



# **City of New Westminster McBride-Sapperton Residents' Association**

## **McBride-Sapperton Residents Association Public Meeting Minutes**

**Date:** Tuesday, March 28, 2017 @ 7:15 pm

**Location:** Knox Presbyterian Church

**Attendance:** 30 residents

**Special Guests:** Peter Julian (MP), Judy D'Arcy (MLA), Mayor Jonathan Cote, Councillor Patrick Johnstone, Councillor Lorrie Williams, Lorraine Brett (Liberal Candidate), Lisa Leblanc (City Transportation Manager)

**Executive:** Rnold, Jerry, Anita, Dee, Ross, Babar, Kevin, Wes, Monica (minutes)  
**Regrets:** Geoff, Lutz

**City Representative:** Rupinder Basi

### **1. Welcome and Introduction of Executive**

**Rnold**

### **2. Approval of Minutes from January 24, 2017 Meeting**

**Rnold**

### **3. Old Business – OCP Update**

**Rupinder**

- Recent February consultation process has concluded and City staff is collating feedback.
- The next step is developing design guidelines.
- Next important dates are April 19 and 24 for an Infill Housing update.

### **4. Sapperton Transportation Study Focus Group Update**

**Monica**

- Monica provided an update on the work of the Focus Group.
- This group, which consists of neighbourhood residents, including Monica, Wilf, Colm Morgan and ?, met on March 9 at City Hall with Transportation planner Stephen Blore and the consultants hired by the City to discuss strategies about how best to approach public consultation with Sapperton residents about transportation planning measures for Sapperton.
- The consultants will be planning a facilitated workshop in the coming weeks. Monica advised those in attendance to watch for advertising of this workshop from the City and plan to attend the event in order to get their voices heard.

## 5. Brunette Interchange Project

- Rnold started the discussion by contextualizing the issue. He presented five themes to discuss which he proposed considering as part of an RA-approved “communications plan”. The five themes are:
  - i) “Consultation is just a tick box” – the idea that if the Ministry/provincial government has a plan in place, they will just go through the motions of “consulting” without truly listening to residents’ concerns. He presented the example of a group of residents in Langley who protested a similar project, and who subsequently lost their battle. This is to illustrate the point that what a community says will not necessarily impact the final result.
  - ii) “Government is allowed to harm our health” – he said that Canada is not a signatory to an international document protecting citizens from government decisions that affect citizens’ health.
  - iii) “Livability is not a key concern in their planning” – one resident stated, “they [MOTI] purposely ignored this point” in their criteria. Rnold stressed that we need to ensure that *our* definition of livability is the one that is used, not theirs. A meeting attendee pointed out that air quality monitoring is done at Sapperton Park, and that we should try to contact Metro Vancouver officials for this data.
  - iv) “It’s possible for MOTI to ‘stack the consultation process’” – there is no way to verify who participates in the consultation process, so we do not know whose voices are given the most clout or credence. He suggested that the way the consultation process was done was flawed.
  - v) “The government is spending significant funds on this project in isolation; there is no consideration of how this project fits into the overall regional plan.”

Rnold’s request is to put these points out for discussion and to a vote by residents to authorize the Executive to use these themes as part of a communication plan to on behalf of our RA as part of the overall conversation on this issue.

- Judy D’Arcy then spoke. Her key points:
  - Together we have been successful in slowing this process down, the Sapperton community, along with the mayors of New Westminster and Coquitlam.
  - Nothing will happen before the election, and “that is a victory”.
  - Genuine consultation is necessary; the government needs “community license” for such projects. At the November meeting, MOTI reps got an earful from local residents, which they were likely not expecting.
  - The livability issue is critical.
  - Making this an election issue is critical.
  - We need real solutions that benefit the whole community to ensure that the money spent is well spent.
- Jonathan Cote spoke. His key points:
  - He is happy to be here and report back what he can.
  - He has nothing specific to report back, but feels that is a positive thing.
  - It appears this issue has been put on the shelf until after the election.
  - He attributes that to the community and to the volume of the input MOTI received. He feels they were not expecting the numbers who turned out in November, nor

the volume of written feedback. This has caused them to take extra time to go through, read, and collate.

- New Westminster City Council has been working with Coquitlam City Council. They had an initial meeting in December, which led to a bus tour with the two councils; the council members then broken into two subcommittees. Through dialogue, they started to understand each other's objectives and issues. The process helped Coquitlam open its eyes to how this project will impact Lower Sapperton; New Westminster was also informed about Coquitlam's perspectives, especially their concerns over the inefficiencies at their major intersections and the connectivity of the Fraser Mills neighbourhood to RCH and Skytrain.
- In some areas, the two city Councils agreed, in some areas, they do not; however, they came up with a list of objectives.
- He feels that the Sapperton community should not await further action, but needs to continue to be active and vigilant as this project is not going away.
- Communication from the two councils to MOTI was confidential, as per mutual agreement between the two councils, so as to not politicize the issue, nor present ideas that are not feasible nor possible. He is not able to share this information publicly until both Councils get a specific response back from MOTI to their letter.
- The Patullo Bridge project will be dealt with before the Brunette Interchange Project, which is not yet a funded project.
  
- Question to the Mayor: Has the B.I.P. come up at the Mayors' Council?  
J.C.: It has not yet been an active topic of discussion. Cote and Stewart have raised it, but "it's not an issue that's on the radar" of the other mayors in the region.
  
