

DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER COUNCIL WORKSHOP

Minutes of the Council Workshop for the District of North Vancouver held at 5:04 p.m. on Monday, April 25, 2022 in the Council Chamber of the District Hall, 355 West Queens Road, North Vancouver, British Columbia.

Present: Mayor M. Little
Councillor J. Back
Councillor M. Bond
Councillor B. Forbes
Councillor J. Hanson
Councillor L. Muri

Absent: Councillor M. Curren

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. S. Walker, General Manager – Corporate Services
Mr. B. Dwyer, Assistant General Manager – Regulatory Review and Compliance
Ms. J. Paton, Assistant General Manager - Planning
Ms. T. Atva, Manager – Community Planning
Mr. J. Gordon, Manager – Administrative Services
Mr. J. Cairns, Community Planner
Ms. C. Archer, Confidential Council Clerk
Ms. S. Clarke, Committee Clerk

1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

1.1. April 25, 2022 Council Workshop Agenda

MOVED by Councillor BACK

SECONDED by Councillor MURI

THAT the agenda for the April 25, 2022 Council Workshop is adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

2. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Nil

3. REPORTS FROM COUNCIL OR STAFF

3.1 Marine Drive Commercial Zone (C9) Review

File No. 13.6410.01/000.000

Mr. Joshua Cairns, Community Planner, provided background on the Marine Drive Commercial Zone (C9), noting that the Marine Drive Improvement Study was undertaken in 1999, with a strategy brought forward to Council in 2005. The Zoning Bylaw was amended to add the Marine Drive Commercial Zone and new Marine Drive Design Guidelines approved in 2007. Mr. Cairns advised that most of the area

currently is zoned C9 and is subject to the Marine Drive Design Guidelines. Mr. Cairns noted that Council has expressed an interest in reviewing the area, starting with this Council Workshop.

Mr. Cairns reviewed a sample of properties that have transitioned from one- or two-storey structures or open parking lots to three- to four-storey mixed use developments, including the southwest corner of Pemberton Avenue and West 16th Street, the northwest corner of Marine Drive and Lloyd Avenue, and sections of Marine Drive between Lloyd Avenue and Bridgman Avenue.

Mr. Cairns advised that there have been significant improvements to the public realm since the changes were implemented, noting that thirty-five percent of the property frontage in the Marine Drive Corridor has been redeveloped or is in process, with more improvements in the future.

Mr. Cairns advised that there have been forty-eight noise complaints between 2007 and 2022 in the area as well as one complaint regarding a business operation. The number of complaints is consistent with expectations and the types of businesses in operation, over half of which, by floor area, are retail, office and restaurants.

Mr. Cairns provided an overview of the review process, noting the steps are:

1. Define the problem;
2. Identify the causes;
3. Prepare options;
4. Evaluate and select options; and,
5. Implementation.

Mr. Cairns advised that staff are requesting feedback on the issues and items of interest that Council would like staff to investigate.

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

- Expressed concern that offices do not increase the vibrancy of an area;
- Commented on street design and the need to make the area welcoming;
- Questioned what changes could be made to make Marine Drive an active transportation corridor; and,
- Opined that the area is motor vehicle focussed.

In response to a question from Council, Mr. Cairns advised that two sites that had been used as vehicle dealerships have redeveloped to mixed-use since 2007 and there has been a reduction of the use of space along the corridor for open parking lots. Mr. Cairns advised that the District's tracking systems and some of the street addresses have changed over time, which complicates the process of generating reports. Mr. Cairns further advised that staff will provide Council with the information at a future date.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the improvements to the area include the creation of new commercial spaces from open parking lots, vacant floor area converted to occupied spaces and an increase to the total square footage of commercial space.

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

- Acknowledged there has been positive change in the Marine Drive Corridor;
- Commented on changes to signage, noting the integration of signs into buildings has reduced visual clutter;
- Commented on the use of commercial sites in the Marine Drive Corridor for non-commercial use such as the display of vintage automobiles and expressed concern that this use could expand to other areas;
- Noted that rapid transit from Vancouver to Park Royal is contemplated in Translink's recently released draft vision document;
- Recommended reviewing the C9 Zone with the goal of attracting a higher level of transit service;
- Expressed reservations regarding densifying the area without rapid transportation in place; and,
- Acknowledged that design guidelines restrict the variety of buildings.

Mayor LITTLE left the meeting at 5:25 p.m. and Councillor MURI assumed the chair.

