



## **COMMUNITY AND SOCIAL ISSUES COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday October 3, 2017 – 5:30 p.m.  
City Hall, Committee Room #2**

### **MINUTES**

#### **VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Councillor Jaime McEvoy	- Chair, City Council Member
Norah Andrew	- Community Member
Dee Beattie	- Community Member
Giuliana Graves	- Community Member
Meredith Haaf	- Community Member
Tasha Henderson	- Community Member
John Hooker	- Community Member
Sukhdeep Jassar	- Fraser Health Representative
Alex McGowan	- Community Member

#### **VOTING MEMBERS REGRETS:**

Nadine Nakagawa	- Community Member
Pam Ralston	- Community Member

#### **GUESTS PRESENT:**

Margaret Eberle	- Planning and Housing Consultant
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#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

April Darke	- Committee Clerk
Claudia Freire	- Social Planner
John Stark	- Community and Social Planner

The meeting was called to order at 5:34 p.m.

### **1.0 ADDITIONS / DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA**

#### **1.1** The following item was added to the agenda:

- Item 6.3 2017 UBCM Convention Update

**MOVED and SECONDED**

*THAT the October 3, 2017 Community and Social Issues Committee agenda be adopted, as amended.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**2.0 ADOPTION OF MINUTES**

**2.1 Adoption of the Minutes of May 23, 2017**

**MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the May 23, 2017 Community and Social Issues Committee meeting minutes be adopted.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**3.0 PRESENTATIONS**

There were no items.

**4.0 UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

There were no items.

**5.0 NEW BUSINESS**

**5.1 Rental Replacement/Inclusionary Zoning Policy Discussion**

John Stark, Social Planner and Margaret Eberle, Planning and Housing Consultant, provided the following presentation:

- Background:
  - Housing Rental replacement
    - Since 2011
      - 55 units have been lost involving 2 buildings located in the 500 block of Royal Avenue which were demolished due to structural issues
  - Market rental housing blocks
    - Were built in the 1960s and 1970s
    - Have not been maintained to adequate standards

- An Inclusionary Zoning Policy is needed that would include new market rental housing
- Municipalities have been looking for creative ways to use the development approval process to deliver:
  - Affordable housing
  - Replace existing purpose built rental buildings with new market rental buildings
- New Westminster is the leader in the region in affordable housing policies
- Rental replacement policies:
  - Incent the market to rebuild new purposeful buildings
  - Provide developers with clear directives on expectations
  - Will be used to determine if there are opportunities for affordable units
  - Are market driven
  - Ensure that the economics piece is primary by incenting developers to build extra density buildings
- Are used by 6 – 7 municipalities in the lower mainland which occasionally:
  - Use 1 to 1 replacement
  - Obtain greater than 1 to 1 replacement
- Inclusionary policies:
  - Can be linked to rental replacement policies
  - Are used to counteract communities from excluding population groups through:
    - Sale and rental prices
    - The type of zoning in place
    - The lack of Senior government funding
  - Are used:
    - as an alternative means to achieve affordable housing
    - by 4 municipalities in the lower mainland
  - A work plan:
    - Is being developed by referencing municipalities' use
    - May involve speaking with:
      - Nonprofit agencies
      - The development community

Mr. Stark advised the Committee that he will report back, answer questions and obtain the Committee's feedback. A draft policy will then be assembled and brought to the Committee for adoption.

