



**Regular Council meeting for Public Hearings
Monday, October 19, 2020**

Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Chak Au
Councillor Carol Day (by teleconference)
Councillor Kelly Greene (by teleconference)
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Bill McNulty (by teleconference)
Councillor Linda McPhail (by teleconference)
Councillor Michael Wolfe (by teleconference)

Claudia Jesson, Corporate Officer

Absent: Councillor Harold Steves

Call to Order: Mayor Brodie opened the proceedings at 7:00 p.m.

1. **RICHMOND ZONING BYLAW 8500, AMENDMENT BYLAW 10198**
(Location: 8671, 8731, 8771, 8831/8851 Cambie Road, 8791 Cambie Road/3600 Sexsmith Road, and 3480, 3500, 3520, 3540/3560 Sexsmith Road; Applicant: Polygon Talisman Park Ltd.)

Applicant's Comments:

The applicant was available to respond to queries.

Written Submissions:

John Roston, 12262 Ewen Avenue (Schedule 1)

Michelle Li (Schedule 2)

Submissions from the floor:

Jim Wright, 8300 Osgood Drive, expressed support for reviewing options to enable the existing natural area to be retained in the proposed development and read from his submission (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 3).



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In response to queries from Council, Mr. Wright was of the opinion that reducing the number of buildings on the site along Garden City Road and allowing greater building height for the proposed buildings could enable the natural area to be retained.

Sharon MacGougan, 7411 Ash Street, President, Garden City Conservation Society, read from her submission (attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 4) and offered additional supplemental photographs of various trees on previously developed Polygon sites in Richmond.

Yvonne Bell, 10431 Mortfield Road, expressed concern over the proposed removal of mature trees in the rezoning application and its impact to the surrounding area and wildlife. Ms. Bell further commented on the value of replacement trees listed in the staff report and inquired where the valuation came from. She also noted concern over the labelling of the property for Richmond-Sea Island United Church for future development in the staff report.

By teleconference, John Roston, 12262 Ewen Ave, Coordinator, Richmond Rental Housing Advocacy Group, noted agreement to the previous speakers' comments on preserving the natural area on the proposed development site. He further summarized comments from his written submission, noting in particular that:

- there is a shortage of available market rental housing in downtown Richmond and a large increase in supply is required;
- operating costs involved in rental housing should be minimized to keep rents down which would require economies of scale through joint management of properties and co-locating market rental buildings;
- limited land in downtown Richmond can accommodate large purpose-built rental projects and this project should incorporate a large portion of market rental units; and
- developers for large scale developments could still potentially profit by selling market rental units or full scale developments to pension funds or a real estate investment trust looking for long-term stable returns.



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In response to queries from Council regarding comments from the delegations, Wayne Craig, Director, Development, advised that:

- it costs the City \$750 to plant a tree and with respect to this project, a security of \$750 per replacement tree is being taken, however through the development permit the bond would be increased based on the actual cost to plant all the landscaping identified in the development permit and the \$750 referenced in the staff report is a placeholder;
- the site is in close proximity to the flight path and is designated for residential use in the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) and the City Centre Area Plan (CCAP);
- as part of the approval process, the developer would be required acoustical reports to demonstrate that the project can achieve the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) interior noise standards with respect to mitigation of aircraft noise;
- the Church site referenced by the delegation is located directly west of the subject development and is identified for residential development in the OCP as future use;
- the City's current policies do not have any requirement for market rental to be included in residential development and the City's focus to date has been on the provision of affordable rental housing;
- the project does comply with the City's affordable housing policy in providing 10% of the residential floor area as affordable housing units;
- in 2018 Council adopted an incentives based approach to market rental housing which includes the provision of additional density exclusively for the provision of market rental housing and this project is being provided with a 0.1 FAR density bonus exclusively for market rental housing;
- the designated height for the proposed site is as identified in the CCAP; and
- increasing the market rental housing for this project would require the project be referred back to staff.



