



## General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, November 6, 2023

Place: Council Chambers  
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair  
Councillor Chak Au  
Councillor Carol Day  
Councillor Laura Gillanders  
Councillor Kash Heed  
Councillor Andy Hobbs  
Councillor Alexa Loo  
Councillor Bill McNulty  
Councillor Michael Wolfe

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:01 p.m.

### AGENDA DELETION

The Chair advised that item No. 2, R7 Rapidbus Update, was removed from the Agenda.

### MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

*That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on October 16, 2023, be adopted as circulated.*

**CARRIED**

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**COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION**

**1. LIQUOR CONSUMPTION IN PUBLIC PARKS PILOT PROGRAM RESULTS**

(File Ref. No. 11-7200-20-01) (REDMS No. 7410281)

In response to queries from the Committee, staff noted (i) anticipated concerns raised prior to the pilot program such as the inability to enjoy parks in the same way, excessive litter and the potential of youth consuming liquor in the parks, were disproven, (ii) there were no calls for service to City Bylaws or RCMP as a result of the pilot program, and (iii) an extensive public consultation process was undertaken, including “Lets Talk Richmond” online surveys (600+ responses), with comments and email responses received throughout the pilot term, July 25 through October 7.

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

It was moved and seconded

*That staff review the options for expansion in a 2024 season for having the consumption of liquor in public parks.*

The question on the referral motion was not called as further discussion ensued regarding the short duration of the pilot program limiting overall public awareness.

The question on the referral motion was then called and it was **DEFEATED**, with Cllrs. Au, Hobbs, Gillanders, Loo, McNulty and Wolfe opposed.

The following **referral motion** was then introduced:

It was moved and seconded

*That staff review options to continue the Liquor Consumption in Public Parks Program for the 2024 season.*

**DEFEATED**

Opposed: Cllrs. Au  
Hobbs  
Gillanders  
Loo  
McNulty  
Wolfe

It was moved and seconded

*That the staff report titled “Liquor Consumption in Public Parks Pilot Program Results”, dated October 13, 2023, from the Director of Parks Services, be received for information.*

**CARRIED**

## PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

### 3. **POTENTIAL LEASE EXTENSION AMENDMENT AGREEMENT FOR 6999 ALDERBRIDGE WAY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING**

(File Ref. No. 06-2280-20-356) (REDMS No. 7414706)

Staff provided historical background and a brief summary of the report and highlighted the following:

- Alderbridge Supportive Housing (“Alderbridge”) opened in the spring of 2019 and was part of the Province’s Rapid Response to Homelessness Program, which endeavored to provide an immediate housing option and necessary supports for vulnerable individuals;
- the City-owned site was carefully selected due to its proximity to transit, community amenities, and health and support services that tenants could access;
- supportive housing is the main tool used across Canada to transition people out of homelessness, and proven to have a positive effect on a person’s housing stability, employment capabilities, and mental and physical health;
- BC Housing and the City have been planning for the development of a 60-unit permanent supportive housing building;
- the City has acquired an alternate City-owned location, and Capital and Operating funding for a permanent supportive housing building has been secured from the Province;
- the lease extension is necessary to ensure a seamless transition for the Alderbridge residents to a new permanent supportive housing building ensuring the 40 residents are not at high risk of housing instability or end up on the street; and
- should Council approve the lease extension until December 31, 2027, City staff will work with BC Housing to advance the planning and development of the permanent supportive housing building.

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In response to queries from the Committee, staff noted (i) with the shortage of housing available in the community, the 40 individuals currently residing at Alderbridge would be at risk of housing instability and very likely homelessness, should the lease not be extended, putting further challenges towards resources within the community and also the health and well-being of these 40 individuals, (ii) to move to a different site would incur greater risk and challenges from uprooting individuals to another site for a short term period and the cost and time required to deconstruct the current modular, to all the development processes and site servicing that is required, taking time away from staff and from BC Housing that is trying to focus on other housing projects as well as permanent supportive housing, (iii) when the ground lease was approved in May 2018, it was never envisioned there was going to be a pandemic, which saw a real shift and a pivot for BC Housing and the City to look at alternate ways to support the vulnerable population and ensure the health and safety of the community, which led to the focus of opening an emergency response centre, (iv) there is a Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”) between the City, BC Housing and the operator, RainCity Housing (“RainCity”), that has commitments in terms of the operations of the building, and RainCity also has an agreement with the tenants in the building, part of which is being a good neighbour and ensuring the tenants are behaving in a manner that is appropriate and not causing disruption within the neighbourhood, (v) the City’s emergency shelter is full; the City works with the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, RCMP Vulnerable Persons Unit, as well as outreach workers within the community, who are apprised of the number of individuals on a waiting list for housing, particularly those that are experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness, and (vi) there is a connection between extending the lease and moving forward with the permanent supportive housing.

Sean Spear and Catharine Hume, RainCity, spoke to the current homelessness in Richmond, noting that the number of street homeless in Richmond has doubled as of the last homeless count.

