

Anmore Special Council Meeting
Public Presentation of the Official Community Plan [final draft]

Tuesday, April 15, 2014
Anmore Elementary School Portable Classroom

Mayor Heather Anderson called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM. All members of Council, CAO Tim Harris, Manager of Public Works Kevin Dicken, Financial Consultant Mindy Smith, Manager of Corporate Services Christine Milloy, and Brent Elliott and Kate Lambert, consultants with CitySpaces Consulting, were in attendance. Members of the Village of Anmore Advisory Planning Commission were not at the meeting, however approximately 30 residents were.

Kate Lambert of CitySpaces made a PowerPoint presentation on the Official Community Plan (OCP) to the assembled group. Her presentation focused on an introduction to the OCP consultation process, key updates to the document, next steps, and open discussion with the public. She began by explaining that the OCP is a long-term guide for land-use, parks, environment, infrastructure, transportation, and finance.

Ms Lambert said that municipal OCPs are normally updated every five years. However, the last one in Anmore was done in 2005, almost a decade ago. Ms. Lambert provided key updates in seven areas: i) land-use, ii) environment, iii) transportation, iv) green house gas emissions, v) financial sustainability, vi) municipal services, and vii) social and community well-being. She indicated that while the OCP [final draft] builds on the previous document, it adds to it and also removes dated policies.

One of the objectives of the CitySpaces consultants in writing the document was to reduce regulatory language. Ms. Lambert indicated that as a guiding document the OCP sets out a vision, however the actual implementation will be in zoning, construction, and other bylaws.

Ms. Lambert talked about the Financial Sustainability Report by Vann Struth consultants. In setting the immediate context, Ms Lambert highlighted the need for infrastructure investment in Anmore. With the Village already \$9 million behind, the replacement of roads, culverts, and bridges will be a challenge and is a pervasive consideration in the entire OCP vision. She also talked about service delivery costs and regional growth pressures.

1. Land-Use Policy Update

- Residential Land-Use: Ms. Lambert stressed the importance of staying flexible. She said, "Don't say no to a good idea".
- She then spoke about most of the remaining developable land being on hillsides and the need for the development of this land for financial sustainability.

- She said that although over 50% of the lots in Anmore are under one acre, RS-1 (one acre) zoning would remain the standard.
- Cluster housing will be allowed for hillside developments,
- The 15% cap on Comprehensive Development Zones will be eliminated. The aspirations of developers would be reflected in innovative proposals to Council. CD zones would be restricted to 1.5 lots per acre.
- The only commercial land in Anmore is at the Anmore store and campground. The OCP opens up the prospect of more commercial land near the Village Center where Council plans to build the new Village Hall/ Community Center, and in the IOCO Special Study area.

2. Parkland and Trails Updates

- In the public consultations on the OCP, access to recreational areas, parks and trails was a high priority. This includes connecting trails. Protecting the wilderness, and active and passive park spaces, are important to Anmore residents. Ms. Lambert also highlighted that a Parks Master Plan is underway.

3. Environment Updates

- An important priority for the Advisory Planning Commission in this OCP was getting useful maps of watercourses and topography. Ms. Lambert indicated that the maps in the previous OCP were faulty, difficult to read photocopies.
- In future, to protect the environment, Development Area Permits will be required for environmentally sensitive and riparian areas.
- Existing stewardship practices will be strengthened and, with the help of environmental consultants, wildlife, habitat, and trees will be protected. Invasive plants will be removed.

4. Transportation

- Residents will be encouraged to use alternative for forms of travel and the consideration of walkability will be prevalent.
- There will be a schedule for road replacement and enhanced connectivity.

5. Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions

- Since Anmore is a vehicle-dependent community, Metro Vancouver should be told that the Village is not on track to achieve targets to reduce greenhouse gases.
- Alternative energy and energy-efficient buildings should be encouraged.
- Waste reduction plans will be put in place by 2015 and will be consistent with the Metro Vancouver ban on organics.

