



MINUTES OF A REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING

Monday, October 16, 2023

7:00 p.m.

Council Chambers, Langley City Hall
20399 Douglas Crescent

- Present: Mayor Pachal
Councillor Albrecht
Councillor Mack
Councillor Wallace
Councillor White
- Absent: Councillor James
Councillor Solyom
- Staff Present: F. Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer
G. Flack, Deputy Director of Corporate Services
K. Hilton, Director of Recreation, Culture and Community Services
C. Johannsen, Director of Development Services
S. Kennedy, Fire Chief
K. Kenney, Corporate Officer
D. Leite, Director of Corporate Services

1. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Pachal began by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is on the traditional unceded territory of the Katzie, Kwantlen, Matsqui and Semiahmoo First Nations.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the October 16, 2023 regular Council agenda be adopted as amended to add the following items:

3.b. Downtown Chilliwack Tour – Francis Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer

7.c. Staff Recognition

CARRIED

3. **COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

Council commence the Committee of the Whole.

CARRIED

a. Provincial Digital Permitting Pilot Project

Carl Johannsen, Director of Development Services, provided a PowerPoint presentation on the City's participation in the province's digital permitting tool pilot project, providing information as follows:

- Overview
 - Province is developing a digital building permit & BC Building Code (BCBC) compliance tool;
 - Intent is to speed up the processing of building permits & housing construction;
 - Current focus is on 'readiness of application' vs. processing actual permit submission;
 - The City is participating in a pilot project to develop & implement this on-line tool;
 - There is no cost to the City for the pilot project; future permit software will likely need City funding;
- Pilot Project
 - The Province is working with 16 local governments & 1 First Nation to identify common permitting requirements/formats & create, test & implement an on-line BP submission tool that will:
 - Indicate whether an application is complete;
 - Evaluate BP designs for compliance with the BCBC;
 - Support electronic permit submission;
 - Track submission & approval timelines;
 - \$1.45 million budget;
 - Once complete, this tool is intended to be used Province-wide
- Anticipated Outcomes
 - The pilot aims to come up with a digital solution that:
 - 1. Creates a minimum consistent standard for complete applications;
 - 2. Validates completeness of the application prior to submission;
 - 3. Provides more certainty by indicating BCBC compliance prior to permit submission; &
 - 4. Provides more information for plan & design reviewers to validate compliance.

- AGILE methodology: used to develop & test the product, through consultation with local Building Officials, & implement an on-line system based on outcomes of the pilot project.
- AGILE: approach that breaks projects into phases & emphasizes continuous collaboration & improvement. Teams follow a cycle of planning, executing, & evaluating.
- Measuring Success
 - Pilot project 'measuring success' metrics may include:
 - 1. Does this decrease paper permit submissions?
 - 2. Does this reduce the building permit re-submission rate?
 - 3. Does this reduce builder/developer questions?
 - 4. Is this tool readily adoptable across BC?
- Team & Timeline
 - Development Services team members:
 - Manager of Building & Licencing
 - Supervisor Plan Review
 - Pilot Kick-off: September – October 2023
 - Phase 1 - Product Development: October 2023 – March 2024
 - Feedback
 - User research/1:1 user testing
 - Sprint demos
 - Phase 2 - Pilot Implementation: March 2024 – August 2024
 - Test the Product
 - User research/1:1 user testing
 - Sprint demos
 - Collect data, measure project outcomes
 - Next Steps
 - Participate in pilot project
 - Report back pilot project outcomes, possible implementation & financial implications
 - Consider further digital permitting processes, present options to Council.

In response to questions from Committee members, Mr. Johannsen advised that:

- the province does have a one-window approach for provincial permits with respect to development on crown lands and he believes the province is working towards that;
- staff are not sure if off-site civil plans are part of this pilot project; staff will follow up and report back; however, he believes that, as municipalities start adopting on-line digital submission, civil plans will be included as well.

Committee feedback was as follows:

- it would be worthwhile monitoring this process to determine if it just moves the delay in processing development applications to a different part of the process.

