

**District of Squamish
OCP Community Advisory Committee**



MEETING NOTES

Wednesday November 22, 2017, 6:00-9:00 p.m.

**Location: Council Chambers
Squamish Municipal Hall
37955 Second Avenue**

Public Members:

Lisa Ames - Regrets
Bill Cavanagh
Gary Fitzpatrick
John Hawkings
Murray Journeay
Grant McRadu - Regrets
Darcy McNeil - Regrets
Sally Rudd
Toran Savjord – Arrived 7:15

Council:

Mayor Patricia Heintzman
Councillor Karen Elliott

Public:

Aran Cheema

Staff:

Gary Buxton
Matt Gunn
Sarah McJannet
Christina Moore

AGENDA:

1. Welcome; Adoption of Agenda

The meeting was called to order by the Chair at 6:10 p.m. The agenda was adopted as presented. Staff outlined the plan for the meeting.

2. OCP Process Update + Phase 4 Approvals

Staff provided an update on the overall project timeline. The process is entering Phase 4. December 1st is the date of public release of the document. Council and the CAC are getting an advance view. On December 12th there may be consideration of first reading at Council, with a second potential bylaw reading in January, and then public hearings in late January. Public input and comments will be accepted during the entire phase. The intent is to offer multiple opportunities for input.

The Committee asked if there would be changes made to the document. Staff responded that it was very likely that changes would be made in response to the public input.

Staff outlined some additional engagement from Phase 3. Staff have been working with Squamish Nation staff, and with other agencies, such as the local school board and various Provincial departments. Staff also noted that the remaining development permit areas have been included in this latest draft, some of which have been reviewed by local environmental professionals and the District's Advisory Design Panel. Additional input sessions would be created for the development permit area material.

Engagement and communication will be undertaken through all our usual e-news and social media channels. Online fillable comment forms will be on the web site and forwarded straight to Council. All maps will be available as static maps and on a GIS platform to allow layers to be used and comments left. Community pop-up events will be used as they were in Phase 3. The District is looking for people to comment both on what they want to see changed, and what they like in the current document.

3. OCP Bylaw Overview + CAC Discussion

Staff briefly outlined the substantive policies and edits made for the final draft plan respecting a selection of top eight focus areas / policy chapters (growth management, natural environment, hazard management, affordable housing, transportation, and employment lands, form and character and implementation / indicators).

Significant work has been done since the last meeting, particularly on areas such as growth management, and development permit areas for form and character, natural environment and flood hazards. Significant editorial efforts have been made to make the document easier to read, to reduce conflicts, contradictions and unclear language.

The growth management section has seen substantial edits based on community input and substantial discussions with Council. The growth management boundary has been shrunk from previous versions. It is more focussed on residential development and requires substantial infill development to be complete, through a population of 34,000 being achieved or 85% of infill properties being developed, before development moves to more remote locations. Areas outside the boundary could possibly be developed once the population reaches 22,500, and a proposal has extraordinary benefits, and certain policies are in place (such as a recreational asset policy, an affordable housing policy, a steep slope development policy). Specific growth management policies have been proposed for the Squamish Nation's lands outside the boundary, that create a distinct process.

The Committee commented on section 9.1, and staff noted an amendment could be made. The Committee also noted that a baseline was needed to determine the 85% limit. The Committee asked where the 85% number came from. Staff noted that a 100% target was not realistic, and that 90 – 95% was also not realistic. The limit was set just below these numbers. The Committee also noted that this number should not encourage development and loss of green space and inappropriate development. Staff noted that any development reaching these levels was likely quite some time away.

The natural environment chapter was a key chapter for the community. Protection of areas within existing areas was as important as protection for peripheral areas. The environmental development permit area section also has been completely overhauled, with increasing requirements for assessments. The Squamish Estuary Management Plan policy work has also been incorporated into the document, as well as enhanced marine protection and planning policies. There are also enhanced water and air quality policies, with a community health lens. Further tree preservation, soil protection and site disturbance policies have been included.

The Committee noted that enhanced mapping would be critical and likely to be undertaken at the sub area plan stage.