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Robin Glover, Vice President Development, Polygon Homes Ltd., spoke to questions from the delegations and commented that:

- number of restraints to retaining additional mature trees on the site including site servicing, that the preload required prior to development in Richmond is potentially damaging for existing tree root systems, and much of the proposed site is below road grades;
- the proposal for the park location on the site allows for a central location of 2.5 acres for park space should the remainder of the block move forward with future development;
- landscaping, including trees, for development sites in Richmond typically go through a one year maintenance program after which the landscape is reviewed and if there are deficiencies, the developer must return to the site to rectify and once that has been addressed, ongoing maintenance is handed off to the strata or City for off-site trees;
- a total of 1226 homes are proposed for the site, 155 of those would be affordable housing units managed through SUCCESS, and an additional 65 market rental units consolidated in a single building;
- Polygon Homes Ltd. has built stand alone rental facilities previously in Richmond however this project proposes delivering the affordable housing and market rental units in Phase 1 to allow for quicker delivery;
- currently approximately 40% of the strata units for previously completed Polygon Homes Ltd. projects in Richmond are available in the rental market; and
- immediately adjacent to the proposed site is a 13 storey tower under construction which was difficult to get YVR and Transport Canada approval for due to potential issues with the proposed third runway and there may be limitations in raising the building height on the proposed site.

In response to questions from Council, Mr. Glover advised that (i) building height on the proposed site is limited by Transport Canada approval, (ii) the location of the park is intended as a central green space and portion of the site will be dedicated to bike and pedestrian infrastructure, and (iii) Polygon has been in discussion with organizations regarding the purchase and management of the market rental housing.



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The Chair acknowledged the conclusion of the first round of public speakers. Three speakers then addressed Council for a second time with new information.

Sharon MacGougan offered additional comments regarding the poor condition of mature trees in areas of the city and expressed concern about the location of the proposed pathways on the Polygon site.

Yvonne Bell spoke to the impact of removing mature trees from the project site on children who would live in the development.

John Roston noted support for increasing the number of market rental units in the proposed development.

PH20/7-1

It was moved and seconded

That Richmond Zoning Bylaw 8500, Amendment Bylaw 10198 be given second and third readings.

The question on the motion was not called as the following **referral motion** was introduced:

PH20/7-2

It was moved and seconded

That the Application by Polygon Talisman Park Ltd. (RZ 18-836123) be referred back to staff to (i) explore better use of existing mature trees, (ii) review the current value for replacement trees, (iii) review the proposed park location, and (iv) increase the number of market rental units, and report back.

The question on the referral motion was not called as discussion took place on (i) the number of market rental units proposed in the development and the possibility of increasing building height to accommodate more, (ii) retaining more of the mature trees and natural area of the site, (iii) relocating the proposed park on the site, (iv) staff review of a formal market rental housing policy, and (v) current valuation of planting trees by the City.

In reply to questions from Council regarding timeline for a report back to Council on the referral, Mr. Craig remarked that it would not be anticipated in time for the next scheduled Public Hearing.

In response to queries from Council regarding the park plan and development of the site, Alexander Kurnicki, Research Planner 2, remarked that typically, public consultation would be part of the park plan process including the surrounding community beyond the site.



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Discussion further took place on reviewing the City’s market rental policies and impact to the project and delay of affordable housing and market rental housing if the item were to be referred back to staff.

The question on the referral motion was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Cllrs. Loo and McPhail opposed.

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

PH20/7-3

It was moved and seconded

That staff provide suggestions and options for a market rental policy and report back.

CARRIED

ADJOURNMENT

PH20/7-4

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (8:34 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Regular meeting for Public Hearings of the City of Richmond held on Monday, October 19, 2020.

Mayor (Malcolm D. Brodie)

Corporate Officer (Claudia Jesson)

ON TABLE ITEM

Date: OCTOBER 19, 2020
Meeting: PUBLIC HEARING
Item: 1

Schedule 1 to the Minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, October 19, 2020.

