



Planning Committee

Date: Tuesday, March 19, 2024

Place: Council Chambers
Richmond City Hall

Present: Councillor Bill McNulty, Chair
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Carol Day
Councillor Andy Hobbs

Absent: Councillor Chak Au

Also Present: Councillor Kash Heed
Councillor Michael Wolfe (by teleconference)

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
March 5, 2024, be adopted as circulated.*

CARRIED

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

1. AMENDMENTS TO THE BUILDING REGULATION BYLAW NO. 7230

(File Ref. No. 12-8360-01) (REDMS No. 7577843)

In response to queries from the Committee, staff noted (i) delay in construction is often the result of events beyond the constructors' control (e.g., labour, supplies), (ii) amendments to the City's bylaw limits the length of time construction can be dormant to 180 days (between inspections) and permits closer scrutiny of dormant projects, and (iii) failure to remove a temporary building after a period of one year, or as directed by the Inspector, has a penalty of \$500 per day.

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That Building Regulation Bylaw No.7230, Amendment Bylaw No. 10506, be introduced and given first, second and third readings;*
- (2) *That Notice of Bylaw Violation Dispute Adjudication Bylaw No. 8122, Amendment Bylaw No. 10504, be introduced and given first, second and third readings;*
- (3) *That Municipal Ticket Information Authorization Bylaw No. 7321, Amendment Bylaw No. 10505, be introduced and given first, second and third readings; and*
- (4) *The Consolidated Fees Bylaw No. 8636, Amendment Bylaw No. 10544, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.*

CARRIED

2. RICHMOND HERITAGE COMMISSION 2023 ANNUAL REPORT AND 2024 WORK PROGRAM AND BUDGET ALLOCATION

(File Ref. No. 01-0100-30-HCOM1-01) (REDMS No. 7575141)

It was moved and seconded

That the Richmond Heritage Commission's 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Work Program and Budget Allocation, as presented in the staff report titled "Richmond Heritage Commission 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Work Program and Budget Allocation", dated February 20, 2024, from the Director of Policy Planning, be approved.

CARRIED

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3. **HOUSING AGREEMENT BYLAW NO. 10545 TO PERMIT THE CITY OF RICHMOND TO SECURE AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS AT 6851 AND 6871 ELMBRIDGE WAY**

(File Ref. No.)

Staff noted the Housing Agreement provides 35 Low-End Market Rental (LEMR) units.

It was moved and seconded

That Housing Agreement (6851 and 6871 Elmbridge Way) Bylaw No. 10545 to permit the City to enter into a Housing Agreement substantially in the form attached hereto, in accordance with requirements of section 483 of the Local Government Act, to secure the Affordable Housing Units required by rezoning application RZ 17-782750, be introduced and given first, second and third readings.

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued with respect to the documentation provided by potential occupants, as required, and the validity of the declarations sworn.

In response to queries from the Committee, staff noted (i) the statutory declaration requested by the City is a notarized response to a City prompt to confirm household income, which is reviewed bi-annually, (ii) staff maintain regular dialogue with non-profit and regular property managers, and (iii) the operator validates the documentation provided by potential occupants, any change to the process would require a review of the City provision/policy for LEMR units.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

4. **LOW-END MARKET RENTAL (LEMR) PROGRAM AND LEMR UNIT MANAGEMENT**

(File Ref. No. 08-4057-051) (REDMS No. 7575578)

Staff provided a brief overview of the report, noting (i) the City of Richmond has been a leader in the region in securing affordable housing for low and moderate income households, with over 530 LEMR units constructed since 2007 and approximately 820 that have received approval from Council, and (ii) in 2017, the City's Affordable Housing Strategy was updated, resulting in updates to the LEMR program which has helped to ensure housing in Richmond remains within reach of low income households and in particular, households that need family friendly housing with 2 or 3 bedroom units.

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In response to queries from the Committee, staff reviewed the recommendations of the report noting (i) the report is in response to previous referrals for staff to look at options for the management and operation of existing and future LEMR units in Richmond, (ii) the recommendation for staff to engage in discussions with BC Housing is to gain a better understanding of the role of BC Housing in the operation and management of LEMR units and to report back to Council on those discussions, and (iii) under the existing Council policy, a non-profit operator is strongly preferred when LEMR units are consolidated in a separate building.

Discussion ensued with respect to (i) the benefits of a centralized registry/wait list, e.g., identifying all applicants in one list, household income thresholds, and how long applicants have been waiting, (ii) prioritization of Richmond residents, and (iii) establishing compliance.

Staff advised that the statutory declaration process is intended to ensure compliance with the terms of the affordable housing agreement. Property managers are provided with a chart to confirm the income that is being charged to the tenant, which is also acknowledged through their statutory declaration that they are abiding by the terms and conditions of the agreement; they are not overcharging for rent and not charging for other fees such as strata fees, move-in/move-out fees. It was further noted in the last Statutory Declaration Process (2021) there was a high level of compliance achieved (93%), and where there were areas of non compliance, they were for the most part to do with income adjustment related to supplemental COVID financial support provided which put certain tenants over the threshold and/or landlords charging move-in/move out fees, which have since been addressed.

Further discussion ensued regarding the 4 options set out in the report, noting staff's recommendation of Option 2, to explore the role of BC Housing in managing the LEMR units.

It was moved and seconded

That staff be authorized, via an expression of interest, to explore opportunities to retain an independent organization to manage the Low-End Market Rental (LEMUR) Program and report back to Council.

The question on the motion was not called as a brief discussion ensued with respect to introducing and administering a centralized list of qualified, and appropriately vetted Richmond applicants.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

The Chair noted the upcoming retirement of Joe Erceg, General Manager, Planning, and expressed appreciation on behalf of the Committee, for his 26 years of service to the City.

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ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded
That the meeting adjourn (4:58 p.m.).

CARRIED

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 Monday, March 19, 2024.

Councillor Bill McNulty
Chair

Lorraine Anderson
Legislative Services Associate