Hazard planning policies were worked on significantly to try and simplify what are very complex and tricky issues, especially related to flood hazards. Staff have been testing some of these policies to see how these policies might affect development applications. The section has also been reorganized to make it more readable. Controlled densification areas are designated to limit putting more people and buildings in areas that are susceptible to serious flooding, and other restrictions of lesser flood hazard areas have been included. Sea dike policies are intended

to protect around a metre of potential sea level rise, and to create adequate dike setbacks to allow for other hazards. There are also revised policies related to the Cheekeye debris flow risks.

New development permit area policies for steep slopes and wildfire hazards are identified as necessary to be completed in the future.

The Committee noted that some of the new hazard policy work was quite innovative and leading edge for the Province. The Committee noted that the words maintain and minimize were used frequently, but that a policy or statement with the effect to reduce the trajectory of risk might be a good idea. The overall intent should be to reduce aggregate risk in the community. Policy statements might also highlight that risk goes beyond life safety but also to other risk factors.

The housing section was also seen as very important, and Staff noted that there is a lot of parallel policy work taking place at the same time. The major thrust is around diversity of housing form and type in all neighbourhoods, perhaps with minimum targets being established. Affordable housing should also be included in all neighbourhoods. Infill is encouraged in all neighbourhoods and in specified circumstances in these areas. Targets for unit creation are proposed, along with better data collection, along with direction to the community amenity contribution policy and the assembly of units through the rezoning process.

The Committee asked about security of rental housing and not losing rental units, as well as encouraging the construction of new rental housing. Staff noted that all of these policies were included in the document. Some informal policies from the past were included as new formal policies, and there are new policies that require replacement of rental units that are lost. The Committee asked if the policies also covered the loss of any rental housing, and not just affordable rental housing, and if a “no net loss” should be stronger to require net gain. Staff indicated that they could consider changes. The Committee asked if there was merit in establishing rental number targets. Staff noted that this issue was covered a little in the implementation section. Staff also noted that better data might be needed to try and establish meaningful targets.

The Committee asked if there is any need to define what the document means by increasing density or appropriate density in neighbourhoods. Staff noted that they would take a look at if, or how this could be defined. The Committee noted that combining density definitions with built form descriptions might be more legible for the public. Staff noted that some of these issues were addressed in the growth management section, where policies at the sub area plan talk to these matters.

The Committee asked about the “missing middle” policy references. Staff noted that this may be an issue better addressed at the zoning stage, but would consider this suggestion. The Committee also asked staff to consider different terminology for the housing spectrum graphic.

In the transportation section, connectivity and safety for all are critical objectives. Additional connections to downtown and commercial connectivity are highlighted also. Strengthening the connection between transportation and land use is emphasised, with mention of appropriate locations for density, and transit supportive densities being proposed. There is an increased

emphasis on alternate transportation and active transportation modes. New policy is proposed on regional transit potentials. New transportation mapping has also been done.

The Committee noted that there were some inconsistencies between some of the mode shift targets in the document. Staff noted that these were based on numbers from other documents and these plans do not work with each other. Staff noted that these inconsistencies may not be easy to resolve. The Committee noted these policies may be better in the implementation section. The Committee suggested possible stronger language in the objectives at the start of the section, and to talk about independence of movement for all ages, and especially those that have mobility restrictions. Staff noted that there was a hierarchy of transportation that might help address this comment. The Committee noted that electric vehicle use might lessen the impact that reducing single occupancy vehicles on greenhouse gas emissions, but that there were multiple other reasons and rationale to lessen single occupancy vehicles (e.g. health, safety, land for parking, congestion and lost time, sprawl, air quality etc.). The Committee briefly discussed the pros and cons of electric vehicles.

Employment, jobs and employment lands policies were enhanced, in a number of areas. Sub area plans should include employment lands; the growth boundary was less restrictive on employment opportunities; infill rezoning should add not reduce employment potential. The Committee asked if the infill policy has a threshold to allow smaller applications to avoid this. Staff said that this policy is flexible and not a requirement. There is policy consideration to incentivize potential commercial space, and industrial policies that protect industrial lands from being rezoned to residential uses, as well as addressing compatibility between adjacent residential and industrial lands. There are new policies on the Business Park contained in the new plan, somewhat addressing the purpose of the Business Park, as suggested by the Committee in the past. The intent is to support light industrial uses in the Business Park, and prevent incursion from less appropriate uses. Commercial uses should be complementary to the light industry. Also, the western portions are reserved for industrial uses that have higher impact.

