

## DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER

### COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 28, 2012 in the Committee Room of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Present:** Mayor R. Walton  
Councillor R. Hicks  
Councillor M. Little  
Councillor D. MacKay-Dunn  
Councillor L. Muri

**Absent:** Councillor A. Nixon  
Councillor R. Bassam

**Staff:** Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. B. Bydwell, General Manager – Planning, Properties & Permits  
Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks & Facilities  
Mr. J. Gordon, Manager – Administrative Services  
Ms. S. Haid, Manager - Sustainable Community Development  
Mr. K. Bennett, Section Manager – Environmental Protection  
Ms. M. Weston, Section Manager – Public Safety  
Ms. K. Rendek, Policy Planner, Sustainable Community Development  
Mr. R. Taylor, Policy Planner, Sustainable Community Development  
Mr. B. Dunsford, Council Clerk

#### 1. Opening by the Mayor

Mayor Walton welcomed everyone to the Council Workshop.

#### 2. 2012 Natural Hazards Program Highlights

File No. 11.5210.01/000.000

##### Staff Presentation:

Ms. Michelle Weston, Section Manager, Public Safety, delivered a presentation to update Council on activities in regard to the District of North Vancouver's Natural Hazards Program.

Ms. Weston advised that the Natural Hazards Program for 2012 is primarily focused on the following four areas:

##### Mosquito Creek Debris Net Installation

- Approximately two hundred thousand dollars total cost.
- Hazard tree removal in the canyon will begin in March 2012.
- The debris net will be installed in August 2012.
- The net will require periodic 3-5 year maintenance to remove catchment material.

##### Supporting OCP Implementation

- Natural Hazards Program is assisting the Planning Department in further refinement of the flood permit areas.
- Flood studies, that will provide technical flood depth modelling for use in flood development permit area applications, should be completed by July 2012.

- An assessment of the groundwater table in the Lower Capilano area is in its preliminary stages.

#### Debris Flow Warning System (Change in Provider)

- Flowworks now monitors DNV stream gauges. A service previously provided by BGC Engineering.

#### Strengthening Local Emergency Capacity

- Outlined benefits of being a Level 2 Natural Resources Canada natural hazards study area.
- Participating with North Shore Emergency Management Office (NSEMO) on a number of emergency planning projects.
- Participating with Metro Vancouver on regional critical infrastructure protection assessment efforts.

### **Council Discussion:**

Council expressed concerns about a negative public reaction in regards to hazard tree removal activities scheduled for March 2012. In addition to signs being posted in the area, Council requested that further public notification efforts be employed.

Council asked what would happen to the lumber produced from hazard tree removal activities. Staff advised that lower quality wood is usually made available to nearby residents to be used as firewood. Higher quality wood is usually sold.

Council sought clarification on some of the hazard area maps displayed at the meeting. Staff advised that hazard assessment and mapping is in its infancy for the DNV. Better maps and reference materials will be available. Specifically, as a Level 2 Natural Resources Canada natural hazard study area, the DNV will benefit in 2012 from updated surficial geology mapping, vulnerable population mapping, HAZUS projected damage assessments and detailed earthquake modelling.

### **3. Proposed Natural Hazards Development Permit Areas**

File No. 13.6480.01/001.000

#### **Staff Presentation:**

Ms. Susan Haid, Manager, Sustainable Community Development, and Mr. Ken Bennett, Section Manager, Environmental Protection, provided Council with a presentation on Natural Hazards Development Permit Areas (DPAs) and asked that Council provide feedback in preparation for the introduction of new DPAs into the Official Community Plan (OCP) this spring.

Mr. Bennett advised Council that the DPAs are now in final draft form. It is anticipated they will be forwarded for Council's consideration as an amendment to the OCP in May or June 2012.

DPAs define areas that have hazards associated with creeks (flooding, debris flow, and debris flood), landslide and wildfire. The preparation of the new DPAs has been underway as part of the OCP process for approximately two years. Overall, the DPA process provides for greater clarity, coordination and consistency regarding the management of development in areas where natural hazards may exist.

The proposed new DPA process incorporates the Council-adopted Natural Hazard Risk Tolerance Criteria and is anticipated to be more efficient and effective than current approaches. This process only applies to new construction projects and would not be applied to the permitting process on renovations and/or additions to existing structures.