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

- Commented on the expectation that all vehicle sales lots would relocate to the North Shore Automall;
- Commended the transition from large, open parking lots to mixed-use developments, noting there is more to be done;
- Opined that CACs and environmental assessments should have been part of redevelopments from the beginning;
- Noted the zone does not specify minimum and maximum unit sizes and suggested adding these;
- Commented on the redevelopment of Lower Lonsdale in the City of North Vancouver, noting the variety of building frontages;
- Suggested regulating property uses on street level to ensure office space is located on the second floor or above, as is the case for the Broadway Corridor in Vancouver;
- Suggesting restricting the number of businesses with the same property use within the same block;
- Commented on the original intention of tilted roofs on the front of buildings, noting that protecting single-family residential homes is less of a priority with the south side of Marine Drive having been redeveloped with higher multi-family buildings;
- Commented on the uniform design of buildings along the Marine Drive Corridor;
- Noted the heavy traffic volume on Marine Drive, including large trucks and transit vehicles;
- Questioned if the Marine Drive Corridor could be made more environmentally sustainable;
- Commented on the challenges with making the area more pedestrian-friendly, including traffic noise that can be as high as seventy to eighty decibels, comparable to the sound of a blender;
- Acknowledged that child care facilities are needed throughout the District, but questioned if it is an appropriate street-level use for the area;
- Commented on the vibrancy of established areas including Commercial Drive, West 4th Avenue and Fraser Street in the City of Vancouver, noting that these

areas have a wide variety of retail stores and do not allow office use on street level;

- Opined that changes will occur over time and do not require changes to the Zoning Bylaw;
- Suggested that increased building heights could facilitate more retail uses in the area;
- Expressed support for the operation of smaller businesses in the area; and,
- Commented on the OCP goal to have compact, complete and walkable communities.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that East Hastings Street in North Burnaby was converted to its present commercial corridor use in the 1990s and now has a Business Improvement Association. It was noted that there is both single-family and multi-family housing to the north and south of Hastings Street and that the street is closed for an annual parade and community event.

In response to a question from Council, staff advised that the Burnaby North area experiences some of the same issues with uniformity of design and financial institutions taking up large spaces as in the Marine Drive Corridor. It was noted that the Advisory Design Panel could be asked to review the existing design guidelines.

Mr. David Stuart, Chief Administrative Officer, provided a summary of Council's direction regarding the Marine Drive Corridor:

- Review what uses are appropriate on which floors of buildings;
- Create minimum and maximum unit sizes to encourage variety;
- Avoid consolidation of lots;
- Provide a financial analysis to ensure the market will support any proposed changes;
- Review design guidelines;
- Look at what could be done to encourage variety in the types of retail businesses in the area; and,
- Examine options to improve active transportation and make the area more appealing for pedestrians.

Mr. Stuart commented on the impact of the calculation of property assessments according to the highest and best use of the property, noting that tenants have left older buildings due to high property taxes.

4. PUBLIC INPUT:

4.1 Mr. Peter Teevan:

- Advised that he had been the Acting General Manager and Acting Sales Manager at a vehicle dealership at the time it relocated within the Marine Drive Corridor;
- Advised that he spoke to Council at the time the Marine Drive Improvement Plan was brought forward to request that dealerships be allowed on Marine Drive within a set of design guidelines;
- Noted that automotive dealerships in the Marine Drive Corridor became existing non-conforming when the C9 Zone was implemented and have been unable from that point to make any changes or improvements to their buildings;

- Commented on the mixed-use development above the dealership on Kingsway, noting that it was the first of its kind in Canada;
- Advised that the national regulations for automotive dealerships do not allow relocation within eight kilometres of another location, so the dealership was unable to move to the Main Street Corridor due to the proximity of a dealership in Burnaby; and,
- Opined that the Marine Drive Improvement Plan's implementation has had the opposite effect than intended for automotive dealerships.

4.2 Mr. Corrie Kost:

- Compared the Marine Drive Corridor with the Lower Lonsdale area, noting that Lower Lonsdale is a more vibrant community;
- Questioned if the vibrancy of Lower Lonsdale is due to the inclusion of adequate parking and suggested there is not enough parking on Marine Drive; and,
- Commented on the availability of street parking on East Hastings Street in North Burnaby.

4.3 Mr. Herman Mah:

- Advised that his comments are on his own behalf as well as with the Pemberton Community Association representative who worked with the District during the development of the Marine Drive Improvement Plan;
- Expressed appreciation for the refreshed look and increased housing options in the Marine Drive Corridor, noting that the area is still in transition;
- Commented that the area is not engaging and lacks vibrancy;
- Opined that the variety of businesses will change over time in accordance with the market and will not require curation;
- Described the corridor as a strip mall with housing;
- Remarkd on the challenges to improving the vibrancy of the area, including:
 - Marine Drive is an arterial road with heavy traffic;
 - The corridor is long and linear, which creates an unappealing long walk next to heavy traffic for pedestrians;
 - The mix of businesses does not attract pedestrian traffic.
- Suggested building a public plaza or other gathering area; and,
- Requested that staff review Marine Drive traffic issues.

5. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Councillor BACK
SECONDED by Councillor BOND

THAT the April 25, 2022 Council Workshop is adjourned.

CARRIED

Absent for Vote: Mayor LITTLE
 (6:08 p.m.)

Mayor



Municipal Clerk

