

Regular Council Meeting, June 13, 2022  
Reported by Jack Gegenberg

Councilors Bateman, Beddows, Logins and St. Pierre and the Mayor present at Council Chambers.

Summary: Meeting was 4 hours + 10 minutes, G-d help us. The following agenda items might be of interest to TS people: 6.1 **Development Permit with Variances - 6645 Sooke Road** , 11.1 **John Phillips Memorial Park - Update** , 11.3 **Participation in the CRD led CleanBC Communities Fund Grant Application - EV Charging Infrastructure Network** , 11.4 **Covenant Amendment - 7044 Maple Park Terrace/2191 Mountain Heights** .

1. 6.1 **Development Permit with Variances - 6645 Sooke Road** . This is a project which has been under consideration for some time, with regular consultation between Staff and the developers WestUrban. The project is for the construction of 2 buildings consisting of rental housing (161 units), with commercial space (4 units) also available, plus an above ground parking garage. The location is downtown, on Brownsey Blvd (just south of Village Grocery). The discussion was around the following recommendation from Staff:

THAT Council deny the issuance of variances requested with Development Permit PLN01582 for the proposed development at 6645 Sooke Road which would vary the following sections of the Zoning Bylaw:

1. vary section 3.22 to eliminate three (3) sight triangles,
2. vary section 4.6(e) to reduce the maneuvering aisle in the parkade from 7.5m to 6.5m, and
3. vary section 4.6(m) to reduce the minimum setback for two (2) surface parking spaces adjacent to a public highway from 3.0m to 1.51m.

AND THAT Council recommend that the Development Permit with Variances PLN01582 for 6645 Sooke Road be referred back to staff so that the Applicant can revise the application to comply with the Zoning Bylaw and work with staff to meet Development Permit guidelines. There were presentations from Staff, WestUrban and comment from a number of people present, including Susan Belford, Britt Santowsky, Herb Haldane.

The developer (surprise surprise) said that further delay would jeopardize the project. Councilors and the Mayor were generally in support of the project on the grounds that it represents, at long last, mixed residential/commercial development of the downtown core. Staff were concerned that the variances requested, concerning sight lines and parking. It was noted that since the development is proposed for downtown, that some residents (about 1 in 4) would NOT have guaranteed parking space available, and if they had cars, they would have to 'park on the street'. Logins asked if the rental units were 'affordable' or market valued. The developer said that the suites would (1 or 2 bdrm) have market rent.

Most of the public commenters were opposed to the project. Belford said that this project is NOT what is needed downtown: not sufficiently pedestrian oriented, built around cars, and has a menacing fort-like demeanor. Another said it was not consistent with OCP. However Haldane said that the project will stimulate downtown commercial growth. All the Councilors and the Mayor basically concurred, though they were not satisfied with the variances proposed by the developer.

In the end, Council voted unanimously to postpone the decision on the variances pending further discussion between the developer and Staff.

2. 11.1 **John Phillips Memorial Park - Update** Discussion concerned the following from Staff

[Postponed motion #2022-150]

- THAT Council consider a charrette as part of the public engagement process leading to a master plan for John Phillips Memorial Park.

THAT Council direct Staff to support the Sooke Lions Club in public engagement efforts regarding their proposal for a community amenity facility within John Phillips Memorial Park, specifically a Town Hall event in September 2022;

THAT Council direct Staff to assist the Sooke Lions Club in hiring a consultant to facilitate the Town Hall event;

AND THAT Council direct Staff to bring forward the development of a Master Plan for John Phillips Memorial Park as part of 2023 budget deliberations.

The background here is that Council is considering renovating John Phillips Park, centered around a building that would house Sooke Lions Club office. It was previously proposed that Council approve a Master Plan for the park based on a yet-to-be-held `charrette`. There was a public referendum on the basics of the plan, which was approved, but with only about 9% turnout in the vote. Also the Lions have planned a Town Hall on the project, slated for Sept. 2022. The Town Hall would seem to be designed with the purpose of defusing some of the public opposition to centering the project around the Lions Club office. A charrette is not much like a Town Hall. In the latter, the public can express support or opposition. In the former, the idea is to have the public engage on what exactly the project will be. There is no room for simply saying `I'm opposed`.

In the end, Council unanimously rejected the charrette, approved support of the Town Hall.

3. 11.3 **Participation in the CRD led CleanBC Communities Fund Grant Application - EV Charging Infrastructure Network** .

Council unanimously approved participation in the grant application. The only discussion was around the question of whether it would be best to have EV charging downtown, as well as at City Hall, as proposed in the application. It was noted that EV charging is in the works for both the Legion and Sea Parc. Passed unanimously.

4. 11.4 Covenant Amendment 7044 Maple Park Terrace.

This is an ongoing development at the top of Wingfield Dr., north of Grant Rd. There is a long history of troubles with this development. It is difficult land to develop, and it is ecologically sensitive. The developer was `covenanted` to respect ecosystems and trails as much as possible, or pay compensation,

but this is proving difficult for the developer. The developer wants to modify the covenant. Council unanimously approved this.