From: Badyal,Sara
Sent: October 15, 2020 3:36 PM
To: 'John Roston, Mr'
Cc: CityClerk
Subject: RE: Polygon Talisman Park Proposal

Dear John Roston,

Thank you for your email and letter regarding the rezoning application RZ 18-836123. Public input is encouraged and may be provided to the City through a Rezoning application process by letter, email, the City's website, or in person at the General Purposes Committee, Council and Public Hearing meetings.

The purpose of this email is to let you know that your correspondence will be forwarded to the upcoming Public Hearing meeting along with the staff report and to share some information with you. As you are aware, the application will be considered at the Public Hearing meeting scheduled for 7pm Monday, October 19, and the rezoning application staff report is published on the City's website as part of the October 19 meeting agenda package at: https://www.richmond.ca/agendafiles/Public_Hearing_10-19-2020.pdf

Regarding market rental housing, the proposal incorporates the voluntary OCP Market Rental Housing Policy with a stand-alone market rental housing building comprising 65 market rental housing units and indoor amenity space in the first phase of development.

If you would like to discuss further or require additional information, please feel free to call me at 604-276-4282.

Regards,

Sara Badyal, M. Arch, RPP
Planner 2
Development Applications Department
City of Richmond
604-276-4282
www.richmond.ca

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-----Original Message-----

From: John Roston, Mr <john.roston@mcgill.ca>
Sent: October 15, 2020 2:21 PM
To: Brodie, Malcolm <MBrodie@richmond.ca>; McNulty,Bill <BMcNulty@richmond.ca>; McPhail,Linda <LMcPhail@richmond.ca>; Loo,Alexa <ALoo@richmond.ca>; Steves,Harold <hsteves@richmond.ca>; Au,Chak <CAu@richmond.ca>; Day,Carol <CDay@richmond.ca>; Greene,Kelly <kgreene@richmond.ca>; Wolfe,Michael <MWolfe@richmond.ca>
Cc: CityClerk <CityClerk@richmond.ca>; Badyal,Sara <SBadyal@richmond.ca>; Nikolic,Diana <DNikolic@richmond.ca>; Craig,Wayne <WCraig@richmond.ca>; Eve Edmonds <eedmonds@richmond-news.com>; mrantanen@richmond-news.com
Subject: Polygon Talisman Park Proposal

Dear Mayor & Councillors,

It is good to see the City functioning so well in such difficult circumstances thanks to Council's initiatives.

Attached is the Richmond Rental Housing Advocacy Group submission on the Polygon Talisman Park proposal being discussed at the Public Hearing next Monday.

We believe that market rental housing in downtown Richmond will be an issue in the next municipal election and at that time, we plan to review Council's record on relevant major development proposals. Council has already approved thousands of new housing units that are currently under construction for sale to investors. Anyone who wants to buy one has plenty to choose from including 1,820 at Richmond Centre. Only 200 units there are market rental. This Polygon Talisman Park proposal has an even lower percentage with only 65 market rental units.

Developers can sell entire buildings to pension plans and REITs with huge capital resources that want the long term steady return from rentals. They will not make as much as from selling to individual investors, but they will still make a reasonable profit. It is a question of how many millions they really need to make. If they abandon a project, someone else will eventually come along and build the rentals we need on that land. We can't use the land twice.

This is the time to turn the rental housing crisis around and send the strong message that Richmond's priority for large downtown developments is purpose-built market and below market rental housing.

Best regards,
John

John Roston
12262 Ewen Avenue
Richmond, BC V7E 6S8
Phone: 604-274-2726

Re: Polygon Talisman Park, File RZ 18-836123

Excerpts from Editorial, *The Globe and Mail*, August 28, 2020:

"Mr. Siddall [head of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.] sees a fundamental problem: a shortage of housing in key economic cities such as Vancouver and Toronto. He favours building density 'on a grand scale' – the big priority being rental housing. This view is not wild-eyed."

"*The Economist* did not mince words. This housing market, with its high prices and lack of opportunity, is a 'rotten edifice.'"

