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**To:** Mayor and Councillors  
**From:** Terry Crowe  
Manager, Policy Planning  
**Date:** March 16, 2006  
**File:** 08-4050-11/2006-Vol 01  
**Re:** **West Cambie Area Plan - Public Meetings - Summary**

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As directed by Council, staff held two public meetings on the proposed West Cambie Area Plan Bylaw 8029, Local Area Development Cost Charge (DCC) Bylaw 8031 and City-wide DCC Bylaw 8037 on Thursday, March 9, 2006.

The purpose of this memorandum is to present the results of these meetings.

**A. Meeting with the Development Community (March 9, 2006 Afternoon)**

The following developers were in attendance:

- Tom Morton, Wing Li (Palladium)
- Scott Baldwin, Steve Jedreicich (Polygon)
- Tiffany Duzita, Nathan Hildebrand (First Pro)
- Rodney Rao, Richard Wittstock (Amacon)
- Farid Damji, Muhammed Virani, Nazim Panju (Ismali Council)
- John O'Donnell (Ledingham/McAllister)
- Kyle Shurry (Townline)
- Norm Couttie (Adera)
- Brian Dagneault (Planning Consultant)
- Peter Simpson (GVHBA)

The key points that came out of the meeting and staff's responses are as follows:

1. The developers want to ensure that there is some flexibility in the proposed required parcel sizes for rezonings.

*Staff will use some discretion and flexibility when interpreting the required parcel size guidelines.*

2. The property owners don't recognize that it is more expensive to develop in Alexandra.

*This will become apparent as development occurs in the neighbourhood, in light of today's costs.*

3. The economics of development are expensive (the City is asking too much from developers).

Suggestions to address this included:

- (a) Give developers in the Alexandra area a break on the City-wide DCCs;

*It would be very difficult and perhaps impossible, to determine, in the City-wide DCC Program, how to charge development in the Alexandra neighbourhood, less than development elsewhere.*

- (b) Transfer the \$22,318,398 natural area from the Local Area DCC to the City-wide DCC;

*Natural areas are typically funded by City-wide DCCs, and for consistency sake the Province may argue that's where they belong; however, including them in the City-wide DCC would probably mean that the lands would have a low City acquisition priority, and properties may not be purchased for a number of years because of other City-wide priorities (e.g., Terra Nova natural area).*

*Furthermore, the natural area benefits the local area the most because this area is a link for local residents to move about the area and it would seem to be more a neighbourhood asset than a community wide asset.*

*Staff recommend leaving the natural area in the Local Area DCC Bylaw.*

- (c) Increase the municipal assist factor in the DCC Programs;

*The assist factor for the Local Area DCC must be the same as for the City-wide DCC, currently 1 percent. Changing the local assist factor would require an equivalent change in the City-wide DCC, creating a much larger liability for the City.*

- (d) Raise the permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR), for example from 1.7 to 1.9; and

*Not recommended; requires a reassessment of the infrastructure requirements and increases the servicing costs.*

- (e) Include the north-south roads in the Local Area DCC.

*City staff are prepared to recommend that the three north/south roads be added to the Local Area DCC Program. This involves:*

- *Amending Local Area DCC Bylaw 8031;*
- *All development in the Alexandra area would assist with road land acquisition [at the proposed rate of \$45 per square foot] and assist with road construction costs;*
- *Developers build the roads and pay all of these costs;*
- *As developers build the roads, they receive a DCC credit, for the amount of the roads which they build, but only up to the amount of the DCC Program rate [e.g. \$45 per square foot for land].*
- *To receive financial compensation for the cost of the roads which they build above the DCC credit, developers enter into a "front-end" agreement with the City.*
- *As the City collects DCCs, the City pays developers back at the above rate.*
- *The DCC Program road rate may be adjusted annually by the City.*

- (f) It was suggested by one developer that the \$45 ft<sup>2</sup> used to calculate the land costs for road was too low.

*The \$45 ft<sup>2</sup> is consistent with current market rates.*

**B. Meeting with the Neighbourhood (March 9, 2006 Evening)**

Around 80 members of the public were in attendance.

The following questions/points were made:

1. Was the cost of the north-south road being reviewed because it has a big impact on property values (e.g., could they be included in the DCC Program)?

*Yes (see point 3e above)*

2. Concern was expressed about the amount of traffic through the area.

*This concern is addressed via the proposed traffic calming devices, and the geometric design and pattern of the internal roads as part of the Area Plan, which will discourage non-local traffic from using internal roads for short-cutting and speeding.*

3. Could the public get a copy of the Transportation Department's traffic analysis?

*A summary of the analysis and rationale for the road and access patterns was provided to Brian Dagneault in a letter dated July 18, 2005.*

*It stated:*

*"...The rationale for the recently approved road layout and road access points is to support the amount of vehicular traffic anticipated from the proposed land use for the West Cambie Area. Based on the ultimate projection of the proposed land use and industry-recognized trip generation rates published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers, it is estimated that a total of approximately 8,700 vehicular trips would be generated by this area in the afternoon peak hour in the area. In the best case where these trips are evenly distributed among the proposed ten road access points, approximately 870 vehicles could be expected at each of them.*