6. Financial Policies

- There is balancing act required between the cost of municipal services, and building and maintaining infrastructure.
- Ms. Lambert talked about how the municipality inherits the infrastructure from developments. The ongoing cost of maintaining these facilities should be minimized.
- The Village should increase contributions to the Capital Reserve for maintaining and replacing infrastructure. There should be an infrastructure lifecycle and renewal policy.
- A revised curb-side pickup of garbage, recycling and organic waste needs to be implemented.

7. Social and Community Well-Being

- Accessibility and age friendliness need to be priorities. Innovative options should be developed for people to 'age in place'.
- There should be programs for youth and a community resources directory.
- Heritage policies should include an ongoing oral history and preservation of artefacts.
- The community should also celebrate local artists.

Where are we now? Ms. Lambert indicated the next steps are to revise and refine policies, and to look at innovation and improvement in the document. The anticipated OCP timeline includes: first and second reading of the bylaw, sending courtesy copies of the report to neighbouring communities and BC Hydro for comment, going to a public hearing, adopting the official OCP, and then prioritizing policies and initiatives to incorporate into the appropriate bylaws.

After Ms. Lambert's presentation, the floor was open to questions from the public. The first person to speak owns hillside property and was concerned about potential restrictions on his capacity to develop his property. He thinks the new watershed and riparian area maps are faulty, He also identified text that he indicated was contradictory. He said the OCP would 'condemn acres and acres of land as worthless'.

Ms. Lambert indicated that if a possibility of a creek exists on land to be developed, the BC Local government Act requires a thorough review by a qualified environmental consultant, Such a review is mandatory before you can get an Area Development Permit. Mayor Anderson indicated that in response to the resident's concern about wording, the consultants would be asked to review the three points to make the wording clearer.

A second resident asked a question about policy S-1. She was concerned that the words requiring accessible facilities were not firm enough. Mr. Elliott indicated that the OCP should be considered a guiding document and firmer wording would be used in the bylaws.

Former Anmore Councillor Glenn Coutts had read the OCP in great detail. He said that this was not easy because four days notice for the OCP Public consultation was far too short. He said that while there had been some public input in earlier meetings, there had been no real community dialogue and no ideas had been exchanged among residents. He indicated that he thinks that further community dialogue on the Official Community Plan [final draft] is required.

Mr. Coutts reminded the consultants that over 70% of Anmore residents had opposed reducing the lot size to less than 1 acre in an earlier referendum. He called for dialogue to determine if this had changed over time. He said that there is a very vocal minority who could give the impression that half-acre lots were desirable, however he thought that if the consultants had had a more thorough consultation with residents, they probably would have found otherwise. Mayor Anderson said that the referendum Mr. Coutts was referring to was held in 2002 and things have changed since then.

Mr. Coutts was also concerned about the premise in the Vann Struth Financial Sustainability report that greater density is required for financial sustainability. He said increased density requires increased services. He was also very concerned about removing the 15% cap on Comprehensive Development Zones. Mayor Anderson said that he should not worry. She said in her experience, developers would rather build to the RS-1 one acre standard, and avoid the time-consuming application procedures.

With reference to steep slope development, Mr. Coutts was concerned that landowners with 'crud land' will benefit from cluster housing. He said that some land is not developable and should not be included. He was pleased to see the new maps. He indicated that RS-2 zoning for hillside and sensitive area development was already in the books. Mayor Anderson indicated that no developers had ever applied for the RS-2 zoning designation.

Editors' Note: Last year an RS-2 zone development application for a steep slope area in close proximity to Mayor Anderson's land came before Council. Residents in the area were concerned about the destruction of habitat for the endangered red-legged frog.

Mr. Coutts indicated that he does not support further commercial land development, nor does he support special status for the development of the IOCO lands. Again he stressed the importance of equity. In this case, a large developer could potentially get special privileges which small developers do not get.

Mr. Coutts was also concerned about the useless pieces of parkland that have been donated to the Village in the past as a part of the 5% provincial

requirement. He said riparian zones should not be included in the green space calculation for CD zoning, and useful pieces of readily accessible land should be required.

The past Anmore councillor was also worried about safety issues. He was pleased with policy T- 22 to widen the roads. However, he said that policy T – 21 should state that grades of 12% or more are not permitted. He does not support driveways by easement, As well, Village Reserve Funds should not be loaned to the water utility.