In response to queries from Committee, RainCity representatives noted (i) like many other communities where RainCity provides supportive housing, it is often where there’s a growth in street homeless that is not connected to RainCity or their operations where it is very difficult for neighbours to differentiate who the people are, (ii) with the growing number of vulnerable persons in Richmond there are times when RainCity receive concerns about people who are currently street homeless in the community but not connected to RainCity in any direct way or to the Alderbridge site, but may have community members who live there and therefore may be connected to the Alderbridge residents, or there to access harm reduction services through the program at Alderbridge, (iii) overall the number of concerns over the last 4.5 - 5 years has not been a significant number, and RainCity has received

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relatively few community concerns, (iv) Alderbridge residents are a mix of age, background and challenges that may have taken them to the point they were without housing, (v) initially there was a community advisory committee that met quarterly in 2021 that had difficulty maintaining a quorum, the assessment of which was the ongoing COVID, but also that there weren't any really significant sustained concerns in the community, and efforts to reach out to neighbouring businesses and residents for the continuation of the committee indicated no appetite to participate in quarterly meetings about a program that really wasn't having any direct impacts from their perspective.

OIC Chief Supt. Chauhan, RCMP, spoke to the number of calls for service that have been received related to the Alderbridge site and surrounding area, noting a downward trend from 2019 to 2022.

In response to queries from Committee, Chief Supt. Chauhan noted (i) statistical analysis has shown that for the past 4 years, the top 3 types of calls received specifically from the Alderbridge facility has been predominantly for checking wellness of individuals, dealing with unwanted persons or calls to assist fire or ambulance, and (ii) the Vulnerable Persons Unit work in teams with the City Bylaw Officers, Vancouver Coast Health, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, continually approaching individuals in the city who are homeless, and in consultation and coordination with those teams, provide them with support systems and referrals where need be to those individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

Zack Segal, Richmond resident, commented on the changes witnessed in Richmond and the Minoru area in the last few years, and urged the City to advocate to the Province and federal government for proper bail reform and treatment and recovery, with a goal to lower crime, provide better access to recovery and pathways to employment.

Kris Ka, Richmond resident, expressed concern with respect to homelessness housing, noting safety and health issues and perceived negative effect on property values and quality of life.

Cynthia Asai, Richmond resident, expressed concern with respect to the violence, a rise in crime and unsafe conditions in the area, and requested that the City further review the lease extension proposal and provide opportunity for public input through a public consultation process.

Clifton Jang, Strata President, Lotus, spoke to the ongoing disturbing and illegal behaviour that takes place in and around the 286 unit development located across from Alderbridge.

Esfand Bakhtiari, Richmond resident, expressed concern with respect to the homelessness and illegal activity in his neighbourhood.

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Karen Schaffer, provided comments on behalf of Michael Yang, Tapestry Church Richmond, briefly outlining the benefits witnessed to the residents of Alderbridge as a result of the supportive housing opportunity provided them, expressing support for the extension of the lease in advance of the approved permanent housing as planned.

Karen Schaffer, Tapestry Church Richmond, expressed appreciation to the City for caring for the vulnerable by facilitating supportive housing, noting the many benefits for the Alderbridge residents as a result of having the supportive housing, and expressed support for the extension of the lease until permanent housing is complete so as to provide stability and security for the current residents.

Sheldon Starrett, Richmond resident, expressed concerns regarding the proposed lease increase as opposed to ending the temporary modular housing as originally proposed, noting there has been a noticeable increase in the level of drug use in public spaces and extensive instances of crime to residences and businesses alike, perceived to have been happening since the occupancy of Alderbridge (together with many visitors/guests), and subsequently resulting in higher insurance/security costs.

Italo Araujo (Lotus building management) submitted a video which was played (and subsequently stopped).

De Whalen, attending on behalf of the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition, reviewed their correspondence of November 1, 2023 to the City expressing support of the staff report and the request from BC Housing to extend the ground lease on 6999 Alderbridge supportive housing, noting that the site provides transitional housing with supports which was never meant to be permanent housing, and applauding the City's decision to build 60 new units of permanent long-term supportive housing at an alternative site, targeted for occupancy by December 31, 2027.

Caden Ho, Richmond resident, questioned the transition plan originally set out at the beginning of the current Alderbridge supportive housing lease and subsequent delay now requiring an extension of the lease and new transition plan.

Patrick Man, Richmond resident, spoke to the appeal of living in the City of Richmond and the importance of caring for the community and its residents.

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It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the current ground lease with the Provincial Rental Housing Corporation (“PRHC”) for the Alderbridge Supportive Housing, located on City property at 6999 Alderbridge Way, be extended for a period of approximately three and a half years from the expiry of the current ground lease until December 31, 2027, as per the terms outlined in the staff report titled “Potential Lease Extension Amendment Agreement for 6999 Alderbridge Way Supportive Housing” dated October 12, 2023 from the Director, Community Social Development and Director, Real Estate Services; and*
- (2) *That staff be authorized to take all necessary steps to negotiate an extension to the lease extension amendment agreement for the Alderbridge Supportive Housing and that the Chief Administrative Officer and the General Manager, Finance and Corporate Services be authorized to execute such amending agreement and all related documentation.*

The question on the motion was not called as further discussion ensued with respect to mitigating the issues and views raised, future opportunities and responsibilities therein, noting that one of the hallmarks of a great city is how the most vulnerable are cared for.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllr. Au opposed.

## ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

*That the meeting adjourn (6:29 p.m.).*

**CARRIED**

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, November 6, 2023.

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Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie  
Chair

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Lorraine Anderson  
Legislative Services Associate