Discussion ensued and the Committee noted the following:

- Coquitlam has experienced success within the last year as a result of offering incentives such as:
  - an additional 1.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR)
  - With possible additions of:
    - Further density for affordable housing
    - reduction of permit fees
    - CACs
    - Grants used from the City's Affordable Housing Fund
- Rental replacement is site specific and thus, may exclude areas and place restrictions on land titles
- Due to demand, as many units as possible are needed
- Size exclusion would increase the capacity
- Offer addition incentives, particularly in areas of high density
- Currently developers are wanting to operate their affordable housing units
  - Want to see partnerships in the non-profit sector
  - Want all purpose built rentals
  - Incentives should be high and increased where possible while also ensuring the community about high density
  - Want to see market rentals and co-op housing
  - Want to see a focus on all inclusive developments
  - Ensure the use of covenants to retain market value
  - Ensure that the City maintains control over this issue
  - Four story walk up rentals, which are key to the market rental issues in the city, are not located near transit
  - Consider building economical replacements of 4 or 6 story buildings
  - Consider the single elderly and marketing for this group
  - Availability for housing for families, including 3 bedroom amenities
  - An increasing number of families and individuals are leaving the city due to the high cost of rentals and housing
  - Utilizing the term and labelling "affordable housing" that includes:
    - decreased mortgage terms
    - does not specify renters
    - low income people
  - Try to be bold and innovative with solutions and stay ahead of current trends and solutions
  - Co-op housing and financing:
    - Look at the smaller units of 6 to 12 co-op housing units for examples
      - Pooled funds together independently and did not require CMCH funding
      - Olympic Village is the most recent co-op that did not require government funding

- Create an internal subsidy
- Utilize a creative lender such as VanCity

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Stark and Ms. Eberle provided the following information:

- Additional density, reduced parking requirements in areas that are close to transit and secure market rental housing policy are incentives that are being offered to developers
  - Looking for additional incentives
- The Family Friendly Housing Policy outlines zoning bylaws for multi units
  - Was placed in the zoning bylaw to ensure it applied to every development
    - Rezoning is a possibility
- Will not change or increase density which would require changing the Official Community Plan or rezoning
- These policies can be applied to increasing those existing zoning entitlements
- Would be area specific given the type of development and existing zoning
- Would not apply to a building that was not a purpose built rental
- The Committee is invited to submit their suggestions and recommendations by email after the meeting as well
- The need for the Family Friendly Housing Policy, which came into effect on January 1, 2016, has been questioned due to a decrease in the 6 – 12 year old population in the city
- The need for rental housing is:
  - at 5%
  - with rezoning, it is approaching 8 – 9%
- New Westminster experienced the largest school enrollment increase in the lower mainland of 12% of the 5 – 17 year old population
  - Signs that the city is retaining and/or attracting new families
- Census information will be reflected in 2021
- Municipalities' involvement in co-op housing and financing is addressed by senior levels of government

## 5.2 Social Equity Policy Discussion

Claudia Freire, Social Planner, summarized the document, Social Equity Policy – Draft Public Survey.

In response to questions from the Committee, John Stark, Social Planner, and Ms. Freire provided the following information:

- Producing translated copies of the survey is costly
  - Personnel will assist with the translation
- The topic of barriers will be expanded to determine what the most significant barriers are
- The survey will be revised in the following manner and order:
  - Electronically sent to the Committee
  - Provided to WINS (Welcoming and Inclusive New West Local Immigration Partnership Council) for vetting
  - Piloted with a small group, likely the New Westminster Family Place
  - Provided to Literacy New West for final vetting
  - Then provided to City staff before
  - Being presented to the community
- A draft will be presented to Council in May 2018

**PROCUDURAL NOTE:** The Committee participated in the survey at 6:33 p.m.

Discussion ensued, and the Committee noted that it liked the survey for its:

- Length
- Repetition of content
- Example provided

Discussion ensued, and the Committee made the following suggestions:

- Simplify the language
- Make an online version available, including hyperlinks to the City’s programs and services
- Request that WINS vet the survey
- Expand upon descriptive words such as “facility” to ensure an understanding of the extent of City facilities and what they are
- Provide examples, choices or rankings in place of the open ended questions with:
  - Examples of what other cities are doing
  - Best practices
  - Ideas that are being considered for implementation

In order to get a sense from people if they feel those items or suggestions may be helpful

- Ask questions to determine if people have families
- Discuss:
  - transportation options
  - child care as a barrier

