

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, March 28, 2022 in the Council Chamber of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

Present: Mayor M. Little
Councillor J. Back (via Zoom)
Councillor M. Bond (via Zoom) (7:17 p.m.)
Councillor M. Curren (via Zoom)
Councillor B. Forbes (via Zoom)
Councillor J. Hanson
Councillor L. Muri (via Zoom)

Staff: Mr. D. Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer
Mr. G. Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks and Facilities
Mr. D. Milburn, General Manager – Planning, Properties and Permits
Ms. N. Chevalier – Manager – Facilities and Project Management Services
Mr. S. Carney – Section Manager - Transportation
Ms. G. Lanz, Deputy Municipal Clerk
Ms. E. Moxon, Section Manager – Project Delivery
Mr. W. Jordan, Project Engineer
Ms. C. Archer, Confidential Council Clerk
Ms. S. Clarke, Committee Clerk
Mr. S. Devine, Engineer-in-Training

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. March 28, 2022 Council Workshop Agenda

MOVED by Councillor HANSON
SECONDED by Councillor MURI

THAT the agenda for the March 28, 2022 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

Absent for Vote: Councillor BOND

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

2.1. January 31, 2022 Council Workshop

MOVED by Councillor MURI
SECONDED by Councillor HANSON

THAT the minutes of the January 31, 2022 Council Workshop are adopted.

CARRIED

Absent for Vote: Councillor BOND

Councillor CURREN declared a potential conflict related to the following items due to owning a business on Gallant Avenue in Deep Cove and left the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF

3.1. Livable Deep Cove Project Update

File No. 11.5250.20/131.000

Mr. Gavin Joyce, General Manager – Engineering, Parks and Facilities, provided an introduction to the Council Workshop, noting that this item is returning from a Regular Meeting of Council. Mr. Joyce noted that staff have made changes to broaden the concept since it was originally presented to Council and highlighted the need for renewal in Deep Cove as well as the urgent timeline due to a deadline to complete grant-funded works.

Ms. Erin Moxon, Section Manager – Project Delivery, advised that Council passed a resolution in July 2021 to refer the Livable Deep Cove Project to a Council Workshop for further discussion, including how the project fits with other District initiatives to mitigate parking, access and circulation issues in Deep Cove. At this Council Workshop, staff will provide context, background information, a project plan and a revised proposed scope of work for the improvements to lower Gallant Avenue, funded in part by a \$3.3 million grant from the Province.

Ms. Moxon noted the following background on the project:

- A temporary pedestrian zone was created on lower Gallant in August 2020 in response to the COVID-19 pandemic;
- Positive feedback has been received from the community and Deep Cove businesses regarding the pedestrian zone;
- The District received a grant from the Provincial Government in June 2021 to undertake permanent pedestrian improvements including flex zones, street trees and street lighting;
- Public engagement regarding design concepts started in June 2021;
- The results of this public engagement showed that eighty percent of respondents supported changes on lower Gallant Avenue, with the majority in support of full renewal of the pedestrian realm;
- The Provincial Government extended the deadline to complete work on the funded project to December 2023, allowing time for the District to complete the Gallant storm sewer replacement; and,
- In order to meet the extended deadline, design work must begin in spring 2022 with construction beginning in early 2023.

Ms. Moxon noted that Deep Cove is a popular tourist destination, which causes local issues with traffic congestion and parking. These concerns were studied and deliberated with the community in 2015 as part of the Deep Cove Dialogue, resulting in the Deep Cove Parking and Access Implementation Plan. Mitigation measures in the plan include expanded Resident-Only Parking (RPO) Zones and time-restricted parking on-street, in the Panorama Park parking lot and the parking lot near Banbury Road. In addition, large tour buses are not permitted in the area, the District has leased local school parking lots for overflow parking and increased bylaw enforcement, ranger presence and traffic control.

Ms. Moxon noted a number of future initiatives including planning for the eastern section of the Spirit Trail, which will terminate at Deep Cove, further implementation of the on-street parking policy in the Deep Cove area, improvements to sidewalks and

pedestrian crossings to provide better connections between local neighbourhoods, parking areas and the village core, and expansion of the e-bike share pilot and pay parking lots. Other initiatives being considered include advanced visitor information, advance booking for trail access, and a shuttle service.

Ms. Moxon advised that the Livable Deep Cove project team has developed the following objective statement: To improve the livability of Deep Cove while respecting its unique identity, residential neighbourhoods, local business needs, visitor experience and environmental integrity.

Ms. Moxon noted that the following metrics have been developed to measure success when delivering initiatives in the Deep Cove area:

- Reinforces the unique character and village feel;
- Increases protected space for pedestrians;
- Improves or retains accessibility to, from and within the area for all ages and abilities;
- Improves the efficiency of traffic flow and circulation and, where possible, reduces traffic volumes;
- Supports local business needs and maintains loading zones; and,
- Enhances the safety and use of public infrastructure and improves and protects biodiversity.

Ms. Moxon reviewed the elements of the Livable Deep Cove Project required as condition of the grant funding awarded for the project:

- Create an expanded and protected public realm;
- Renew sidewalks, street trees, street lights and surfacing; and,
- Install rainwater management features.