Mr. Coutts questioned the repeated reference in the OCP to people aging in place. Mayor Anderson is keen to provide housing options for Anmore seniors and indicated that older people are now moving away. Mr. Coutts said that he had talked to over 25 people and no one saw 'aging in place' as a priority.

Editors' Note: While some seniors may be leaving, other old seniors are actually moving into Anmore to live in family suites and carriage houses.

Mayor Anderson had some further comments on Mr. Coutts' concerns. She said that there had been ample consultation and people felt that they had been well consulted. People are sometimes shy.

The mayor said that relative to the RS-1 one acre zoning, about a third of the people she talks to want to keep it, another third want to change it completely, and another third are somewhere in the middle. She said that increased density is required to deal with the \$9 million shortfall. She also indicated that a developer had given \$500,000 towards a community center (Ravenswood).

Another resident then raised concerns about what he sees as an onerous responsibility for steep slope landowners with the introduction of Development Area Permits. He also said that before the Tree Retention Bylaw was established, his neighbours to the south logged their property in order to avoid bureaucratic oversight. Mr. Elliott indicated that the environmental inspection is already required. Mayor Anderson said unless the developer is dramatically altering the land, a Development Area Permit would not be required. She asked the consultants to fine tune the language and make the terms clearer.

Another resident was concerned about riparian setbacks. Ms. Lambert indicated that the environmental review requirements are provincial. Another resident, on the Environment Committee, confirmed that the provincial requirement has been in place since 2007 and a qualified environmental assessment needs to be done in riparian areas.

Another resident indicated that a creek was shown where there normally is no water on the new watershed map. Mr. Elliott said that some creeks have been buried by developers in Anmore, and sometimes the waterflows are seasonal. He

also spoke about the precision of the new maps compiled from flyby data and vetted by environmental consultants. Councillor McEwen asked about open ditches. The consultants indicated that even ditches can be fish bearing.

Another former Anmore Councillor, Ken Juvik, said that he agreed with a number of points made by Mr. Coutts. He said that every time you put in a new development, there are problems. Quickly increasing density may be a short-term fix, but it's not a long-term solution for Anmore's financial problems. He also confirmed the need for more precise language. The example he used was the update of the Emergency Preparedness Plan. Where the OCP says that it should be updated as needed, he indicated that the update is a legal requirement, and the wording should be much stronger. 'The emergency preparedness plan should be updated on a regular basis.' He also indicated that he is in favour of further community dialogue on the Official Community Plan [final draft]

On density, Mayor Anderson indicated that while the initial growth would be faster, the population for the Village would be capped at 4000. Mr. Elliott indicated that while the Financial Sustainability Plan was for 32 years, that the window should be shortened to address the immediate \$9 million shortfall.

Several other residents reiterated earlier comments. One said that language like encourage, support, and consider should be replaced by firmer language, especially in the environmental and social areas.

Another resident complimented the consultants on a report well-written. He said that while some of the wording could be changed, it will be useful to have practical guidelines. He also said that increased density would increase the tax base to deal with the \$9 million deficit. Mayor Anderson indicated that roads need to be replaced every 25 to 30 years, water mains every 50 years, and bridges every 52 years. She said that Sunnyside Road was built in 1979 and needs to be replaced.

Another resident asked if the OCP actually meant to encourage 'secondary suites and carriage houses.' Ms. Lambert explained that this terminology was not intended for individual residents on 1 acre properties, but rather in a generic overall sense.

Financial consultant Mindy Smith and Councillor Thiele talked about the importance of an Asset Management Plan. Councillor Thiele said that Anmore was already working on a Water Utility Plan.

Mayor Anderson agreed with the requests by former Anmore Councillors Coutts and Juvik for further dialogue on the OCP. Another Public presentation on the Official Community Plan [final draft] is now scheduled for Tuesday, April 29th at 7:00 PM in the portable classroom behind Anmore Elementary School, beside the tennis courts. This venue is accessed by the road beside the Friendly Forest

Preschool. Councillor Thiele asked residents to invite other residents to the meeting in an effort to inform more people. The Special Council meeting was adjourned and Council went into an in-camera [closed] meeting.