### **5.3 CSI Representative to Sit on Healthier Community Partnership Committee**

John Stark, Social Planner, provided the following presentation:

- The Healthier Community Partnership Committee:
  - Is seeking a representative from the Community and Social Issues Committee for the end of the 2017 term as well as the 2018 term
  - typically meet during the day
  - Meeting dates and times will be sent to the Committee by email
  - Is currently working on a strategic plan and it will be sent to the Committee by email
  - Next meeting is in November 2017

## **6.0 REPORTS AND INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Renovictions Action Plan Implementation and Next Steps**

John Stark, Social Planner, summarized the report dated June 26, 2017 regarding Renovictions Update and Union of BC Municipalities Resolution Related to Proposed Amendments to the Residential Tenancy Act.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Stark provided the following information:

- Settlement organizations are referenced when looking for new tenants
- Information sheets are distributed to rental buildings in 10 different languages

Discussion ensued, and the Committee made the following suggestions:

- Ensure that the information sheets that are distributed to rental buildings include contact information for content interpretation
- Establish contact with all new comers to the city through users of:
  - The City's utilities
  - The Food Bank and amenities
  - Churches and faith based organizations

### **6.2 Rent Bank Update**

John Stark, Social Planner, summarized the report, New Westminister Rent Bank Program.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr. Stark provided the following information:

- Applications
  - Of the 13 that were submitted:
    - 9 were approved
    - The process was not completed by the remaining 4 applicants
- Loans included an administration fee of \$1.00
  - Is paid by the City
  - Funds are taken from the Affordable Housing Fund
- Individuals are also being referred to other community support programs such as:
  - Budgeting
  - Financial literacy

Discussion ensued, and the Committee made the following comments:

- Proud of the New Westminster Rent Bank Program
- Enlist the assistance of the Province of British Columbia Housing

The Committee requested that an invitation be extended to New Westminster MLA, Judy Darcy, to the next meeting of the CSI Committee.

The Committee requested that an invitation be extended to Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Minister, Selena Robinson, to the next meeting of the CSI Committee.

### **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the Community and Social Issues Committee recommend that Council request that the Provincial Government, as part of its Comprehensive Housing Strategy and Poverty Reduction Strategy, consider funding for rent bank programs. This funding would enable rent banks to enhance access to loans, expand financial literacy offerings, and remain sustainable. This would enable eligible renters to maintain their housing in 'temporary crisis' situations and be a preventative and cost-effective measure in addressing homelessness.*

**CARRIED.**

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

## **MOVED AND SECONDED**

*THAT the Community and Social Issues Committee recommend that Council communicate to the Provincial Government a need for more urgent action on housing and renovictions than that which will be addressed in later legislation.*

**CARRIED.**

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

**PROCEDUREAL NOTE:** Alex McGowan left the meeting at 7:15 p.m.

### **6.3 2017 UBCM Convention Update**

Councillor McEvoy advised the Committee that the issues of housing, renovictions and Intelligent City were discussed by Council with:

- several Ministers and Ministerial Staff
- the Minister of Municipal Affairs
- the Family Development Ministry
- the Minister of Social Development
- Airbnb
- Andrew Weaver, Leader of the Green Party of British Columbia

Discussions were constructive and productive.

Announcements from UBCM included:

- 7 new addiction treatment centres will be opened with the majority being located in the lower mainland
- Construction has already begun on 2,000 housing units
- The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions will focus on fentanyl overdoses

New Westminster Council offered to provide the Ministries with information on pilot projects administered by and within the City.

Discussions ensued and the Committee noted the following:

- Seniors, who have little or no financial means, are being placed into care facilities that do not take into consideration the specific needs of those individuals

## **7.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items.

**8.0 NEXT MEETING**

**December 5, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at City Hall, Meeting Room 1**

**9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

**ON MOTION**, the meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Certified Correct,

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**Councillor Jaime McEvoy**  
**Chair**

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**April Darke**  
**Committee Clerk**