- Question to Judy D'Arcy: What will be the NDP's position on this if elected?  
J.D.: The NDP would work with communities, get community license, and ensure they are not pitting one community against another.
  
- Rnold asked for feedback from the Mayor on the communications plan. Mayor Cote said we should focus on the livability issue.
- Patrick Johnstone emphasized we should ensure our definition of livability is the one that is the focus.
  - He also said that we need to make the point that there is a major trust issue with regards to the consultation process, that we should demand a consultation process that we can trust. He gave the example of the Patullo Bridge consultation process as one that worked well and was positive.
- Anita made the suggestion that we could use the billboard at the intersection of Braid and Brunette to draw attention to the issue.
  - Peter Julian spoke. His key points:
    - "fake consultation is the scourge of democracy".
    - He encouraged the community to remain active.
    - He said that all communities believe in the same thing: livability.
    - He assured everyone of his support.
- Lorraine Brett spoke (recently selected provincial Liberal candidate). Her main point:
  - She is happy to be here and is here to listen.

- Jonina Campbell (Green Party candidate). She was unable to be present tonight, but Rnold read her letter. Its key points:
  - Letter expressed concern about the consultation process and the lack of vision presented, as well as the impact of the potential options on the livability of residents.
  - Stated that “BC Greens are committed to engaging in meaningful consultation”.
- Motion made: “That the MSRA members authorize the Executive to spend up to \$1000 of the RA funds on a communications plan to support and magnify our collective message about the impact of the BIT project on the Lower Sapperton Community.”
- After discussion around the sufficiency of the budget, the motion was amended to “spend up to \$1500 of the RA funds”. **Motion:** Babar; **Secunder:** Wes; **Vote:** Carried.

## 6. 408/412 East Columbia Street Property

Presentation by Myron Calof on behalf of I4 Property Group (owners of the property)

- City representative Carolyn Armanini spoke to provide some background context to the project: went over the rezoning process for this project; within the existing OCP, six storeys is consistent with guidelines; the proposed OCP guidelines would limit the building to six storeys; the City measures proposed projects against other programs in the City (eg. Social housing, the new “Idea Centre”); because this project is with the Idea Centre region, it is being considered.
- Myron Calof then spoke, along with his project architect, transportation consultant and Joelle Calof (VP of company). His key points:
  - Went over the history of zoning – in 2001, the OCP allowed for 1<sup>st</sup> storey retail and 3 storeys of residential; in 2011, the OCP was updated (?) to allow for medium to high density; in 2017, the proposed new OCP guidelines would limit buildings to four storeys, but allow up to six in “exceptional circumstances”
  - He mentioned the concept of the Sapperton “Great Street” under the City’s Master Transportation Plan.
  - He discussed their “family friendly” initiatives and market rental housing initiatives.
  - The proposed building would have 7000 sq. ft. retail and 11,000 (?) sq. ft. office space. There would be 60 secured marked rental housing units and 84 parking spaces, 49 of which would be designated for residents.
- The architect then spoke:
  - He said that the building would be two storeys smaller than the building across the street.
  - The City insisted on high quality contemporary architecture.
  - They have given an extra six feet to the sidewalk to encourage an “interactive street front”.
  - The parking will be accessed through the back lane.
  - There will be an “ample amount of parking....it might even be ‘overparked””.
  - They have tried to incorporate a privacy buffer zone into the building to screen building residents from residents across the lane in single family homes.
- Calof spoke again: he emphasized that the project will help to achieve the objectives of the Idea Centre and the OCP, as well as the M.T.P.

- The developer is looking for exemptions in a couple of design guideline areas due to the lot configuration. They are emphasizing living and social space and de-emphasizing bedroom space. Thus, several of the bedrooms will not have windows.
- Clarification from Carolyn Armanini:
  - Zoning is currently for four storeys. The OCP proposal is for from four-six storeys.
- Concerns expressed by residents over the use of balconies for storage. The architect said that there will be bike storage lockers provided which would be sufficient.
- Concerns expressed over height of building and the precedent it will set for six storeys all the way down the street.
- Brent from CTS, the transportation planning consultant addressed questions re: parking. He said a study was done (but did not say when). He anticipates only 36 stalls will be in demand by residents.
- A resident expressed concern over how this building creates a sense of community with a limited number of family friendly units. Also, concern was expressed over the contemporary design of the building and that it does not fit with the character of the surrounding neighbourhood. The developer responded by saying that contemporary designs can still fit into older neighbourhoods.
- An additional concern was expressed over the need for an extra floor of office space when there is lots of unused office space in the city already.
- A concern was expressed over the City encouraging the developer to go one storey higher than it had originally planned.
- Rnold expressed his feeling that we need more residents in the area to support local businesses.
- Another question was asked about the sufficiency of the planned number of parking units.
- The developer concluded by saying that the application is still in the early stages, so there is still an opportunity for public consultation, and encouraged everyone to attend the Open House being held next week. He also encouraged anyone who wanted to stay after the meeting to do so and ask questions.

Because of the length of the meeting and the time, it was decided to adjourn, despite not addressing the final items on the agenda: **the NWPC update, the MSRA Society Incorporation and Constitution update, the honorarium for the church, and Sapperton Day.**

**Meeting Adjourned:** 9:45 pm.

**Next meeting:** May 2, 2017, at 7:15 PM.