The Committee noted that some of the Business Park policies could be more definitive. Staff noted that some of the recent comments of the Committee via email have outlined an issue that needs to be corrected and would be dealing with it. Staff note that some of the difficulties in limiting uses in the Business Park result from the fact that there are some commercial businesses already there, and that staff didn't to create real hardship for existing businesses.

The Committee did note that many of the Business Park policies were within the District's jurisdiction to be directional, and less ambiguous in nature. Staff are open to tighten these policies.

Staff noted that some of the OCP's form and character guidelines (which address site and building design and landscaping) have not been updated in many years. As a result, the current guidelines often do not address current issues. As a result, they have been completely redone, with help from the Advisory Design Panel. There is now a set of universal guidelines that apply to all development for important basic matters. These apply to all multi family, commercial and industrial uses. There are then more specific guidelines for other areas that sit on top of the universal guidelines. Industrial guidelines tend to be much lower in requirements and standards.

The Committee asked about clarifying what DP guidelines applied where. Staff highlighted the maps that show where these applied. Staff noted that they would be hosting sessions with local design professionals on these guidelines. The Committee noted that around multi family developments, were there gathering space requirements for rainy times or usable all the year round? Staff thought this could be improved in the draft document.

The Committee asked about how development permit areas worked in practice. Staff noted that these areas required a separate step, or getting a development permit that addresses the guidelines in all of these areas. The relevant Provincial legislation also limits the extent to which development permit areas can operate. Staff also noted that these are all guidelines, and use permissive language generally. It is intended that they are discretionary and are interpreted in a contextual fashion.

Staff finally outlined an implementation section, which has not previously been seen. These represent a commitment to track the District's progress in meeting the objectives. Staff have tried to coordinate this section with other District planning documents, such as the Strategic Plan, financial plan and annual report. This section has also tried to work with existing metrics and measurement efforts, that are already being collected. At the start of the process, it would be necessary to establish benchmarks against which actions could be measured into the future. The intent was to incorporate a lot of this work into the District's Annual Report to avoid creating duplicate or multiple reporting documents. Staff are proposing to start with a modest and reasonable set of metrics, that we would be able to easily track over time, rather than large and un-manageable sets of metrics. There was an initial proposal for 25 – 30 basic measures or metrics. Others could be added as needed or withdrawn if they were not effective in measuring progress.

The Committee expressed satisfaction that the implementation section has been included and makes it trackable, and increased accountability. The Committee recommended the use of infographics to make it as legible to the public as possible. The Committee thought that the set of measures proposed seemed reasonable. The Committee suggested looking into the number of community events as a possible metric.

Staff noted that the amendments proposed would be incorporated as soon as possible, but the changes may not show in the draft that is issued to the public next week.

Aran Cheema asked some questions of staff about growth management, and what was in and out of the growth management boundary. Mr. Cheema also asked about how the 85% number would be measured. Staff noted that there was not a definitive answer on this question at present. The Committee noted that possible monopoly residential developer concerns could be created by the 85%, as the land supply diminishes, and needs to be considered. Staff noted that this issue is so far in the future, it is difficult to manage at present. Staff would revisit the policy.

Mr. Cheema also asked about the 34,000 cap, policy precursors and extra-ordinary benefits. Staff responded that policy precursors were District policies that were needed to regulate development prior to the development proceeding, and outlined the definition of extra-ordinary community benefits. Staff also noted that Council had some discretion as to how to deal with limited development of future residential areas. Staff also noted that developers would need to meet all of the requirements to proceed. Staff also noted that this is the start of the public

process, and there would be ample future opportunities to have questions and concerns addressed through the public process.

Staff presented a short video for the upcoming engagement process, and also confirmed that the Committee could send comments to staff over the next week.

4. Committee Thanks + Process Reflections

The District wanted to express a small token of appreciation to the Committee members, and presented small gifts and cards to those present. The Mayor thanked all of the members for their hard work over the time the Committee has been operating.

5. Meeting Close

Staff thanked the Committee for all their supportive efforts and comments throughout. Staff are also open to hearing comments on how the committee process has functioned.

The meeting terminated at 9:00 p.m.