"These are not normal times, and housing problems are worsening. Research suggests that if housing was more affordable in New York, San Francisco and San Jose, the U.S. economy would jump significantly. The same could be said for Toronto and Vancouver. These cities are the engine of Canada's present and future. If people can't afford to live there, it is all of Canada's loss."

There continues to be an acute shortage of market rental housing units in downtown Richmond and yet Richmond City Council only makes feeble token efforts to do something about it. A dramatic increase in the number of new market rental units is required to meet demand and bring down high rental rates driven by scarcity.

The Government of BC has given the City the power to designate all or a portion of new housing developments as market rental, but Council refuses to take bold action and endorsed the Richmond Centre redevelopment plan with only 200 market rental units and 1,850 units for sale to investors. Our children and grandchildren brought up in Richmond will resent this inaction as they are forced to move elsewhere and endure long commutes which add to our greenhouse gas emissions.

This Polygon Talisman Park proposal will create 1,226 residential units of which 150 are below market rental units. Ideally 80% of the remaining 1,076 units or 860 units, should be market rental. Instead there will only be 65 units or 6%, a ridiculously small number. This is even lower than the totally inadequate 10% market rental units in the Richmond Centre redevelopment.

Developers with short term financing who need to sell the housing units to repay their loans can instead sell entire buildings to pension plans and real estate investment trusts (REITs) that want the long term steady returns that come from rentals.

Even when investor purchasers of individual units rent them out, rental rates are high and service can be poor due to absentee landlords and the high costs of maintenance and repair. The best way to reduce these costs, provide prompt service and lower rental rates is through efficiencies of scale. The larger the purpose-built rental project, the lower the administrative costs with on-site rental offices and full-time maintenance and repair staff.

There is a very limited amount of land in downtown Richmond that can be used to create market rental housing and once Council allows it to be used to sell housing units to investors, it is lost forever. To prevent that happening, it is time for Council to send the strong message that Richmond's priority for large downtown developments is purpose-built market and below market rental housing.

John Roston, Coordinator, Richmond Rental Housing Advocacy Group

Schedule 2 to the Minutes of the Public Hearing meeting of Richmond City Council held on Monday, October 19, 2020.

To: Mayor & Each Councillor

From: City Clerk's Office

Materials Relating to an Agenda Item

Meeting: Public Hearing - October 19, 2020

Item: #1

Sent: Michelle Li <michelleli@shaw.ca>
October 18, 2020 6:41 PM
To: Brodie, Malcolm; Steves, Harold; Loo, Alexa; Greene, Kelly; McPhail, Linda; Au, Chak; Wolfe, Michael; McNulty, Bill; Mayor and Councillors
Cc: editor@richmond-news.com
Subject: Polygon Talisman Development
Categories: - TO: MAYOR & EACH COUNCILLOR / FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

Dear Mayor and Councillors,

I am writing in regards to the Polygon Talisman development.

I am extremely concerned with the lack of market and below market rental housing contained within this development. It is my understanding that this current number is even lower than the Richmond Centre development, which is shockingly low.

You have been granted powers through the provincial government to designate areas and/or developments as whole or partial market rental housing. I would like to encourage you to think about future generations and how important it will be for them to have affordable housing, access to transit, and job opportunities in Richmond city centre or downtown Vancouver.

We currently have a provincial MLA candidate publicly stating that he can no longer afford, or find, appropriate housing in Richmond. This should be a wake up call for council.

When council election time rolls around again, can you say you've done all you can to ensure single-persons, seniors, and families are appropriately housed? I sure hope so.

It is time for council to take bold action to ensure a healthy supply of rental housing for Richmond's future.

With hope,
Michelle Li

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Schedule 3 to the Minutes of the
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Re Polygon application to Richmond Council, Public Hearing, October 19, 2020

Delegation: Jim Wright, 8300 Osgoode Drive, Richmond

Mayor Brodie and Councillors,

Staff have been extremely thorough with today's application, and they and Polygon have made progress toward saving trees. I'm familiar with the site. The northeast part of it, Area A in the staff report [\[Show site diagram\]](#), has rare quality and is much needed. It is a place where Nature has reclaimed nature.

