, would be destroyed if the tram were to go through. Mr. Coblin expressed concern about the safety of children, including those of Homma School, and he asked that the proposed routes be scrapped.

Mr. Larry Biggar, 10011 Swift Lane, a Richmond realtor who was involved in the development of Steveston Landing, and a board member of the Gulf of Georgia Society, spoke about the opposition that was initially directed at the development of Steveston Landing, a development now embraced by the community. Mr. Biggar said that the history of Richmond was dated in decades, and that if built, the tram, which would have a minimal impact on the residents of Steveston, would be a piece of rolling history that would link other pieces of history. It was suggested that another route be sought, and harder facts because to dismiss the tram would be an insult to the hundreds of volunteers that provided an opportunity for the tram to become a reality.

Mr. Bob Butterworth, 12911 Railway Avenue, a Steveston resident for over 30 years, was not in favour of the tram. Mr. Butterworth spoke about the many meetings, between 1995 and 2000, that had been held in an effort to define the Steveston waterfront, and the proposed changes to the open, peaceful area that could make it dangerous with incurred liability issues. Mr. Butterworth suggested that if the tram was wanted it could become a tourism office at No. 1 Road and Moncton Street, or it could be run along Railway Avenue as part of the RAV line.

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Ms. Gail Nichols spoke in opposition of the tram as it would pass within 20 feet of her home. Ms. Nichols said that not all of those in opposition were new residents in the area; and, that the BC Packers plan had indicated that the tram would only extend as far as Railway Avenue, and not to London Farm.

Mr. Roy Akune, 4500 Westwater Drive, in representation of the Westwater Drive - Copper Sky Development as Chairman of the West building, said that as a collective unit, the owners were vehemently opposed to the tram as it was not required or essential to Steveston. Mr. Akune said that he was not opposed to heritage sites in general, and that as many as possible should be retained, but that he was opposed to those that would destroy the ambience of a particular area, as would be the result of the proposed tram. Mr. Akune spoke about an advertisement placed by the Richmond Heritage Railroad Society and acknowledged the magnanimous efforts to raise funds for the tram, but he said that 80% of residents had indicated that they did not want the tram, and that the staff recommendation reflected this. Mr. Akune asked that Council say no to the tram, and that any funds instead be directed to other projects, such as the Steveston Community Centre, or a covered soccer field.

Mr. Mark Thompson, Chairman of the Strata Corporation for Westwater Drive - Copper Sky East, said that he had observed, during the course of the meeting, that 80% of those speaking were against the proposal, and that this could not be ignored. Mr. Thompson cited the safety issues and liability issues that could be incurred as result of the proposed route along the waterfront. Mr. Thompson also spoke about the voting rights of both old and new residents; the nature of a discussion working document; the feasibility of the project and its fit with the concept plan; the improper utilization of space within a family friendly residential area; the unaddressed long term issues such as what the cost of removal would be if required; the comparison of the proposal with water-based transportation alternatives; the environmental factors associated with a waterfront community; that the use of grant funding would impact available funds for other capital projects; the operation of a public transit system by volunteers; the need of more definition of the long term maintenance costs; that projects of this type are expected to involve impact studies; and, that dollars to build the tram would take dollars away from alternate, more desirable, projects. Mr. Thompson concluded his comments by saying that Copper Sky East residents hoped for a recommendation that considered not only what was being stated, but the depth of those statements, by those in opposition to the tram line.

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Ms. Patty Outram, 11631- 7th Avenue, thanked all those who had contributed to heritage sites in both Richmond itself and Steveston. Initially opposed to the idea of the tram, Ms. Outram said that the tram would bring a magical feeling to the area as something about trains and trams fascinated people. Noting that impact studies should be undertaken and care given, that boats should also be considered, and that further consideration should be given to the route, Ms. Outram also said that it would be wonderful to have the tram running for the 2010 Olympics as it would highlight both the community and Richmond.

Discussion then ensued among Council members on various aspects of the proposal which included:

- that a short-term route running from London Farm to the Britannia Heritage Shipyard was viable as a right-of-way already existed, a portion of which could be fenced off for the tram;
- the concerns of cost, a waterfront route in close proximity to residences; and liability issues;
- that no formal discussion had occurred with the Richmond Heritage Railroad Society regarding a commitment for future operating costs and responsibility for insurance;
- that while it made sense to link historical assets work should continue with both the community and the Richmond Heritage Railroad Society to look at alternative ways to accomplish this;
- that the success of tourism or business in Steveston was not reliant upon the tram; and
- the need to prioritize City spending.