3.b. Downtown Chilliwack Tour

Francis Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer provided information to the Committee on his recent meeting with the CAO of Chilliwack and his tour of Chilliwack's new District 1881 Neighbourhood in Downtown Chilliwack, advising that:

- current and past Chilliwack Councils should be commended for the vision they set for Downtown Chilliwack;
- Downtown Chilliwack and Downtown Langley share some similarities;
- Over the past 30 years, every 10 years or so, Chilliwack Council would attempt to refresh the look of their downtown with small refurbishments such as putting in new street lights, new sidewalks, and updated street furniture;
- These improvements, however, did not attract the development they had envisioned for the downtown;
- Chilliwack's District 1881 Neighbourhood has been decades in the making:
 - the City of Chilliwack owned some land in a central block in the downtown area;
 - approximately 10 to 15 years ago, a concerted effort was made to assemble the lands within that block in order to create an innovative development for the community;
 - what was envisioned was a mix of residential developments, loft style apartment buildings, unique office space, local restaurants and retail shops;
 - over the last 15 years the City of Chilliwack purchased all of the properties within that block;
 - the City of Chilliwack went out for proposal for a developer to build their vision, with the successful proponent being Algra Bros;
 - the City of Chilliwack sold the block to Algra Bros. at a reduced price, who in turn, developed the land with residential apartment buildings, retail stores, restaurants, and brew pubs;
- during his tour of the District 1881 Neighbourhood at 2:00 pm on a Thursday afternoon, he observed at least 10 to 15 pubs and restaurants in the area, which had brick finishings and open joist ceilings, in keeping with the 1881 theme for the area;
- the restaurants, pubs, as retail stores were all busy, considering the time of day, and there was a lively atmosphere to the area;

- the developer is still finishing the final phase of this themed development; having completed the retail buildings that front onto the main streets;
- the inner streets of the development are narrower and that area is reminiscent of a ski village in a small Bavarian town; with small commercial shops on the main floor and residential units above;
- the City of Chilliwack has also been strategically acquiring land to build surface parking lots and to create breezeways in the downtown that would connect to other areas and amenities in the area;
- it is envisioned that some of the breezeways would have canopies, and if located near a restaurant, would connect to outdoor patios;
- the CAO for the City of Chilliwack advised that this vision took decades to become reality and required patience and significant investment and commitment by the City with the understanding that in the short term it would not recover the costs of acquiring the land, but would do so in the long through rejuvenation of the downtown by attracting development, expanding its tax base, and creating a vibrant downtown;
- overall, this was a worthwhile, informative tour;
- City of Langley could possibly emulate some of the elements of Chilliwack's downtown to revitalize our own downtown;
- City of Langley has a unique opportunity with SkyTrain coming to the City, which Chilliwack doesn't have.

In response to a question from Committee members, Mr. Cheung advised that the City of Chilliwack partnered with BC Housing and other agencies to build supportive housing which is located just outside of the downtown core.

Committee feedback was as follows:

- the murals in Chilliwack's downtown core are beautiful;
- like that the developer for the project has their office in the downtown core;
- the developer of District 1881 Neighbourhood's process for relocating existing tenants of buildings that were redeveloped is a good example for the City of Langley in how to protect our residents during redevelopments that require tenants to be relocated.

In response to question from Mayor Pachal, all Council members confirmed they had toured the District 1881 Neighbourhood.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Committee rise and report.

CARRIED

4. CONSENT AGENDA

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the following recommendations be approved:

a. Adoption of the Minutes

1. Regular Meeting Minutes from September 25, 2023

THAT the minutes of the regular meeting held on September 25, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

2. Public Hearing Minutes from September 25, 2023

THAT the minutes of the public hearing held on September 25, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

3. Special Meeting Minutes from September 25, 2023

THAT the minutes of the special council meeting held on September 25, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

4. Special (Pre-Closed) Meeting Minutes from September 26, 2023

THAT the minutes of the special (pre-closed) meeting held on September 26, 2023 be adopted as circulated.

b. Correspondence

THAT the following correspondence be received for information:

1. Blanket BC: The Wonders of Warmth Challenge

Blanket BC Society

2. October is Foster Family Month

Minister of Children and Family Development

CARRIED

5. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

See Consent Agenda

6. DELEGATIONS

- a. Support Letter to TransLink to Reduce Taxi Use and Develop In-House HandyDART Service

Save Our HandyDART Coalition

Wendy Cook, Save Our HandyDART Coalition member, Co-Chair, Langley Human Dignity Coalition, member of the Executive Board, New Westminster District Labour Council as the BC Teachers' Federation representative, and Special Olympics Club Fit Coach, spoke on behalf of the Save Our HandyDART Coalition to give Council first hand accounts of the Coalition's concerns regarding HandyDART and to request Council's support of the Coalition's campaign in lobbying TransLink to ensure that the paratransit system is given the same priority as conventional public transit in the region.