We have a golden opportunity to empower it to go further. [\[Show Natural area satellite view.\]](#) Here is the corner of opportunity where nature has re-purposed human intervention to bring itself back, as seen from above.

We have here a great chance to team with nature in empowering ways for a big win-win. In contrast, it cannot be nearly as good if we take unnatural steps like uprooting almost all the mature trees and their ecosystem. It is not good enough to fool ourselves that sparing some hedgerow and the occasional tree and dotting the site with nursery saplings is a fine alternative.

I recently visited that natural area, at Garden City Road and Cambie. Sharon MacGougan and Yvonne Bell joined me there, and they showed how they feel about the options. [\[Show Sharon & Yvonne hugging trunk.\]](#) (Like this.)

I took another photo from the vantage point of the Richmond and Sea Island United Church property on Cambie, next to the natural area. [\[Show photo from United Church lot.\]](#) We're looking east. Beyond the left side of the photo to the left, further north, the United Church has a row of mature trees that are a bonus part of the natural area.

This next photo is from beyond the opposite corner of the natural area. [Show the hedgerow photo.] We *were* looking northeast from near Cambie, but now we are near Garden City Road. We are looking southwest at the towering hedgerow that is featured in the staff report. Staff, along with Polygon, seem to wish to save as much of the hedgerow as they can, and that's a commendable start. On the left side, which is the *east* side, you may see that the line formed by the hedgerow has zig-zagged.

In the next photo [Zigzag photo with Sharon & Yvonne], Sharon and Yvonne are talking about mice in the tall grass and the barn owls that thrive there. In this perspective, the edge of the wooded natural area is going southward toward Cambie and then turning eastward toward Garden City Road.

I caught up to Sharon and Yvonne, and for the next three photos we were right *in* the natural area.

[Show three photos, one by one.]

One.... Two.... Three....