As a result of the discussion the following referral motion was introduced:

It was moved and seconded

That staff:

- i) *explore routing Tram #1220 along Moncton Street and Railway Avenue; and*
- ii) *hold discussions with the Richmond Heritage Railroad Society regarding the ongoing operating costs and the liability issues associated with the running of Tram #1220.*

CARRIED

Opposed: Cllrs. Dang
McNulty

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3. MANAGER'S REPORT

There were no reports.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (9:20 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, January 11th, 2005.

Councillor Harold Steves
Chair

Deborah MacLennan
Administrative Assistant

The tram route is reported to be going from Downtown Steveston to #2 Road, we all have heard about Steveston to Britannia shipyards but this is only half way there. I will give you the other half, Britannia Shipyards to #2 Road. Dyke Rd., between Britannia Shipyard and #2 Rd., is provincial Crown land and not Richmond's. This is the southern most City of Richmond land and it stops at the City of Richmond building lots, that then becomes Provincial land with only the Dyke Rd. upkeep and the grass cutting along Provincial land by the City of Richmond plus the right-of-way which Richmond owns. A Developer says that the south side of the road will be the tram lines. The Steveston Harbour Authority, Paramount Harbour will have tram lines overhead, right where in/out traffic will cross it, the tram wires would be placed at about 12 feet above the road, cutting off the widebody semi - trailer, both with/without pilot cars crossing into Steveston Harbour Authority, Paramount Harbour, for larger boats. The Steveston Harbour Authority land is provincial land as well and no way will it be cut off with only about 12 feet of vertical height into it, the Harbour Provincial land, is a direct access from Trites Rd. The right of way-of-way might be Richmond's but it is the Province who will keep the Paramount Harbour open.

The Paramount Pond is another Provincial property. The marina in there would become smaller as the river would have land infill in it, to make the south side of the Dyke Rd wider, so that a tram line could be placed on it. Another crazy idea, especially after Ron Schuss, President of the Richmond Heritage Railroad Society, downgraded the actual cost to be 4 to 4 1/2 million dollars. The other way, on the north side of the road, would still be in need of an infill of land to make the ditch nonexistent. The parking situation would become more of a problem, because the ditch is now preventing people from parking there, without the ditch, it

will mean more parking there (winter and fall of nonexistent trams). Which will mean the tram rails have got to go down the middle of Dyke Rd, past the Paramount Harbour, which will mean no more boat's coming up and down Dyke Rd., via forklift.

The Tram would have to be configured along the fire lane to Nautica South, as this is the only way fire trucks can get into Nautica South, along the southern route, via #2 Rd, besides that, the tram would almost come to some five or six foot back, with tram rails along and behind the Nautica South back gardens. What about the tram crossing of #2 Road, it might be that the crossing would be guarded by automatic level crossing gates. How much, 4 to 4 1/2 million dollars? and more to the point, what about the fire trucks in an emergency down the the fire lane at the south end of Nautica South?

The Bob Ransford suggestion that if Residents were to have known about it, they would have been more careful where to buy, is all about supposition, if and when the tram was going from Downtown Steveston through #2 Rd., It was NOT. The handout at the 23rd. November, 04, of the Richmond Comittee meeting, was a 1999 copy of Imperial landing at Steveston, telling the reader that a tram could be built from the proposed Canada Packers land site to Downtown Steveston, NOT from #2 Rd to Steveston.

The apparent point of view handed out with (that we could get used to the noise like it was an airport or something), we do not like noise, period. Steveston is peaceful and quite, the way it was then, the way it is now and the way of it is of the future, if Richmond Town Council is to vote on their Staff's recomendation, of not going ahead with it.

The Steveston business Community have said their 33 members have just found out about it and would you give them more time to

try and figure it out, have they got no papers to read? no television to see? No Costomers they listen to? No Steveston Cummunity Centre to be seen, where the Richmond City Staff were going to get Resident's views on the tram, back in the late summertime of 2004.

It was Councillor Harold Steves who said that it would cost a fraction of the estimated total to just run it from Britania shipyard to #2 Rd., on the existing right-of-way that Richmond already owns. " It would just be a matter of laying the track and putting up one quarter-inch overhead wire." Were are you going to get the Passengers from? How much does it cost? Where would you put the Tram lines?

It is like printed signs down the boardwalk of Copper Sky, NO SKATING, NO CYCLING, NO TRAMS.

Mr.A.Williams
224-12639 #2 Rd.
Nautica South.
Richmond

January 11, 05.