

MINUTES of the REGULAR MEETING OF COUNCIL
held Monday, February 24, 2020 @ 2 PM
In the City Hall Council Chambers – 4850 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

PRESENT: Acting Mayor C. Solda
 Councillor R. Corbeil
 Councillor D. Haggard via telephone
 Councillor R. Paulson
 Councillor H. Poon
 Councillor D. Washington

ABSENT: Mayor Minions

Gallery: Approx. 25

A. CALL TO ORDER & APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the agenda be amended by removing 'discussion regarding Harbour View apartments' item D.2; adding items F.4. a. b. and c., correspondence expressing opposition to DVP Application No. 98 – 6151 Russell Place; and adding item J. 4. correspondence in support of 3rd Avenue Revitalization Project and trail connecting Harbour Quay to Victoria Quay. The agenda was then approved as amended.
CARRIED

B. ADOPTION OF MINUTES

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the minutes of the Special Meeting held at 12:30 pm, and Regular Council Meeting held at 2:00 pm on February 10, 2020, be adopted.
CARRIED

C. PUBLIC INPUT PERIOD

Mr. Towle took this opportunity to express to Council his opposition to the 3rd Avenue Revitalization Project noting that the sidewalks are already 5 – 6' wide, the proposal reduces the number of public parking spaces and does not identify a truck route for commercial vehicles even though the proposal reduces the number of vehicle travel lanes to two [both directions]. Mr. Towle encouraged Council to address homelessness and addiction issues in the area rather than the revitalization project.

D. DELEGATIONS

1. Flandangles Kitchen & Gifts / Gibson's Fine Linens

Christine Washington, Owner of Flandangles Kitchen & Gifts / Gibson's Fine Linens, on behalf of a number of the Uptown Merchants Association, expressed overall support of the 3rd Avenue Revitalization Project even though it will result in an interruption to businesses [during construction] and proposes to reduce the number of parking spaces.

2. Uptown Urban Market

Keith Ambrose presented Council with a petition of approximately 40 signatures representing individuals/business owners expressing their support in having Mr. Ambrose act as their liaison to the City regarding improvements to the City's business area. Mr. Ambrose also commented on the negative impact current activities in the Uptown District are having on area businesses.

3. Kinsmen Club – Soapbox Derby

Mitch Gardner, on behalf of Mr. Hadley, addressed Council regarding the 2020 Soapbox Derby which will be held on Saturday, July 25, 2020. In order to accommodate the event, the Kinsmen are requesting road closures from Argyle & 3rd Avenue to the Industrial Road/Harbour Quay area.

R20-045 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the email dated January 28, 2020 requesting the use of 3rd Avenue to the tracks on lower Argyle Street from 8am to 5pm on Saturday, July 25th for the Soapbox Derby be received and the request approved.*
CARRIED

E. UNFINISHED BUSINESS NIL

F. STAFF REPORTS

1. Accounts

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the certification of the Acting Director of Finance dated February 24, 2020, be received and the cheques numbered 145639 to 145711 inclusive, in payment of accounts totalling \$ 2,490,629.63, be approved.
CARRIED

2. Director of Parks, Recreation and Heritage – Award of Tender #001-20 – Alberni Valley Multiplex Evaporative Condenser Replacement

R20-046 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Council for the City of Port Alberni award tender #001-20, Alberni Valley Multiplex Evaporative Condenser Replacement, to Accent Refrigeration Systems Ltd. in the amount of \$205,950.00 plus GST, with funds provided from the City's Gas Tax Fund.*
CARRIED

3. City Clerk - McLean Mill Society Dissolution

R20-047 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Council appoint the City Clerk to act for the member at the General meeting of the McLean Mill Society scheduled for Tuesday, February 25, 2020 at 10:00 am.*
CARRIED

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4. **Manager of Planning – Development Variance Permit – 6151 Russell Place**
On behalf of the Manager of Planning, the CAO provided background information pertaining to the application.

The Acting Mayor then invited the applicant[s] to present.

Mr. John Jessup, Mr. Derek Appleton, and the architect addressed Council regarding their intentions to construct 39 rental units to low/moderate income seniors. Due to existing site conditions/limited building area, they advised they were having to reduce the footprint of the building resulting in the request to vary the height.

Acting Mayor Solda invited questions from members of Council:

- Is the applicant concerned with potential run-off as a result of the development?
- Supports the concept of the project, however, is concerned with the height variance being requested. Is there an opportunity to construct smaller units resulting in a reduced height variance being required?
- Requested clarification as to what would be seen [of the development] from Russell Place/Street?
- Will this development be working together with Rainbow Gardens?
- Is adequate parking being provided?
- Former greenspace/playground equipment no longer there – will the new development include a form of park being reinstated on the site?
- To what extent will existing trees on the development site be protected/retained and to what extent will those trees contribute to the current slope stability?

Acting Mayor Solda invited input from the public.