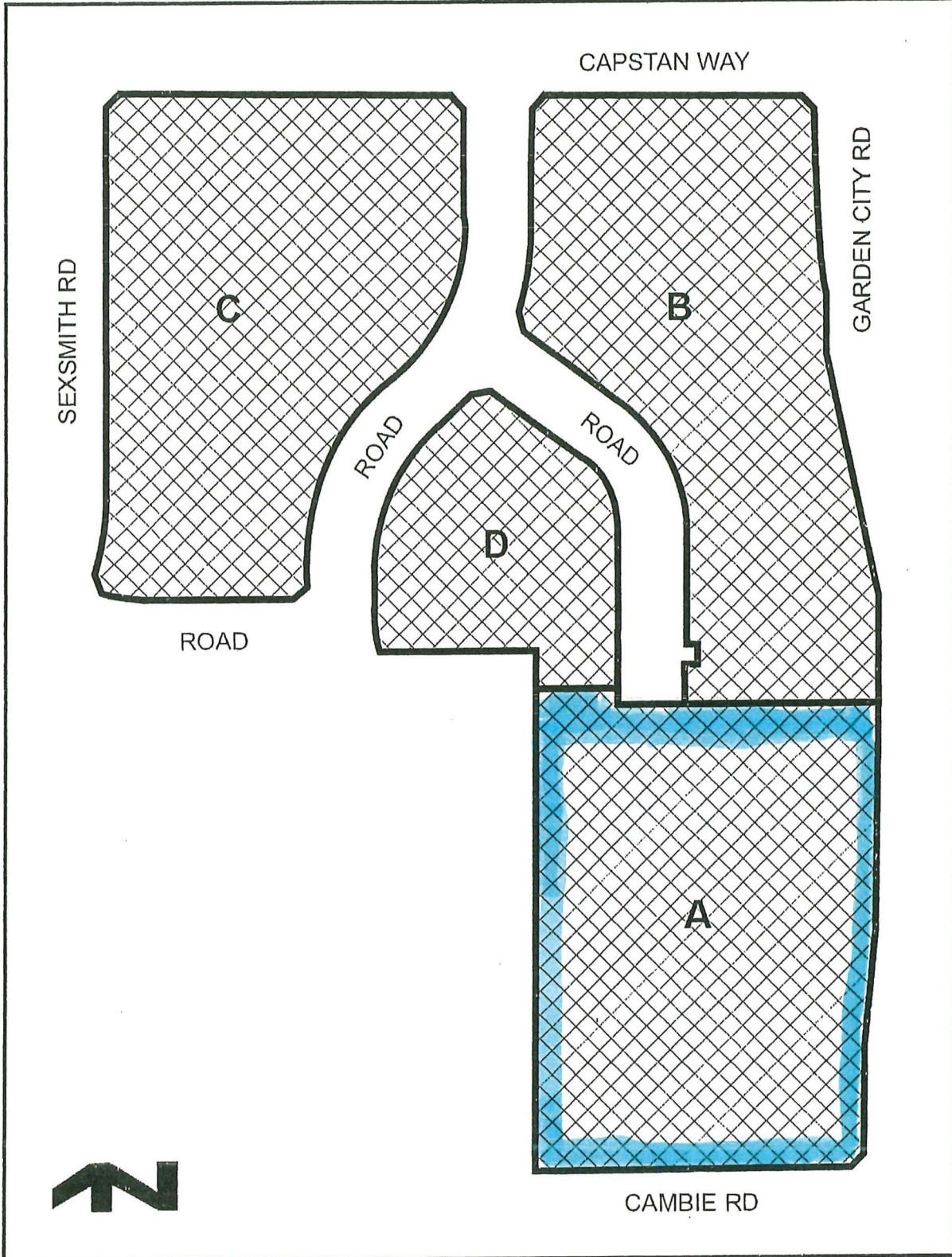
[Then show panoramic photo from near Cambie.] Now we're just a little into the natural area, just north of Cambie Road and looking north at this panorama. At each stop, I keep thinking how this is can be a different and needed kind of natural area, where we experience how nature can restore itself if we give it a chance and especially if we *empower* instead of *obliterate*.

Fortunately, the natural area is located in Area A, the southeast corner, with much lower lot coverage and lower height than in Areas B and C, so the cost in the developer's floor area to enable the natural area to be retained and enhanced is less high where it is, in Area A, than it would be in the other areas.

