



COMMUNITY SAFETY ADVISORY TASK FORCE PUBLIC FORUM

Held June 10, 2003
Meeting Room M.1.003
Richmond City Hall

Present:

Robert Aldcorn (Chair), Cllr Linda Barnes, Mary Campbell, Lisa Doran, Shawn Issel, Brenda Karp, Jim Lavery, Vince Miele, Mark Scott, Bill Sorenson, Max Tondowsky

Also Present:

3 members of the public

The Chair advised that the evening's meeting comprised a regular Task Force meeting, and a Public Forum. He provided an outline of the work being carried out by the group, stating that a number of meetings had taken place within the community regarding safety issues. A PowerPoint would be shown outlining the goals and initiatives of the Task Force, and a survey available for completion which, when all community meetings were complete, would be incorporated into a report to Council (this report would be available to community groups).

Following the PowerPoint presentation, a question period began, which included:

Crosswalks

- ☐ a resident advised that, because of the potential danger to pedestrians, he had been trying for ten years to have a crosswalk light installed at Cooney Road, and believed a survey of busy streets/crosswalks should be undertaken. Rather than have "ornamental lights" displayed on Cooney Road as is currently the case, the area residents would prefer lit crosswalks
- ☐ drivers preferred to drive on streets such as Cooney rather than on No. 3 Road, resulting in heavier traffic in neighbouring side streets

The speaker was advised:

- ☐ a number of issues had been identified relating to traffic control and had been forwarded to the City's Transportation Department for study. It would also be useful to include the Planning Department when such issues arose
- ☐ it would be beneficial for a study to be conducted regarding where DCC charges were utilised, especially in the city core

Open Ditches

- ☐ concern was expressed by the same resident regarding the open ditches still remaining in the Cook Crescent and Spires sub-division – the water in the ditches was not tested, and area residents perceived the ditches as a health hazard. It did not appear that the filling-in of ditches was viewed a priority by City Hall, and he considered more attention was necessary to core area needs

Mr Fred Ursel advised that he was a BlockWatch captain in his neighbourhood, a member of the Family Court Committee, and had been a member of the now disbanded Advisory Committee on Policing. Concerns raised by Mr Ursel were responded to on completion of his presentation – for ease of reading, a table capturing the information follows:

Mr Ursel advised that the Advisory Committee on Policing had already documented, and presented to Council, safety concerns information that had been collected from the community – what was happening to that information. He also expressed regret that the existence of the Advisory Committee had ceased	
<i>response</i>	<p>As community safety was one of the top priorities of Council, previous information was being/would continue to be used</p> <p>Mr Ursel was advised that the rationale behind closure of the Policing Committee was that community concerns were seen as a broader issue than purely policing – a wider span had been introduced to fully determine the public's perception of safety</p> <p>Mr Ursel, responding to the question of what could be learned from the Policing Committee, advised that an Annual Report, and a consultant's report outlining the cost efficiency of policing was available for study</p>
With the increase in the existence of grow-ops, the introduction of RAV (which could potentially increase Richmond's crime rate), plus the increase in casino gambling, the cost of policing could increase significantly – how was the City preparing for such an increase?	
<i>response</i>	The RAV line was supported, but consequences of its introduction were a concern. With the introduction of any casino/mall facilities, consideration was always required re potential negative aspects. It was anticipated that ,when design process began, CPTED (Crime Protection Through Environmental Design) would be involved
The need to join the Safe Communities Foundation was questioned as Mr Ursel believed that many safety issues were already being covered by various groups (Fire-Rescue, RCMP, WCB, etc.) – Richmond also had a good volunteer involvement record, why not make use of those resources	
<i>response</i>	<p>The proposed entry into the Foundation was viewed as a recognition for the work currently being undertaken by the City</p> <p>A Mr Robert Evans stated that, with the demise of the Block Parent program, a large number of volunteers could potentially be available to assist in various areas</p>
YIP/Restorative Justice dealt with youth-related problems – Cst Ed Rhyal had created a good rapport with youth so why, on retirement, was he not retained to teach his skill to other officers rather than the RCMP just increasing patrols?	
<i>response</i>	Youth was an important topic to the Task Force, although some groups believed the City was not moving quickly enough on certain issues. Cst Rhyal had moved out of the community so was unable to extend his skills to fellow officers

Mr Ursel then outlined his main areas of concern, as follows:

<p>What had been done to improve safety in Richmond (grow ops, deteriorating inner City, youth groups)? Concern was expressed by Mr Ursel that discarded needles/condoms, and "johns" working in the car park, were regularly being observed by a shop owner in the Buswell area, to the extent that the owner was now leaving Richmond. Also, the evidence of graffiti and broken windows was seen as a signal by community policing that "unsavoury" people were moving into an area.</p> <p>He also stated that when grow ops were seized, why couldn't the RCMP "take" the house, it was time to lobby the federal government that those involved lose their house.</p> <p>He considered the "inner city" included the Blundell and Cambie areas</p>	
<i>response</i>	<p>Graffiti in the city was increasing and more consideration could be given to combat the issue.</p> <p>An information item regarding grow-ops was recently sent to Council, a copy would be forwarded to Mr Ursel.</p>

Community policing was on hold, what had it been replaced with? Why had community policing stations not been extended to the Hamilton, Cambie, and Aberdeen areas?	
response	Mr Ursel was advised that community policing was not "on hold", and space was being incorporated into the design of the new firehalls to accommodate policing areas. The Task Force could study the community perception that no new policing stations existed.
Why was the City and its police unable, unwilling, or not interested in taking action when calls were made re prostitution\massage parlours, x-rated businesses, and their hours of operation?	
response	no response recorded

Mr Ursel was advised that a fuller response to his concerns would be provided at a future date.

The Chair advised that the Task Force had been created to assist in policy development, and that it supported initiatives that involved the community. Both he, another committee member, and a resident impacted by a grow-op had recently attended a workshop where RCMP, Bylaws, and Parks had discussed the issue. A policy approach was decided on to deal with the matter which focussed on owners of the rental properties – making it difficult for them to continue to rent to such people.

A final concern raised was that when track events took place at Minoru, barricades were placed by the participants' coaches which blocked off pathways to seniors in wheelchairs, etc. The park caretaker had advised coaches of the problem, to no avail. City staff had been approached but no solution had been provided.

The public group were thanked for their input and left the meeting at 8:45pm.

Adoption of Minutes

Brenda Karp\Mark Scott

That the minutes of the Community Safety Advisory Task Force of May 13, 2003 be adopted.

CARRIED

The Chair advised that the Community Safety Committee had met that day and discussed the Community Safety Foundation report; this would now be presented to Council with the recommendation the application process continue.

A community meeting had recently taken place with community policing volunteers, and was positively received. That group had supported the education and prevention components being discussed by the Task Force, and also had issues around traffic and the need for speed bumps.

As yet no meetings had taken place with local businesses regarding their views\concerns. Groups still outstanding included: Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, SUCCESS, Richmond Committee on Disabilities, and the members assigned to set-up these meetings would arrange accordingly. The Chair would follow up with Florence Gordon re the business community meetings.

Discussion ensued on what would be the City's core area in ten years' time (Gilbert Road\Garden City\Granville Avenue\Cambie, and include the casino area at Bridgeport), and the problems that could potentially emerge.

Concerns regarding crosswalks often arose in various meetings, and although more of a concern in the inner core, it would be beneficial to include the issue in the final report. Note was made of the impact future changes would provoke, the involvement of CPTED would be beneficial.

Next Meeting

The meeting ended at 9:05pm, with next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 9 at 5:30pm, meeting room M.1.002.