



Planning Committee

Date: Tuesday, March 6, 2018

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Councillor Linda McPhail, Chair
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Chak Au
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Harold Steves

Also Present: Councillor Carol Day

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee held on February 20, 2018, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING DATE

March 20, 2018, (tentative date) at 4:00 p.m. in the Anderson Room

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COMMUNITY SERVICES DIVISION

1. **FINAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING STRATEGY 2017-2027**

(File Ref. No. 08-4057-01) (REDMS No. 5748976 v. 14)

Joyce Rautenberg, Affordable Housing Coordinator presented the Final Affordable Housing Strategy, noting that public feedback was received through online surveys and open houses and respondents expressed support for the Strategy with particular focus on the short-term actions. She added that staff are continuing work on reviewing the affordable housing policies and will provide updates when appropriate.

In reply to queries from Committee, staff noted that (i) staff are monitoring how rezoning and demolitions impact the availability of secondary suites and will provide information to Council at a future date, (ii) secondary suites are permitted in all single family and townhouse zones and staff are preparing a report regarding secondary suites in duplexes, and (iii) secondary suites are required to have a separate heating system from the primary dwelling.

Discussion ensued with regard to (i) advocating to senior levels of government to provide information related to vacant properties and foreign ownership of properties, (ii) utilizing micro suites as an affordable housing option, (iii) utilizing the Special Development Circumstances and Value Transfer funding model on housing projects, (iv) exploring funding partnerships with senior levels of government, and (v) reviewing policies on adult-only strata.

De Whalen, representing the Richmond Poverty Response Committee, expressed support for the Affordable Housing Strategy, and raised concern on the insufficient affordable housing supply. She encouraged the City to consider options to increase affordable housing for seniors and seek more support from the Province.

John Roston, 12262 Ewen Avenue, referenced his submission, (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 1) and expressed that affordable housing be focused on units for families. Also, he suggested that a new type of condominium building be created where vacant condominium units would be rented out and revenue shared amongst property owners.

In reply to queries from Committee, staff noted that types of rental agreements and options to dedicate zones to rental property can be explored.

It was moved and seconded

(1) That the final Affordable Housing Strategy 2017-2027 and companion documents, as outlined in the report titled "Final Affordable Housing Strategy 2017-2027" dated February 15, 2018 from the Manager, Community Social Development, be adopted;

2.

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- (2) *That the staff report be referred to the Council/School Board Liaison Committee; and*
- (3) *That copies of the staff report, along with advocacy information to senior levels of government be sent to Richmond Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly.*

CARRIED

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

2. **AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2017 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2018 WORK PROGRAM**

(File Ref. No. 01-0100-30-ACEN1-01) (REDMS No. 5733493)

In response to queries from Committee staff noted that the Agricultural Advisory Committee (AAC) has been involved in reviewing Agricultural Land Commission (ALC) related development applications and exploring programs such as farm tours to promote agricultural viability. It was further noted that the AAC has worked on identifying potential community partnerships and supports local farming groups such as the Young Agrarians.

Mr. Roston referenced his submission (attached to and forming part of these minutes as Schedule 1) and expressed concern that (i) a special stakeholders meeting on proposed changes to the City's Agricultural (AG1) zone excluded community groups such as Richmond FarmWatch, (ii) members of the AAC may be in conflict of interest due to their ownership of farmland, and (iii) there are instances where farm property owners are reportedly not extending utility connections beyond the farm home plate.

In reply to queries from Committee, Barry Konkin, Manager, Policy Planning, noted that Council directed staff to proceed with the consultation process on proposed changes to agricultural zones, adding that Richmond FarmWatch was involved in the consultation process and attended public information sessions hosted by the City. He further noted that the City is willing to assist in the matching of potential farmers with farm property owners.

Todd May, Co-Chair, AAC, thanked Council for their support and remarked that the AAC would support land matching initiatives for potential farmers.

Committee commended the AAC for their work in the community.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the staff report titled "Agricultural Advisory Committee 2017 Annual Report and 2018 Work Program" dated February 16, 2018 from the Manager, Policy Planning be received for information; and*

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- (2) *That the Agricultural Advisory Committee 2018 Work Program, as presented in this staff report, be approved.*

CARRIED

3. **MANAGER'S REPORT**

(i) *Agricultural Land Reserve Non-Farm Use Applications*

Mr. Konkin noted that the ALC has advised that inquiries for non-farm use will no longer be handled by ALC staff. Formal non-farm use applications must be submitted and will be considered by the ALC Executive. Staff anticipate an increase in non-farm use applications that will require review by Planning Committee and Council. He added that staff have the capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in non-farm use applications and that staff will work the AAC as part of the review of the applications.