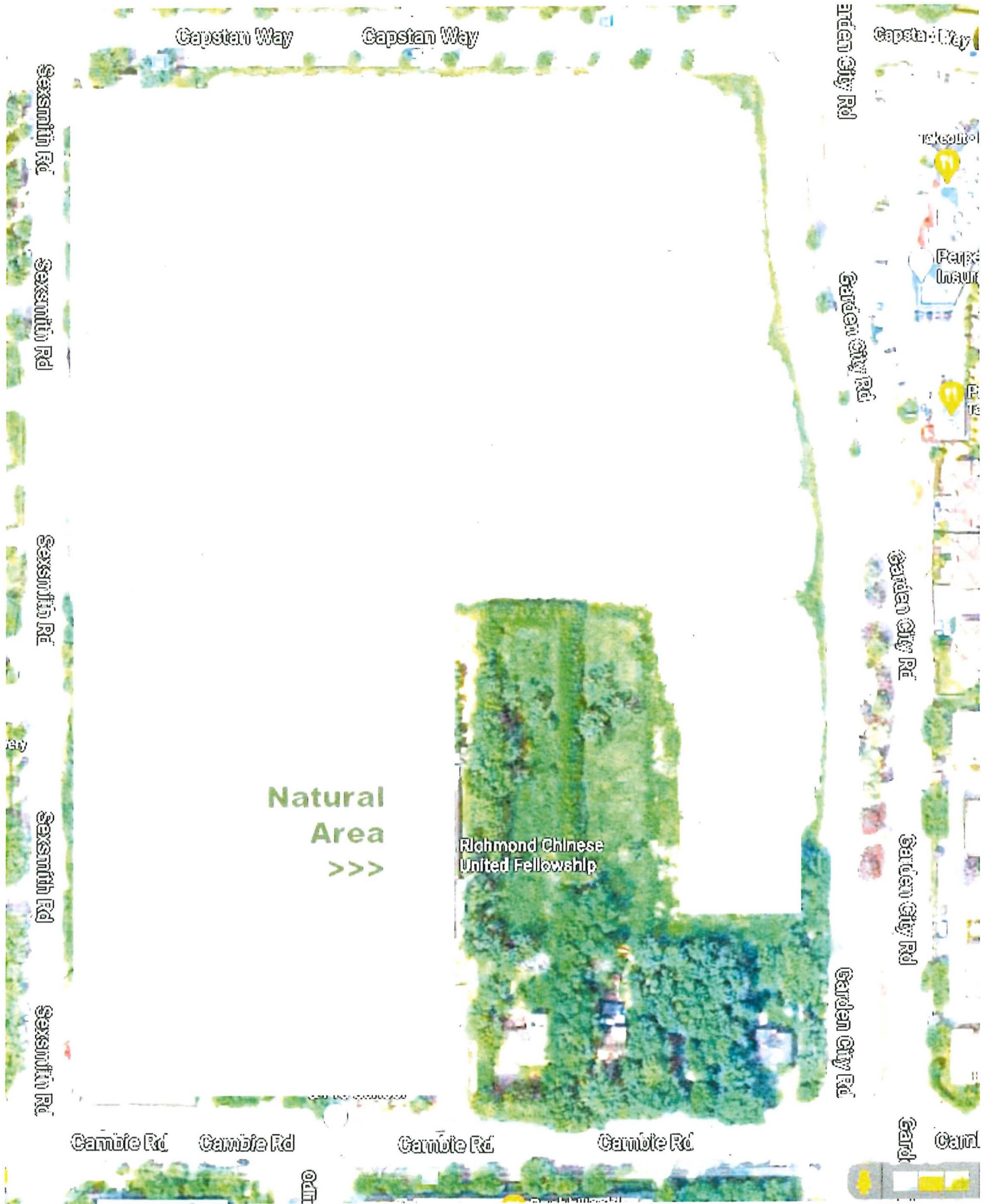
Let's go back to a satellite view of the natural area. [Show Audain Natural Area slide.] Michael Audain, who is the 83-year-old chair and principal owner of Polygon, is a philanthropist. A lot of Mr. Audain's millions have come from Richmond council, because rezoning for much denser development adds many millions to the property value. I imagine that we all would like to enable the natural area to be spared from destruction and instead be empowered as city parkland. If Mr. Audain agrees, that will make a big difference. In that case, it would be an Audain natural area and could be called that if you and he wouldn't mind.

I am asking you, Richmond's mayor and councillors, to hold off from approving the application at this time. I suggest that you might arrange to discuss the project with Michael Audain and ask him to sponsor the retention and enhancement of the existing natural area that Polygon is currently on the verge of devastating.

Schedule "A" attached to and forming part of Bylaw 10198



4



Capstan Way

Capstan Way

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Garden City Rd

Garden City Rd

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Garden City Rd

Natural Area
>>>

Richmond Chinese United Fellowship

5









9



NO







13



Capstan Way

Capstan Way

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Saxsmith Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Cambie Rd

Garden City Rd

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Garden City Rd

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Garden City Rd

Audain Natural Area >>>

Richmond Chinese United Fellowship

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Schedule 4 to the Minutes of the
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Dear Mayor Brodie and Councillors,

My name is Sharon MacGougan. I'm President of the Garden City Conservation Society and a life-long resident of Richmond.

I have two main concerns about this Polygon project:

1. Loss of habitat
2. Placement and size of the proposed park

I will also speak to:

3. Valuing of on-site trees, landscaping securities and QEP recommendations.

PHOTO #1 (please leave on)

Loss of habitat:

We have lost 3 billion birds since the 1970's. These are not some exotic species out there somewhere. These are our backyard birds, like finches and sparrows. The number one reason is habitat loss.

