

**DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER  
COUNCIL WORKSHOP**

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Minutes of the Council Workshop of the Council for the District of North Vancouver held at 6:12 p.m. on Monday, April 23, 2012 in the Committee Room of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

**Present:** Mayor R. Walton  
Councillor R. Bassam  
Councillor R. Hicks  
Councillor D. MacKay-Dunn  
Councillor L. Muri  
Councillor A. Nixon

**Absent:** Councillor M. Little

**Staff:** Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer  
Mr. B. Bydwell, General Manager – Planning, Properties & Permits  
Mr. B. Dwyer, Manager – Development Services  
Mr. J. Gordon, Manager – Administrative Services  
Ms. S. Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development  
Mr. S. Jenkins – Energy Project Manager  
Mr. R. Boase, Environmental Protection Officer  
Ms. L. Brick, Confidential Council Clerk  
Mr. M. Brown, Community Forester  
Ms. T. Guppy, Community Planner

**1. Opening by the Mayor**

Mayor Walton opened the meeting and welcomed members of the public.

**2. Development Permit Area Regulations: Protection of the Natural Environment**

File No. 13.6480.2/002.000

Presentation: Tamsin Guppy, Community Planning

Report: Tamsin Guppy, Community Planning

Ms. Susan Haid, Manager - Sustainable Community Development, advised that this is the second workshop in a series of Development Permit Area workshops regarding protection of the natural environment. She noted that this work will be brought forward at a regular Council meeting as an amendment to the OCP.

Ms. Tamsin Guppy, Community Planner, reported that one of the key findings from the Official Community Plan process is the importance of the natural character of the North Shore neighbourhoods. The Development Permit regulations serve to limit construction in protected areas, minimize and mitigate the impact in those protected areas where building is unavoidable.

Ms. Guppy outlined the proposed changes to the Protection of the Natural Environment Development Permit and the Streamside Protection Development Permit as follows:

Protection of the Natural Environment Development Area map changes:

- Blanket (parcel based) approach for lots which include defined environmental features;
- Bluffs which are visual assets such as the Eldon Park/Sunset Bluff, Berkley Escarpment, and Pemberton Escarpment are now included;
- Wildlife corridors, including BC Hydro right of ways, are included;
- Corrections based on existing patterns of development;
- Removal of lands which are included in the Streamside Development Permit Area;
- Inclusion of mapped sensitive ecosystems that are in the District's inventory; and,
- Maplewood area industrial lands and water lot areas have been removed.

Protection of the Natural Environment Development Area text changes:

- Clarification of what is protected inside mapped sites, including mature stands of trees, habitat for species at risk, wetlands, raptor nesting sites, and wildlife corridors;
- Exemption language is now included to allow for renovations and regular maintenance; and,
- Guidelines added for development within the protected areas.

Streamside Protection Development Permit continues to:

- Recognize that there are some properties which were built prior to implementation of the plan in 1991 and are existing non-conforming;
- Improve consistency with provincial regulations;
- Allow for exemptions for renovations and regular maintenance;
- Provide clear guidelines and illustrations to identify building restrictions; and,
- Allow staff the ability to issue minor development permits.

Staff advised that the next steps include a public workshop on the proposed Development Permit Areas and consideration of the bylaw at a regular meeting of Council.

Council Discussion:

Staff advised they are not aware of any Federal changes to stream definition; however there have been changes to the Canadian Environmental Approval process. Mr. Stuart advised that some of the changed definitions will clarify if a stream has value to fish, and the highest protection will be afforded to those streams.

Ms. Guppy advised that many municipalities do not have environmental development permit areas; however, those that do extend them into privately owned properties. Of the 26,000 parcels in the District, 4,861 are in the Development Permit Area.

Public Input:

Mr. Corrie Kost;

- Queried what the fee process would be for applicants within the Development Permit Area to make changes to their property.

Staff confirmed that a fee would only be charged if an application were made to make changes to property within the defined area.

Mr. Bill Tracey;

- Expressed concern regarding repairs to property which is within the streamside protection area.

Mr. John Hunter;

- Commented on the definition of stream in the environmental bylaw;

- Queried the time period involved for declaring raptor nests empty; and,
- Expressed concern regarding the short notice for the open house.

Discussion ensued regarding the definition of streams and ditches; staff noted that the definitions are consistent with common practice and provincial wording.

Mr. Peter Thompson:

- Requested a sponsor for workshops to encourage participation and attendance.