(ii) *Agricultural Farm Home Plate Interpretation*

James Cooper, Manager, Plan Review, noted that staff issued a bulletin clarifying that the farm home plate must be rectangular in shape and must be located adjacent to the front property line or riparian management area line and contiguously with one side of the property line. Also, he noted that applicants may submit variances to the farm home plate and that staff will work the AAC to review if the proposed variances maximize the farm's viability.

In reply to queries from Committee, staff noted that the bulletin can be distributed to Council and that staff can work with the AAC to explore policies that would encourage extending the utility connections to the farming area.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (4:53 p.m.).

CARRIED

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Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the Planning Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Tuesday, March 6, 2018.

Councillor Linda McPhail
Chair

Evangel Biason
Legislative Services Coordinator

Subject: FW: Planning Committee, March 6, 2018.

----- Original message -----

From: "John Roston, Mr" <john.roston@mcgill.ca>
Date: 2018-03-06 12:28 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: "McPhail,Linda" <LMcPhail@richmond.ca>
Subject: Planning Committee, March 6, 2018.

Dear Councillor McPhail,

I will be attending the Planning Committee meeting today and with your permission would like to speak briefly on both the Affordable Housing Strategy and the Agricultural Advisory Committee annual report. I will read out the comments below.

John

john.roston@mcgill.ca
John Roston
12262 Ewen Avenue
Richmond, BC V7E 6S8
Phone: 604-274-2726
Fax: 604-241-4254

Re: Affordable Housing Strategy

A major component of the affordable housing strategy should be increasing the total number of family friendly units available for rent, not just the LEMR units, so that increased supply will lead to lower rents. There has to be a change from building what investors want to building what Richmond families need. We also have to change investors who buy units and leave them empty from part of the problem to part of the solution.

More Multi-Bedroom Units

Condo developers currently have no incentive to build mostly multi-bedroom units needed by young families when they can make a lot more money faster by selling the smaller units that are most attractive to investors. The developer could be given fast track permit approvals for buildings where at least 50% of the units are a decent size with two bedrooms and at least an additional 25% of the units have three bedrooms or more.

New Type of Condo Building Structure

Many condo units remain empty because the owners, especially foreign ones, see renting as too much of a hassle. A new type of condo building could be created with bylaws specifying that the condo owner must agree when purchasing a unit that the condo building manager is responsible for renting out, at market rates, all units not occupied by the owner, or a close relative of the owner. The city could also make use of the same building manager to rent out the affordable housing units at lower cost than finding a separate affordable housing manager.

This condo building structure can be made attractive to condo investors by having all rent revenue in the building go into a common fund, from which all expenses are deducted, and the investors then share in the profits according to the size of their unit. No owner gets preferential treatment. It doesn't matter to an owner if his or her unit is temporarily vacant, or the unit next door has a higher rent, because all revenue and expense is shared by all the owners.

Re: Agricultural Advisory Committee 2017 AAC Annual Report
Attachment 1, Page PLN-188, second item "City Policy Initiatives"

“Received information on the proposed changes to the City's AG1 (Agriculture) zone on establishing limits to residential development. This included a special stakeholders meeting with members of the AAC, RFI and the Richmond Farmland Owners Association.”

I note that the stakeholders meeting did not include members of Richmond FarmWatch or other group representing the interests of Richmond citizens who certainly have a stake in the preservation of Richmond farmland for future generations. There are Richmond FarmWatch members who are owners of ALR properties and whose views do not coincide with those of the Richmond Farmland Owners Association.

There is also the question as to whether any of the members of the AAC were in a conflict of interest due to their ownership of farmland and the maximum house size influence on the value of that farmland. If yes, then the Committee had the option of saying that due to conflicts of interest, it was not able to provide a recommendation as to maximum house size.

There is no question that the AAC does valuable work, but it's important that its work schedule for 2018 include a review of its policies on consulting widely and conflicts of interest to ensure that it continues to be an independent advisory group and doesn't morph into a lobby group for special interests.