We have a choice. Do we continue to be the problem or will we be part of the solution? I'd like to think that we'll take action to remedy this significant loss for our future generations.

Habitat loss is happening in every neighbourhood. Mature trees and bird-friendly bushes have, for the most part, been replaced with sterile yards. Birds need food, shelter and water and without those, they die. Our parks are, for the most part, designed for people. So, if we remove bird habitat and don't, at the very least, replace it, we will keep losing our birds.

The big question is – how to mitigate ecological loss in neighbourhoods?

This project in its current form will not mitigate the loss. At present, the site is ecologically rich; filled with bird song and wildlife. If this project is carried out as planned, it will be a dead zone.

Placement and size of the proposed city park:

The area where the park is slated to be placed has no mature trees, only a hedgerow. It is an empty piece of land that will need new trees planted on. This doesn't make sense because right next to this area stands a forest. And, if we are concerned with habitat loss, why don't we keep it? The park area as proposed is small. I suggest a re-thinking of how good habitat and mature trees could be retained which would provide a real benefit to the wider community which includes the natural world. The mature trees to the north of the original park plan could be retained with the purpose of creating a bird-friendly natural park.

I know that Polygon has built many developments in Richmond. I'm sure that that company is aware of the ecological challenges Richmond among other communities, faces. And I'm sure, that given the right incentives, Polygon would want to step up to be part of the solution; to give back, ecologically speaking, to a community in which they have worked in for so long.

Valuing of on-site trees:

\$750 is not enough money to charge for a tree. Many of these trees are decades old "grandmother" trees. \$750 would pay for a branch. If trees were given a proper valuation (what the tree is really worth when everything is factored in) more thought might be given about removing them. Instead, we would find more creative ways of working around them. We are losing too many mature trees in many different ways, including mature tree unfriendly setbacks. More generous setbacks could play a big part in keeping trees.

One year is not long enough:

Currently developer's need to maintain (keep alive) a tree for one year. This is not long enough. We have far too many dead and dying street trees. Developers, including Polygon, need to take full responsibility for the trees that they plant. I have some examples to show:

PHOTO # 2

When my neighbourhood, close to Paulik Park, was redeveloped, I imagined leafy tree-lined streets filled with birdsong. This has not happened. Photos show street trees on Heather Street, between General Currie and Granville.

PHOTOS #3 TO 11 (I'll let you know when to change, thank you!)

These two blocks should be an ecological network supporting bird life between Paulik and Garden City community Park. Instead, this is one more lost opportunity for ecological richness and one more dead zone.

Qualified Environmental Professional (QEP):

"The City of Richmond **recommends** that where significant trees or vegetation exists on-site, the services of a QEP be secured to perform a survey and ensure that development activities are in compliance with all relevant legislation."

I suggest that **recommends** be replaced with **requires**. Thanks to Sofi Hindmarch, who tracked owl hunting activities on this proposed development site. But the point is, if he had not come forward would we know that the owl pair has hunted here for years? An owl family and a red-tailed hawk family were displaced from my neighbourhood through redevelopment. I spoke for

the hawk, resulting in the QEP process being followed. But I didn't know about the owl. If the QEP process is mandated our wildlife would be better served. It shouldn't be by chance that wildlife is protected.

In conclusion, the best solution would be that Polygon, through a philanthropic gesture, gives back this owl hunting field, allows a forest to stand for our future generations, and builds a much smaller development, with a nature friendly and sustainability focused mission. We all need to be part of the solution of ecological loss: Mayor Brodie, the Councillors, the citizens of Richmond and the companies that work here.

But, if that fails to spark hearts instead of minds, the next option would be to make a much larger natural park that keeps mature trees instead of cutting them.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon MacGougan
President, Garden City Conservation Society
7411 Ash Street,
Richmond, BC
V6Y 2R9