Ms. Moxon noted that much of the infrastructure on Gallant Avenue is at the end of its useful service life, including street lights and sidewalks.

Ms. Moxon provided a rendering of the revised scope of work proposed for the project, noting that the concept provides a modest yet full refresh of the public realm, designed to blend in with the recently reconstructed upper section of Gallant Avenue and the Panorama Park Plaza. Ms. Moxon advised that the detailed design will be presented to the community through in-person and virtual means, possibly including an open house, with public input on the design to be collected by the project team. Ms. Moxon further advised that the proposed construction would be scheduled to complete the most disruptive parts of the work before the busy season in order to minimize impacts on businesses and visitors.

Councillor BOND arrived at this point in the proceedings.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Recommended focussing on improving the current issues without attracting more visitors to the area;
- Commented on the intensity of peak periods in Deep Cove;
- Noted that parking and businesses are over capacity on busy days;
- Recommended holding special events on weekdays rather than weekends when the area is already crowded;

- Commented on the potential to return to holding events following two summers restricted by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic;
- Expressed support for maintaining flexible spaces;
- Expressed concern that hard built structures and features such as rain gardens and bollards would limit future flexibility;
- Requested that staff contact the Provincial Government regarding use of the grant funds for other improvements in Deep Cove;
- Acknowledged that some of the public facilities in Deep Cove are not adequate and are in need of improvement;
- Expressed concern regarding the proposed use of pavers as they create potential slip and trip hazards, as confirmed by the North Shore Advisory Committee on Disability Issues (ACDI);
- Noted that planters may reduce accessibility for people using wheelchairs;
- Commented on the narrow width of the street near the end of Gallant Avenue;
- Commented on the addition of tables and chairs to the widened sidewalk causing unintended crowding;
- Noted that the proposal reduces parking by only two spaces from pre-pandemic levels;
- Expressed support for the revised proposal;
- Commented on parking issues experienced by residents, including vehicles improperly blocking or in private driveways;
- Commented on access and circulation for the entire area north of Mt. Seymour Parkway;
- Suggested widening pathways to increase accessibility;
- Expressed concern regarding the impacts of construction on businesses;
- Opined that the proposed improvements will not attract additional visitors;
- Expressed concern regarding the loss of secured grant funds if a decision cannot be reached;
- Noted the importance of public engagement and expressed a preference for including a variety of methods including in-person events and virtual participation;
- Recommended improvements to wayfinding signage in the area;
- Recommended the provision of secure bicycle parking;
- Expressed concern regarding cyclist speeds and pedestrian safety;
- Recommended engagement with the cycling community on how best to accommodate cycling in Deep Cove;
- Opined that the Deep Cove community is experiencing construction fatigue;
- Commented on business parking needs, noting that some short-term parking spaces are necessary to allow for picking up take out orders;
- Recommended consulting with ACDI regarding accessibility; and,
- Expressed concern that there may not be enough time to properly engage with the public and stakeholders and meet the construction deadline to receive grant funds.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the grant is specific to the creation of safe gathering spaces in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, so the project must demonstrate improvement in this area. Staff can approach the Provincial Government regarding a change of scope, however, this will likely be limited.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that prior to the temporary pedestrian area being created, there were twenty-two street parking spaces available. There are currently ten street parking spaces and the revised concept includes nineteen to twenty spaces.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that rain gardens provide opportunities for green space and bench seating.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the length of construction is projected to be six to nine months, depending on the final design. The proposed timeline would have the project tender process complete and construction underway in time to complete the more disruptive work prior to the peak summer season. The potential for phased construction will depend on the final design and it is too early at this time to determine if phasing will be possible.

Mr. David Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer, commented on the perceived lack of consensus on Council and in the community regarding this project and cautioned against proceeding only to retain grant funding.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Noted common ground among members of Council on improvements to public spaces, better use of existing spaces as well as reducing steep grades, improving accessibility, and maintaining flexibility;
- Suggested a more modest project or extending the geographical area;
- Commented on improving use of available spaces;
- Noted that some obstacles cannot be relocated as they are on private property;
- Commented on the positive impact of improving pathways and washrooms; and,
- Noted that specific design details can be finalized later in the process with input from the community.

3.2. Naughton Avenue Construction Detour Discussion

File No. 11.5250.20/131.000

Ms. Erin Moxon, Section Manager – Project Delivery, advised that Council considered the staff recommendation regarding the Naughton Avenue Construction Detour at the Regular Meeting of Council on February 28, 2022 and passed a resolution to refer the matter to a Council Workshop for further discussion. Following the Council Workshop, staff will prepare an updated recommendation for consideration at a future Regular Meeting of Council.

Ms. Moxon advised that the Naughton Avenue detour was constructed to help avoid traffic congestion approaching the village core, reduce delays for commuters and improve safety at the intersection of Gallant Avenue and Panorama Drive during the Gallant Avenue Storm Sewer Replacement Project. Impacts to residents living close to the detour include loss of trees and an increase in traffic to a previously low-traffic area.