*The above level of vehicular traffic expected at each of the access points is considered to be marginally acceptable as it already slightly exceeds the maximum limit suggested by the Transportation Association of Canada for a collector roadway. Any reduction of the number of access points would result in long-term adverse impacts on the circulation of traffic in the overall area. As such, all ten access points proposed are considered to be essential to support the proposed land use and meeting with City's objective to ensure the livability of this neighbourhood."*

*A copy of this information can be provided to other interested parties*

4. The number of intersections on Cambie Road and need for a traffic signal was questioned.

*Three new access points (intersections) are proposed along Cambie Road, between Garden City Road and No. 4 Road, in the Area Plan. As indicated above (point #3), all three will be required to support the amount of vehicular traffic anticipated from the proposed land use. Traffic signals are proposed and will be installed when warranted to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of vehicular traffic in/out of the West Cambie Area.*

5. It was noted that, if there is an accident on No. 4 Road and Alderbridge Way, traffic uses Alexandra Road as a short cut.

*This concern can be alleviated with the traffic calming devices, and geometric design and pattern of the internal roads currently proposed as part of the Area Plan, which will discourage non-local traffic from using internal roads for short-cutting and speeding.*

6. Concern was expressed that by designating the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) as Natural Park, the sale value of these properties was diminished.

*A fair market assessment of the properties will be made during the process of negotiation for acquisition.*

7. The amount of money (\$22,318,398) in the Local Area DCC Bylaw is insufficient to purchase the approximately 14 acres of Natural Park.

*The southeast green space is comprised of:*

- Natural Area - 11 acres - to be purchased,
- Natural Park - 3 acres – from the future consolidation of a portion of Alexandra Road.

*The Local Area DCC has been estimated based on recent property sales in the area at up to \$2 million per acre. The budgeted amount should be sufficient to acquire the land. The City can update the DCC rates bylaw annually if current estimates prove insufficient.*

8. The location of the linear North Parkway and South Parkway should be shown/shared between properties, rather than in some cases, being wholly shown/located on individual properties.

*These areas are linear parks. The northern linear park/greenway is adjacent to Tomsett Elementary school/park and expands the open space overall. Separating the properties would create smaller lots which would be isolated.*

*The southern linear park has been sited to ensure that the green corridor is in line with the northern section and is a single property designated as park/open space.*

*The single property also serves as a buffer between two distinct proposed land uses in the area plan.*

9. Why are the North Parkway and South Parkway so wide? Properties with this designation on them could be orphaned and experience drainage problems if the development around them is higher.

*The North Parkway adds needed total open space to the area by building on the existing Tomsett School/Park site. The area is for passive recreation, as well as to provide a strong North/South linkage that ties the entire open space system in the section together.*

*Adjacent property owners will be responsible to ensure that drainage is not diverted to neighbouring properties, when redeveloping.*

10. The West Cambie Area Plan Land Use Map could be changed to show the proposed Alexandra Way walkway partially on both properties all along its length, rather than in some cases, being wholly shown as if it is to be located on individual properties.

*As there is flexibility in siting the walkway, so that it may be a shared responsibility, it is not necessary to modify the proposed Land Use Map.*

11. Would the appraisal value of a property be used to determine its value, if required for park land?

*A fair market value would be used based on the sale of comparable properties elsewhere. Property owners and the City would both undertake independent realty appraisals prior to sale/offers to purchase.*

12. The public wants assurance that there is some flexibility in interpreting the minimum required parcel sizes.

*Yes, staff will use some discretion and flexibility when interpreting the required parcel size guidelines.*

13. Why are the roads curved and not in a straight line (results in an increased loss of value to a property owner)? Wouldn't it be better for the roads to be staggered on No. 4 Road?

*From a traffic operation and safety perspective, the east/west road south of Odlin Road is proposed to curve to the south to connect to Fisher Gate to avoid creating two closely spaced t-intersections on No. 4 Road. The distance between two such intersections would be approximately 55m, measured between road right-of-ways, which would not be supportable taking the following factors into consideration: function of No. 4 Road as a major arterial road, left-turn storage requirement (the need for back to back left-turn storage within a very constrained distance), short spacing between two intersections that may warrant for signalization, and guidelines published by the Transportation Association of Canada.*

14. Could the DCC Bylaws be changed now if the calculations (e.g. \$45 ft<sup>2</sup> for land) upon which they're based too low?

*DCC Bylaws may be updated annually to keep abreast of cost increases. Staff would prefer to utilize this approach since we believe that the existing calculations are sound.*

15. Aren't there court cases about a municipality designating properties for "park" or "road" purposes (e.g. how soon will the City purchase the park lands)?