Mr. Tom Folton, Moore Road noted they don't necessary disagree with the provision of social housing however, he is concerned with the height variance being requested. Mr. Folton had the following additional comments:

- not clear on access and if there will be a significant increase in traffic
- concerned with the height of the building/development and retaining their privacy
- went to Rainbow Gardens to view the proposal but felt the information provided was not clear
- slope access/retaining wall also not clear – seeking confirmation as to whether the retaining wall will be built?
- trees bordering around the retaining wall are they supplemental? Will they be retained in order to retain privacy?
- will there be an opportunity in the future to receive more clarity on this proposal?

Mr. Darryl Gretchen, Westporte Blvd., commented as follows:

- objects to the issuance of the DVP
- agrees with the spirit of the intent of this property however, lately it has been difficult due to the ongoing construction. Russell St./Place residents heavily compromised since construction beginning July 18th i.e., dust, noise, music, foul language from construction workers, noise of machines 8 – 10 hours per day including construction work continuing on weekends.
- concerned with the timing of this construction project given that construction on this site [last phase] was only completed last fall
- former proposal [at time of development] noted that they [Rainbow Gardens] were to provide playground/pickleball court/outdoor exercise area. This has not been done.
- greatest concern is the two additional storeys [height] and compromising current views
- this next phase of development is too soon to subject nearby residents to further construction chaos; and
- Rainbow Gardens should be required to construct the promised playground before this next phase/expansion is considered.

Councillor Corbeil left the meeting at 3:21 pm

Mr. Carl Barnwell, Russell Place, commented as follows:

- residents in the area will see all five floors; minimum of 3.5 floors above ground
- concerned with proposed tenants [low income] and being rented to not just 'seniors'
- parking – 3 to 1 ratio for residents, what about the staff that will be working on-site; parking is already a challenge
- is there a guarantee that renters of the units will be to those 55 – 64 years of age?

Mr. Harold Austin, River Road commented as follows:

- not totally against the project
- would look for clarity around potential water run off
- will there be a 'buffer' to ensure he retains his backyard privacy due to the overall height of the building?
- how will rentals be restricted to seniors? What mechanisms are in place to ensure units are rented to low-income seniors?

Mrs. Jennifer Carnegie advised that they purchased a home in the area 8 years ago, and largely due to the playground in the area [at the time]. She noted that it is not possible to regulate renters. Parking is already a challenge in this area and will continue to be with the addition of the 39 units. She does not support varying the bylaw to allow for two additional storeys.

Mr. Joseph Leskosek, Princess Road, commented as follows:

- is the development in the proposal stage?
- location of this development will not support tenants 'walking' to amenities as they are not in close proximity to this development.
- all in favour of 'aging in place' but challenging to locate affordable seniors housing in this location due to lack of amenities in the immediate area noting that seniors will have to rely on vehicle and/or transit for transportation.

Mr. Ambrose, 2nd Avenue commented as follows:

- Landlord/Tenancy Act is challenging
- need to guarantee that rentals are in fact, rented to low-income seniors

Mr. Pat Carnegie commented as follows:

- curious if anyone has thought of the floodplain and an evacuation plan for future tenants of the 39 units; and
- if the City sold this land which at the time included the park, why is it the responsibility of Rainbow Gardens to reinstate/build a park?

Acting Mayor Solda noted that she represented the City on the Board of the Rainbow Gardens and confirmed that they are responsible for the construction/return of the park.

Applicants provided the following additional information in response to questions/comments raised by members of Council and the public as follows:

- due to site limitations and costs, underground parking was not an alternative however, the provision of 13 stalls meets the City's bylaw requirements with an additional 8 being contemplated
- following construction completion, it is intended that the overall site would be run as a comprehensive facility by Westcoast Native Health Care Society.
- drainage [water run-off] will be managed on site via the retaining wall and on-site drainage system
- proponents will be retaining the services of a professional landscape architect who will speak to tree retention/privacy buffers etc.,
- access proposed off of Moore Road is to allow for access to 8 parking stalls
- trees in lower/mid and upper area show they are to be retained/minimizing the impact
- important to develop when opportunity presents itself [when funds are available to create affordable housing]
- fire safety/evaluation plans will be prepared
- BC Housing recognizes that we must have approval to build 39 units in the form of this development variance before they are willing to provide us with provisional project approval. Hopefully with a positive response from this meeting, we will meet with BC Housing development team in order to move forward.
- if approvals given, the project should be shovel ready 3 – 4 months

- if Council does not approve the variance, would the project move forward? The applicant noted that it would be challenging due to costs relating to site limitations, additional foundation work, and the need to have sufficient economies of scale.
- there is criteria in place that potential tenants must meet in order to occupy one of these units
- clarified that there will be one property manager on-site
- applicants advised that they are happy to meet with residents in the area to address/clarify their questions
- will be moving forward with implementing 'privacy' measures though landscaping/fencing to ensure privacy for all parties

Acting Mayor Solda invited any additional comments from Council and are as follows:

- comments/concerns expressed by the public are legitimate and we are confident that they are not insurmountable. Perhaps the City's Traffic Advisory Committee could be tasked with reviewing the parking concerns, traffic calming measures etc.
- it would be difficult to turn down 39 units of affordable seniors housing.