In summation, Mr. Bennett highlighted the following benefits of DPAs:

- Relies upon expertise of professionals;
- Manages safe development;

- Work with on-going district processes (risk management, development process and research);
- Reduces risk and potential liabilities;
- Improves on the old hazard map;
- Exemptions apply for renovations and other uses of minor nature: practical and reasonable; and,
- Administered by staff.

### **Council Discussion:**

Council raised concerns in regard to the impact the proposed DPAs would have on property values and insurance rates. Staff felt the impacts would be minimal, noting that hazards defined by the proposed DPA process already exist. The process is simply a better way of flagging these hazards and proactively preparing for emergency situations.

Council was concerned about negative public reaction. Staff advised that public hearings had already taken place on the matter.

Council queried staff on the issue of a property being within all three natural hazards DPAs and asked if this would make the permit process overly onerous. Staff advised that the process was designed to be efficient; as such, even if a property was located within all three DPAs the property owner/contractor would only fill out a single permit application.

Council commented that the definition of 'new construction' is unclear, specifically in the instance of an existing property being torn down and re-built. Would this be classified as new construction? Staff shared Council's concern and agreed that the definition of 'new construction' may need to be refined.

Council asked staff about wildfire and the possibility of requiring sprinkler systems in single family residential structures through the enactment of a bylaw. Staff advised that this matter was previously brought to the DNV Legal Department. The result was that this requirement is beyond the scope of a municipal bylaw and would have to be imposed through Provincial law.

Councillor Muri left the meeting at 6:07 pm and returned at 6:09 pm.

Council expressed concern that this program may not be aggressive enough in mitigating natural hazards risk. Based on approximately one hundred new construction homes a year being built in the District, it would take a long time for the implications of the DPAs to become widespread. Council suggested that these kinds of restrictions be included into renovation permits in the future. Staff advised this is only a starting point for the District and there will be opportunity to get more aggressive in the future.

Councillor Hicks left the meeting at 6:20 pm.

## **4. Proposed Development Permit for Form and Character of Commercial, Industrial and Multi-Family Development**

File No.

### **Staff Presentation:**

Ms. Karen Rendek and Mr. Ross Taylor, Policy Planners, Sustainable Community Development, provided Council with a presentation on a proposed Development Permit for form and character of commercial, industrial and multi-family developments. The intention is to include these guidelines as part of Schedule B (Development Permit Package) to the Official Community Plan that will come before Council in May or June 2012.

These guidelines will apply to all lands designated commercial, industrial, multi-family and intensive residential

development in the OCP. This includes three park zones (parks, recreation and open space, community park, special purpose park) and all public assembly zones. These guidelines will not apply to single family residential development, institutional development (schools, churches or federal and provincial buildings) and the interior of buildings.

The main objectives of the proposed guidelines for form and character are as follows:

- Placemaking – achieving a distinctive look and feel in each of the town and village centres;
- Connectivity – enhancing the block and the street;
- Design Excellence – creating outstanding and sustainably built form and character;
- Good Neighbour – harmonizing with the scale and character of surrounding development;
- Safety and Security – reducing the opportunities for crime; and,
- Accessibility – ensuring barrier-free development.

Mr. Taylor clarified the scope of a development permit (DP) by outlining the following points:

- DP's are a supplementary tool to the Zoning Bylaw and the Development Servicing Bylaw;
- Council may issue a DP that varies or supplements Zoning Bylaw regulations such as setbacks, building heights, or parking requirements; and,
- Council cannot use a DP to vary the permitted land use or density as specified in the Zoning Bylaw.

### **Council Discussion:**

Council urged staff to think about the amount of maintenance required for design elements. Council cited white railings in the Deep Cove area as an example. Suggesting that the colour choice looks great when first installed but quickly wears when exposed to the elements and, therefore, requires a great deal of maintenance.

Council urged staff to focus on functionality in the guidelines citing weather protection and the availability of parking as important elements to consider.

Council cautioned staff about setting an expectation of a very high level of quality throughout the District, expressing concerns about cost. Council also expressed concern that imposing a very high level of quality would be contrary to some of the statements made about affordability in the new OCP.

Council commented that community involvement, particularly gathering input from local area residents before design decisions are made, is important.

## **5. Adjournment**

The February 28, 2012 Council Workshop was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

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Confidential Council Clerk