*As long as the City is actively collecting money to acquire the parks, they can be designated.*

16. Why not include the east-west roads in the Local Area DCC Bylaw too?

*The north-south roads have much greater impact on properties than the east-west roads because of the lot orientation in the Alexandra area. The Province may raise issues with respect to the consistency of servicing types to be included in DCC bylaw since local roads are not normally included in a DCC Bylaw.*

17. How would a developer be reimbursed for a north-south road if it is included in the Local Area DCC Bylaw (e.g., Development Coordinated Works)?

*For servicing in the Local DCC Bylaw, developers who dedicate and build the north-south road would be eligible for DCC credits to the maximum of the DCCs to be paid, or the estimated cost of the project in the DCC Program, whichever is lesser.*

*Any further DCC rebates from the DCC Program would be by means of a front-enders' agreement to a maximum of the project in the DCC Program, or the actual project cost, whichever is lesser (e.g., actual project road cost \$90,000, project road DCC budget \$100,000, DCCs to be paid \$40,000; DCC credits \$40,000, DCC rebates \$50,000 by a front-enders agreement).*

*The same principle would apply to services in the City-wide DCC Bylaw (e.g. actual project road cost \$125,000, project road DCC budget \$100,000, DCCs to be paid \$40,000; DCC credits \$40,000, DCC rebates \$60,000, by a front-enders agreement).*

18. Won't the City receive more taxes from this area because of development which it could use to buy park land?

*Yes, the City will receive more taxes from this area when it is developed. However, only a very small percentage of the City budget is available for capital works or land acquisition; the large majority of the budget is for regular City operations, such as police, fire, public works maintenance, parks and recreation services, etc. With 6,000 new people expected, the demand for those services will increase accordingly. In addition, the City already pays for a small percentage of the projects and acquisitions in the DCC programs through the assist factor.*

19. Would the City consider increasing the density to compensate for the cost of the north-south roads?

*This has been considered but would require a reassessment of the infrastructure requirements and increase the servicing costs. It has been discussed with the development community and the response has been that it would be hard to accommodate a higher FAR in a four storey, wood frame apartment building, which is generally accepted.*

20. One individual made a number of points about: drainage issues; the amount of park land; traffic backing up at the intersections; the lack of bikeways; the proposed Wal Mart store; the difference between 5% - 20% affordable housing; the use of energy alternatives; establishing a "pesticide free" zone; the school field is not big enough; concerns about airport noise; and that the previous open houses were a complete failure.

*Property flooding was a comment that one resident identified. Development of the area is contingent on upgrading several major conveyances along with two significant upgrades to the pump stations serving the West Cambie Area. Upgrades to this infrastructure will benefit all the existing properties as well as all the proposed development.*

*The amount of park and open space in the Alexandra section of West Cambie is addressed in a separate memorandum to Richmond City Council from the Manager, Parks – Programs, Planning & Design dated March 7, 2006.*

*The concern related to traffic backing up at intersections will be addressed with the traffic improvements along the arterial roads proposed as part of the Area Plan, including new traffic signals, turning bays, road widening for new bike lanes, etc., which enhance the efficient movements of traffic and alleviate existing congestion issues.*

*Two dedicated bike routes are included, one existing (along Garden City Road) and one proposed (along Alderbridge Way) in the Area Plan. In addition, all internal roads would be "cyclist-friendly" with the traffic calming measures and pedestrian enhancement (high street) proposed as part of the Area Plan.*

*The Wal Mart proposal will be a separate rezoning application, involving its own review process and Public Hearing.*

*More than 5% affordable housing may be obtained in the neighbourhood. To increase the target to 20% for the purposes of calculating the Interim Amenity Guidelines would make the affordable housing contribution prohibitive in what has already been stated to be a costly area to develop.*

*Staff will pursue energy alternatives at the Development Permit stage.*

*The notion of a "pesticide free" zone will be discussed with the City's Environmental Programs staff and does not need to be reflected in the West Cambie Area Plan.*

*The size of the school field is addressed in correspondence from the Richmond School District and a separate memorandum from the Manager, Policy Planning dated March 16, 2006.*

*The Airport Authority has been consulted regarding the West Cambie Area Plan.*

*Staff consider the West Cambie open houses to have been very worthwhile and productive, as a high degree (e.g., 80%) of consensus has been achieved for the West Cambie Area Plan.*

### **Summary**

Staff recommend:

- no changes to the proposed West Cambie Area Plan Bylaw 8029;
- no changes to City-wide DCC Bylaw 8037; and
- that Council direct staff to bring forward a new amended Local Area DCC Bylaw to include the north-south roads in the Alexandra neighbourhood.

If the latter recommendation is endorsed, staff will prepare a report for the March 27, 2006 Council meeting that will:

- 1) recommend that Local Area DCC Bylaw 8031 be abandoned;
- 2) recommend that an amended Local Area DCC Bylaw including the north-south roads be introduced and given first, second and third reading; and
- 3) outline the financial implications of this new bylaw (estimated to increase the Local Area DCCs by approximately \$2-\$3 ft<sup>2</sup>, for multi family development.

For clarification, please contact me at 604-276-4139.



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TTC/HB:hb

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