R20-048 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Development Variance Permit No. DVP 98 for 6151 Russell Place be issued to the property owners to vary Section 5.31.2 P1 – Institutional, Maximum Height, Principal Building, from 12.5 m to 17.71 m, and Section 5.31.2 P1 – Institutional, Maximum Number of Principal Building Storeys, from three (3) to five (5) storeys.*
CARRIED

R20-049 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Council direct staff to forward comments/concerns regarding parking, parking congestion and traffic calming considerations to the Traffic Advisory Committee for their review/input.*
CARRIED

5. Acting Director of Finance - Reserves and Surplus Funds Overview

R20-050 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the report from the Acting Director of Finance dated February 18, 2020 speaking to the City's Reserve & Surplus Funds as of December 31, 2019 be received and that Council of the City of Port Alberni direct staff to create a Financial Management Policy for the purpose of documenting long standing principles and best practices to be used by the City to assist in maintaining the City's financial stability.*
CARRIED

6. Manager of Planning - Uptown District Revitalization Strategy – Project Funding & Grant Support

R20-051 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Council support staff in applying for funding to the Poverty Reduction Planning & Action 2020 Stream 1 – Plans & Assessments [through UBCM], for its project titled ‘Uptown District Revitalization Strategy’ including a commitment to provide overall grant management of this project should funding be received.*
CARRIED

7. Deputy City Clerk – 3rd Avenue Revitalization Project – Conceptual Design Costs

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the report from the Deputy City Clerk dated February 18, 2020 providing payment information by the City to Watt Consulting Group for the preparation of conceptual design work for the 3rd Avenue Revitalization project, be received.
CARRIED

G. BYLAWS NIL

H. CORRESPONDENCE FOR ACTION

1. City of Port Moody

R20-052 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the letter dated February 4, 2020 requesting support of their resolutions to the Minister of Health Canada calling for the creation of a National Pharmacare program be received and Council direct staff to provide a letter of support.*
CARRIED

2. BC Summer/Winter Games 2024/2026

R20-053 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the letter dated January 31, 2020 inviting the City to consider hosting one of the upcoming BC Winter or Summer Games be received and that Council direct staff to prepare a report that speaks to the feasibility of the City hosting either the BC Winter or Summer Games in 2024 or 2026.*
CARRIED

3. Request to amend Business Licence Bylaw – T. Affleck

R20-054 *MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the letter from Teresa Affleck requesting an amendment to the City’s business licence bylaw be received and that Council direct staff to review the City’s current practices, including identifying any implications and/or concerns should the City move forward and amend its business licence bylaw to permit the manufacturing of products in a home-based business.*
CARRIED

I. PROCLAMATIONS NIL

J. CORRESPONDENCE FOR INFORMATION

1. **Cycle Alberni**
Thank you card received regarding the City's contribution toward the bike fix-it stands.
2. **Treadsetter Shoes**
Email dated February 11, 2020 from Barbara Mellaart, Owner of Treadsetter Shoes encouraging Council to proceed with the 3rd Avenue Revitalization project.
3. **The Honourable Judy Darcy - Minister of Mental Health and Addictions**
Copy of a letter received from Minister Darcy to Mayor Lisa Helps, City of Victoria providing an update on recent Government initiatives in response to resolutions sent to the Union of BC Municipalities regarding Safer Drug Supply and Overdose Prevention Sites.
4. **Owners of Dog Mountain Brewing Ltd., [Mr. Richards & Ms. Miles]**
Letter received February 24, 2020 from Andy Richards and Robin Miles, owners of Dog Mountain Brewing Ltd., expressing support of the planned improvements to 3rd Avenue and the trail connecting Harbour Quay to Victoria Quay.

K. REPORT FROM IN-CAMERA NIL

L. COUNCIL REPORTS

1. **Council and Regional District Reports**
MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the Council reports outlining recent meetings and events related to the City's business, be received.
CARRIED

M. NEW BUSINESS

1. *Recommendation from the Committee of the Whole Meeting held February 3, 2020 for Council's consideration:*

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT Council instruct staff to reduce the funds currently allocated to the "Welcome to Port Alberni Signage Project" in the City's Five-Year Financial Plan 2020 – 2024, to \$75,000 [from \$150,000] in 2020 and place the remaining \$75,000 in the 2021 calendar year.

This item was tabled until such time as Council receives a report from staff speaking to the details of the project.

N. QUESTION PERIOD

Mr. Joseph Leskosek asked if the City had considered other City owned lands to accommodate low-cost housing for seniors?

The CAO responded that the City's OCP outlines the areas of general consideration for specific types of projects and in this case with BC Housing interaction a proposal was received for a multi-family housing development.

O. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED and SECONDED, THAT the meeting adjourn at 5:00 pm.

CARRIED

CERTIFIED CORRECT

Mayor

Dawna Sartwell
Clerk