

## **COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE**

**November 5, 2013: 5:30 p.m.  
Committee Room #2, City Hall (511 Royal Avenue)**

### **MINUTES**

#### **VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT**

Councillor Jaimie McEvoy	- Chair
Norah Andrew	- Community Member
Catherine Cheng	- Community Member (arrived at 5:37 p.m.)
Ashley Currie	- School District No. 40 Representative
Chinu Das	- Community Member
Yasser Elmasri	- Community Member
Briana Tomkinson	- Community Member
Christine Vickers	- Community Member

#### **REGRETS:**

Nancy Brar	- Community Member
Judith Hockney	- Fraser Health Representative
Lillian Whitmore	- Community Member

#### **STAFF:**

John Stark	- Senior Social Planner
Tristan Johnson	- Planning Analyst
Alison Worsfold	- Recording Clerk

The meeting was called to order at 5:33 p.m.

#### **1.0 ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

There were no additions to the agenda.

#### **2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

##### **2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of October 8, 2013**

#### **MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the minutes of the Community and Social Issues Committee meeting held on October 8, 2013 be received and adopted.*

**CARRIED.**

All members of Committee present voted in favour of the motion.

## 3.0 PRESENTATIONS

### 3.1 New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy – John Stark

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, provided a power point presentation regarding the New Westminster Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy, and highlighted the following:

- The City has wanted to investigate family friendly housing options for the past several years;
- One of the goals is to increase enrollment in our local schools;
- The City is currently looking at how New Westminster compares to other municipalities throughout Metro Vancouver;
- New Westminster ranks 19<sup>th</sup> when compared to other municipalities in Metro Vancouver in regards to children and youth (0-17 years of age) in proportion of the total population;
- New Westminster is ranked below the Metro Vancouver average of children and youth as a proportion of the total population;
- New Westminster ranks second to last of all municipalities throughout Metro Vancouver when looking at ground-oriented housing as a percentage of all housing;
- 35.3% of housing units in New Westminster are two bedroom units (4th out of 22 municipalities in Metro Vancouver) and 26.8% of housing units in New Westminster are three-plus bedroom units (20th out of 22 municipalities in Metro Vancouver);
- The City's Official Community Plan (OCP) maintains the following two goals related to housing:
  - Encourage the private market to supply a sufficient amount of housing in terms of cost, features, location, size and type;
  - Facilitate the provision of a variety of ground-oriented housing opportunities which meet the present and future needs of new residents;
- The City's Downtown Community Plan (2011) includes the following goal and action related to family-friendly housing:
  - The Downtown area will be a family-friendly neighbourhood with sufficient services and amenities to meet the needs of households with children and youth;
  - It will encourage the development of ground-oriented housing units, and establish guidelines for unit size distribution;
- The draft Queensborough Community Plan requires that a diversity of unit types are available within the community;
- 32.4% of homes in New Westminster are ground-oriented, whereas 59.9% of homes throughout all of Metro Vancouver are ground-oriented;

- In March 2013, the *Society for Children and Youth of BC* approached the City regarding its interest in an initiative termed ‘Municipal Strategies for Implementing Child and Youth Friendly Communities;’
  - The project will create an overarching Child and Youth Strategy for New Westminster;
  - The strategy will act as a template for other municipalities and will be presented at the 2015 *Cities Fit for Children* conference.
- A Child and Youth Friendly Community is described as one that upholds child rights as detailed in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; and,
- There will be eight domains (working, living, caring, learning, sense of place, moving, playing and engaging), each of which will have a vision, context, goals and indicators.

**Procedural Note:** Catherine Cheng arrived at 5:37 p.m.

### 3.2 Family-Friendly Housing Initiative – John Stark and Tristan Johnson

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, advised that the City will be developing a Family-Friendly Housing Policy. This policy will inform the Zoning Bylaw and may include Design Guidelines. The policy will form part of a larger Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy. The proposed methodology is as follows:

- Conduct case study research to identify promising practices;
- Analyze the housing stock, including by city and by neighbourhood;
- Consult with families;
- Prepare a draft policy;
- Consult with the community and developers;
- Revise and finalize the draft policy;
- Seek Council endorsement; and,
- Implement the policy.