Ms. Moxon noted the recommendation presented at the February 28, 2022 Regular Meeting was informed by a full community engagement process and technical analysis.

Ms. Moxon reviewed the three directions presented to the public for consideration:

1. Revegetate;
2. Active Transportation Link and Emergency Access (staff recommendation); and,
3. Full Transportation Link.

Ms. Moxon noted that concerns were raised at the February 28, 2022 Regular Meeting of Council regarding the recommended direction including cyclist speeds, future access needs of the community, and ongoing issues with parking and access. In response to these concerns, staff have developed a revised option for a narrower pathway for pedestrian and cyclist access only, without the additional emergency vehicle access. This option would narrow and reconfigure the existing asphalt and allow for revegetation and features to slow cyclist speeds, such as bollards, as used on the City of North Vancouver's Green Necklace pathway.

Council discussion ensued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Noted that the detour is not needed for emergency access as other options are available;
- Expressed concern that if the roadway is retained, there would be temptation to use it;
- Expressed support for the option to revegetate the site;
- Noted that revegetation to a natural state was promised to the community at the time the detour was implemented;
- Noted that the detour was intended to be temporary;
- Commented on feedback from the community, noting that most have expressed support for revegetation and that the staff recommendation was rated lowest among survey respondents;
- Advised that cyclists will reroute to Gallant Avenue and will not use the pathway if they are required to dismount or manoeuvre around chicanes or bollards;
- Expressed concern regarding cyclist speeds in Deep Cove, the use of electric bicycles and dangerous riding including running stop signs;
- Commented on the effect of delaying a decision;
- Noted that active transportation should include transit buses and the staff recommendation does not accommodate this use;
- Remarked on ongoing issues with traffic circulation in Deep Cove and recommended restricting smaller side roads to local traffic only; and,
- Expressed concern regarding future traffic issues when Quarry Rock reopens to the public.

Mr. David Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer, advised that a decision has not been reached regarding the Livable Deep Cove Project and that the detour may be needed if the project requires any portion of Gallant Avenue to be shut down during construction.

In response to a question from Council, staff confirmed that none of the options being considered at the workshop involve motor vehicle traffic in any form.

Council discussion continued and the following comments and concerns were noted:

- Acknowledged that the detour roadway needs to be kept in place until major works in Deep Cove are completed;

- Expressed opposition to any vehicle access on the detour route after it has served its purpose;
- Commented on the cost of full removal of the detour and the availability of funds in the Capital Fund;
- Advised that the original pathway was unstable, very steep and not suitable for all ages and abilities;
- Expressed concern that a pedestrian-only route will not improve existing cycling issues in Deep Cove;
- Noted that cyclists are required to dismount while travelling through Whistler Village and that the same could be required for portions of Deep Cove;
- Commented on the livability of Deep Cove for residents, noting that the peak season is stressful;

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the fill could be removed, but is required to maintain the grade at a slope that could accommodate pedestrians.

In response to a question from Council, staff confirmed that vehicle use of the route needs to be an option until works in Deep Cove are completed.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that restricted access to Deep Cove is not being considered and that more rangers, local traffic signs and enforcement will be used to mitigate issues. It was noted that a consultant has been hired to analyse parking needs and issues in the area.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that flaggers are used on long weekends and on sunny weekends and that they will be used during the summer season in 2022.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that studies to meet the Resident Parking Only Policy must be done after the May long weekend as street parking is not heavily used in the off-season.

4. Public Input:

4.1 Mr. Peter Teevan:

- Advised that he lives near Deep Cove;
- Commented on how different people define different words and opined that the Livable Deep Cove Objective Statement is not objective;
- Commented on the rumour that the District has no intention to reopen Quarry Rock;
- Noted that he would like to see the full picture of the finished state of Deep Cove following the proposed work;
- Commented on how different user groups use the space and noted that Deep Cove needs to work for everyone;
- Noted that the government dock in Deep Cove was originally built to serve public transportation;
- Opined that the community is divided on Deep Cove;
- Opined that resident trust is low and that the District has not shown a commitment to communicating with the public or reporting back on public input received; and,

- Commented on the possible requirement to have a geotechnical review if a large amount of fill is to be left in place.

4.2 Mr. John Lawless:

- Opined that the community has clearly communicated its opposition to vehicular traffic on the Naughton Avenue Construction Detour.

4.3 Ms. Katherine Fagerlund:

- Commented on drivers with families in Deep Cove circling the area looking for parking closer than the overflow parking lots at local schools as they have too much to carry over distance;
- Suggested allowing visitors to park on Deep Cove streets on a time-limited basis and unlimited resident parking;
- Suggested adding short-term parking spaces of up to twenty minutes to facilitate quick pick-ups; and,
- Expressed concern that some emergency access routes have hazards that need to be addressed such as blind corners.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor HANSON

SECONDED by Mayor LITTLE

THAT the March 28, 2022 Council Workshop is adjourned.

CARRIED

(9:26 p.m.)

Absent for Vote: Councillor CURREN

Mayor

Municipal Clerk

Acting