



MINUTES

Community Planning Advisory Committee

Wednesday, March 2, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.
Via Zoom

PRESENT: Acting Chair – Jason Robertson; Members – Brian Childs, Jennifer Sibbald, Steve Frankel, Tamara Hutchinson; Council Liaison – Marsh Stevens; Director of Development Services, Jake Belobaba; Senior Planner & Recorder – Christina Hovey

ABSENT: Members – Abbas Farahbakhsh, Jason Harrison

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm.

It was moved, seconded and carried that Jason Robertson be the acting chair for the meeting. Acting Chair Jason Robertson acknowledged with gratitude that Ladysmith is located on the traditional unceded territories of the Stz'uminus First Nation.

1. AGENDA APPROVAL

It was moved, seconded and carried that the Agenda of March 2, 2022 be approved.

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

It was moved, seconded and carried that the Minutes of February 2, 2022 be approved.

3. COUNCIL REFERRALS

None.

4. NEW BUSINESS

CPAC Comments for OCP Steering Committee

As requested by the CPAC meeting in February, this meeting was convened to allow CPAC time to provide preliminary comments to make to the Official Community Plan (OCP) Review Steering Committee. Jake Belobaba provided a brief update on the status of the OCP project. Member Jennifer Sibbald is the CPAC representative on the OCP Steering Committee and will bring CPACs comments forward to the OCP Steering Committee.

There was a high level of consensus among the members present. CPAC brought forward the following considerations for the OCP Review:

- **Need for Neighbourhood Connectivity and Amenities:**
 - Concern with creating neighbourhoods that lack access to amenities within walking distance. Walkable neighbourhoods need to have destinations where people can walk to. South Ladysmith was the main example where there is a large residential area with few other land uses: few parks, no local commercial, no schools, recreation & community centers, or other government services. There is a need to design neighborhoods that de-incentivize driving.
 - Concern with “urban sprawl” and neighborhood connectivity, not only to amenities, but also between neighborhoods as well as to natural areas and greenspaces where people can recreate.

- Need to focus on creating/preserving greenspaces and parks to serve new neighbourhoods. “Cash in lieu” of parkland should only be considered in the context of a bigger plan for parkland.
- **Need for Stronger Environmental/Development Standards:**
 - The CPAC recommends that the town be ambitious in its commitments and take a leadership role in reducing GHG emissions and building resilience to climate change.
 - The CPAC strongly recommends that the town consider adopting policy to ensure that vulnerable ecosystems are protected from future development. An example of this would be making policy and/or value statements in the OCP about the protection of at-risk Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystems, represented by areas like Arbutus Ridge. Mechanisms for protection could include designating vulnerable areas in DPA’s as Conservation Areas or Natural Parks, or including strong policy in the OCP about advocating to the Province about protection of vulnerable habitats.
 - Need for better tree and vegetation preservation/retention and more/better tree planting, particularly with regard to new developments. Clearing of vegetation in new developments should be kept to a minimum, and where landscaping or mitigation for vegetation removal are required, native species and/or drought tolerant, non-invasive plant species should be used.
 - The CPAC recommends that the town motivate developers to preserve vegetation/greenspace rather than allowing expansive tree clearing. Retaining existing vegetation in newly developed areas serves many important functions, e.g.,: improved visual quality, better stormwater retention, provides habitat for birds and other wildlife, improves air quality. Replanting after development should be seen as a less ideal option than retaining existing vegetation because of time lag it takes new vegetation to provide these important function (i.e., decades).
 - Need for better stormwater management: maximizing permeable surfaces and properly controlling and treating run off is important for reducing the impacts of drought and storm events on both habitats and human infrastructure.
 - The CPAC suggests actions such as adopting Best Practices like *Stormwater Planning: A Guide Book for BC* and adopting permeability standards in zoning bylaws. This will be an important component of building communities that are resilient to climate change.
- **Need for High Quality Development:**
 - Considering the rapid rate of development and the high cost of housing, the Town needs to protect residents/future residents by ensuring that the standards of construction and development are high:
 - Adopting the BC Energy Step Code was presented as one way to improve construction standards as well as energy efficiency. The CPAC recommends that the Town be ambitious in selecting which Step on the Step Code to adopt. For example, inefficient methods of heating, like baseboard heating, should be removed from building codes.
 - In the OCP we are talking about increasing density and having more multiple developments so we need to ensure that these buildings are

designed “smartly” to the benefit of future residents in terms of quality of life and costs over the long term. For example, ensuring the site plan allows for easy garbage collection.

- As such, the CPAC suggests that the Town adopt high-level policy in the OCP that focus on quality of life for people living in multi-family developments.
- Need for better standards for high-quality and sustainable building materials.
- Landscaping should be more extensive and better suited to the local environment (e.g., native species and/or drought tolerant, non-invasive plant species).

The committee also highlighted climate change mitigation and adaptation as well as housing affordability as major concerns.

5. MONTHLY BRIEFING

File Updates:

The following files that CPAC previously reviewed have been to Council since the last meeting:

- 631 1st Ave (3360-21-11)

CPAC members can review the Council Agendas and Minutes or call staff for further information.

6. NEXT MEETING - TBD

7. ADJOURNMENT

It was moved, seconded and carried that the meeting be adjourned at 8:47pm.


Belief of . _____
Acting Chair (J. Robertson)

RECEIVED:



Corporate Officer (D. Smith)