Mr. Stark noted that the Community and Social Issues Committee can play a vital role in the development of the Child and Youth Friendly Community Strategy and the Family-Friendly Housing Policy, and there will be numerous opportunities for engagement, as well as strategy and policy review.

Discussion ensued and the following comments were noted:

- The City of Vancouver has conducted a study around critical mass in multi-family housing buildings that staff could further investigate;
- Local multi-family building developments have appealed to younger families by including community spaces and playgrounds;
- There is a high ratio of seniors in our City. Although this is common today, it would be ideal to see an increase in our youth population;

- The policy should take into consideration the needs of families who are looking to possibly move to the City of New Westminster;
- City staff plan to gather information from surrounding municipalities when drafting the policy;
- The City should look at modifying the existing housing designations to ensure that the housing stock is more appealing and affordable to young families;
- Allowing homes to maintain rental suites aids in housing affordability for young families;
- City staff are looking at gathering information in regards to housing affordability for the different neighbourhoods throughout the City;
- Health is a major goal that should be addressed in the policy, as statistics show that diabetes rates in our City are increasing;
- Youth in Queensborough have indicated that many of their friends reside on the mainland, which inhibits their relationships with their friends;
- The City should ensure that families reside in an area that can be easily reached by transit, so that schools are easily accessed;
- Under provincial funding, the New Westminster schools will soon incorporate Neighbourhood Learning Centres (community complex's attached to schools); and,
- If the City wants to see the growth for schools and children, we need to ensure that there is housing available, appealing park spaces, and a strong sense of community.

## **4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **4.1 Social Inclusion Update**

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, provided the following update regarding Social Inclusion:

- People in the 25-34 year old age group in New Westminster feel more alone than people younger and older than them, and also find that it is hard to make friends with people younger and older than them;
- The City is investigating options to reach out to the 25-34 year old age group to make them feel more socially included;
- The City is interested in researching social inclusion in Washington State, as at last meeting Ross Chilton stated that the State has been highly successful at employing people with disabilities; and,
- Health and activity limitations surrounding the disabled population will be a topic at the next Community and Social Issues Committee meeting.

## **4.2 Safe Harbour: Respect for All Update**

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, advised that all City facilities will soon be designated as 'Safe Harbour' sites. 'Safe Harbour' is the training of staff to become more aware of diversity, stereotypes and discrimination, and how to deal with negative instances should they arise at the workplace and community.

## **5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

### **5.1 January CSI Meeting – Responding to the Mental Health Crisis**

John Stark, Senior Social Planner, reported the following:

- The mental health crisis will be discussed at a future Community and Social Issues Committee meeting;
- Burnaby has started to investigate the issue of mental health; and,
- The Fraser Health Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) Team is looking at how to effectively deal with mental health individuals on our streets who do not know how to seek assistance, whether it be by offering treatment or supportive housing.

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1. Municipal Strategies for Implementing Child and Youth Friendly Communities**

The report was discussed with items 3.1 and 3.2.

### **6.2 New Westminster – Family Friendly Housing Backgrounder**

The report was discussed with items 3.1 and 3.2.

### **6.3 Surrey Child and Youth Friendly City Strategy**

The following report was discussed with items 3.1 and 3.2.

[http://www.surrey.ca/files/Child\\_and\\_Youth\\_Friendly\\_City\\_Strategy\\_City\\_of\\_Surrey.pdf](http://www.surrey.ca/files/Child_and_Youth_Friendly_City_Strategy_City_of_Surrey.pdf)

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

## **8.0 NEXT MEETING**

**January 7, 2014; 5:30 p.m.; Committee Room #2**

## **9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting concluded at 7:05 p.m.

Certified correct,

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**Councillor J. McEvoy**  
**Chair**

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**Alison Worsfold**  
**Recording Clerk**