Concern was expressed regarding drainage ditches emptying into local streams and the environmental impact; staff advised they have worked towards mitigating this practice in many areas through holding areas, plantings, etc.

The meeting recessed at 6:59 pm and reconvened at 7:03 pm.

**3. Development Permit Area Regulations:  
Wildfire Interface Development Permit Area Regulation  
File No. 13.6480.01/001.000**

Presentation: Susan Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development, and Mark Brown, Community Forester

Report: Mark Brown, Community Forester

Ms. Susan Haid, Manager – Sustainable Community Development, advised that this item is returning to Council for further discussion following the February 28, 2012 Council Workshop and incorporates the suggestions made by Council.

Mr. Mark Brown, Community Forester, presented the proposed Wildfire Interface Development Permit Area regulations advising that the objectives for the regulations are:

- Protect people, property and the environment;
- Manage developments to reduce risk of interface fires; and,
- Implement the 2007 Community Wildfire Protection Plan, including post fire landslides, debris flow hazards, floods, and erosion.

Mr. Brown advised that the Wildfire Interface Development Permit Area regulations only apply to new home construction within 125 metres of the identified wildfire interface area.

The focus of the guidelines are to implement FireSmart practices in building construction and vegetation management; to develop community resilience to protect homes and assets; and lower the risk profile for interface areas.

Mr. Brown reported that key changes to the Wildfire Development Permit Area include:

- Combining the natural hazard regulations;
- Updating exemptions including defining renovation, repair, and additions to be consistent with other Development Permit Areas;
- Primary and secondary risk areas are combined as the wildfire interface area where qualified professionals determine appropriate mitigation; and,
- Updating maps to ensure they are consistent with the Environment Development Permit map and making them parcel based.

Staff advised that the next steps include:

- A final review of the draft Development Permit Area bylaws and maps;

- Public open house;
- Introduction of bylaws in June and referral to a public hearing;
- Incorporating the Development Permit Area process into the development review procedures; and,
- Increasing public, developer, and builder education.

Council Discussion:

Staff advised that the threshold for a single isolated stand of forest is anything greater than 5 hectares and many isolated parcels within the District which are no longer included in the Development Permit Area. Staff further noted that the guidelines speak to defensible space adjacent to housing structures and the mitigation strategies for that defensible space.

Staff noted that most residents value the forest canopy and realize the expense involved with maintaining the forest environment. Site specific solutions are necessary with an intent to raise awareness and have professionals be aware for new home construction.

Council inquired how many homes have been captured by the map for the interface area; staff advised that there are 6,800 homes in the interface area. Staff clarified that the wildfire interface Development Permit Areas applies to new construction only.

Public Input:

Mr. Bill Tracey:

- Queried what the definition of renovation, repairs, and additions will be; and,
- Asked if stands of trees along Mt. Seymour Road are considered part of the park.

Staff advised that mixed stands of trees are not considered high hazard areas, but noted that there will be anomalies within the District.

Councillor MACKAY-DUNN left the meeting at 7:38 pm and returned at 7:40 pm.

Public Input:

Mr. Lyle Craver:

- Commented that residents were made aware of the dangers when the forest was closed during the summer of 2003; and,
- Opined that the education process is significant to reassure residents that the regulations apply to new builds not renovations.

Staff advised that new homes require non-combustible materials; however, permits are not issued for roofs and siding on renovations and bylaws cannot contain building specifications.

Mr. Peter Thompson:

- Expressed concern for any unintended consequences due to the proposed regulations; and,
- Queried if the regulations will affect people's home insurance.

Staff advised that Ms. Fiona Dercole has investigated the question and was advised that of the agencies surveyed they did not consider this designation as a high risk for home insurance compared to other natural hazards. Staff noted that the proposed changes will increase the safety of the homes in the area.

Mr. John Hunter:

- Requested that the existing bylaws be black lined for the proposed changes.

Mr. Corrie Kost:

- Commented on the science based vs. technical based approach;
- Expressed concern regarding the measuring of the distance from the edge of the forest; and,
- Queried if this area is included or exempted from GVRD sprinkling regulations during the summer.

In response to concerns raised, staff noted that the edge of the forest line was digitized using the forest canopy based on the forest fuel types, not intrusion of deciduous canopy. Sprinkling permits are issued by the District.

In response to a Council inquiry, staff confirmed there was an interface fire twenty years ago at the base of Grouse Mountain; a fire occurred in October 2011 at the VanTan Club at the top of Mountain Highway; and West Vancouver has had several interface fires.

#### **4. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:57 pm

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Council Clerk