Ms. Cook spoke regarding the following:

- advised that other Coalition members were in attendance:
 - Mark Beeching, President of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1724 which represents bus operators, dispatchers, mechanics, and workers that operate HandyDART throughout Metro Vancouver;
 - Leslie Gaudette, President, Council of Senior Citizens' Organization BC (COSCO), and Vice President, Langley Seniors in Action;
 - Jerry Gosling, Chair, Transportation Committee, COSCO BC;
 - Ron Bergen, accessibility and inclusion advocate;
 - Paul Crump, President, Langley Seniors in Action;
- Some other supporters of the Coalition were not able to attend due to the rain storm;
- Coalition members also include other organizations that together represent thousands of stakeholders from Metro Vancouver;
- Everyone deserves an effective means of public transportation, and if part of the system is not allowing complete accessibility to all, then it is time to change so it does;
- The individuals and groups that utilize the service need a form of transportation that is timely, and safe, so they can work, live, and play, the same as everyone else;
- In recent years the contractor for HandyDART has relied heavily on taxi companies due to challenges recruiting and retaining their own workers;
- Having the most vulnerable members of our community picked up by taxi drivers who do not have proper training to assist people with disabilities is worrisome;
- Taxi drivers are not held to the same safety standards as HandyDART bus drivers; for example, taxi drivers are not required to pass a vulnerable sector check;

- She is aware of an instance where a Special Olympic athlete was asked out for coffee by a taxi driver as she was being driven home;
- There is simply a lack of accountability with taxi companies whereas HandyDART drivers are held to a very high standard of safety and accountability;
- Timeliness has also been an issue; it is not unusual after an activity that HandyDART patrons wait up to an hour for the service to arrive;
- The Coalition sought feedback on the HandyDART service from some Special Olympic athletes, their guardians, and parents which confirmed the issues faced with respect to lack of reliability, safety, accountability of taxi drivers;
- When services are contracted out the accountability of these services dissipates; with the priority being making a profit rather than benefitting the riders;
- Despite HandyDART's shortcomings, the reason it continues to function is due to the dedication of the bus operators and staff;
- TransLink's current contracting model of HandyDART is broken as it is operated by a revolving door of private corporations;
- The budget for HandyDART is not the limiting factor; it's the contractor's inability to meet the complex needs of our community members;
- Now is the time to fix HandyDART by operating it as a subsidiary of TransLink;
- Our riders and workers can not wait any longer:
 - Metro Vancouver's aging population will mean more people will be relying on paratransit;
 - The morale of HandyDART staff is low and has been for years under the management of four different companies;
 - If things don't change, HandyDART will continue to lose experienced workers;
- HandyDART could speed the transition to electric vehicles by accessing provincial and federal funding for electrifying transit and building permanent in-house operations centres;
- Urge Council to support the Coalition's open letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure.

Council discussion ensued regarding the following:

- intention by a Council member to put forward a notice of motion in response to the Coalition's request;
- Accessibility Committee member vacancies.

7. COUNCIL MEMBER REPORTS

a. Upcoming Regular Meetings

October 30, 2023
November 6, 2023

b. Council Advisory Bodies Update

Councillor Wallace advised that the City's Arts, Recreation, Culture, and Heritage Committee and the Langley Arts Council will be hosting B.C. filmmakers in the first Langley City Film Festival taking place October 21 to October 22, 2023 and provided information on the upcoming event.

Councillor Mack advised that, after a long hiatus, the Fraser Health led Healthier Community Partnerships is now active again; it is a collaborative group involving Fraser Health, service providers, and the two Langleys, and she and Councillor White are the City's appointed representatives to the group.

c. Staff Recognition

Council recognized that Francis Cheung has achieved Life Membership with the American Public Works Association through his continuous membership with the association over the past 30 years.

Before consideration of the next item, Councillor White declared a conflict of interest, as he is associated with an organization that may be financially impacted by the bylaw and left the meeting at 7:37 pm.

8. BYLAWS

a. Bylaw 3257 - Permissive Tax Exemption

First, second and third reading of a bylaw to exempt certain lands and improvements from municipal taxation for the year 2024.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the bylaw cited as the "Permissive Tax Exemption Bylaw, 2023, No. 3257" be read a first, second and third time.

CARRIED

Councillor White returned to the meeting at 7:38 pm.

- b. Bylaw 3254 - Zoning Amendment No. 197 and Development Permit No. 06-23

Third reading of a bylaw to rezone the property located at 19948 55A Avenue from RS1 Single Family Residential Zone to CD91 Comprehensive Development Zone to accommodate a 6-storey, 126-unit apartment development.

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the bylaw cited as "Zoning Bylaw 1996, No. 2100 Amendment No. 197, 2023, No. 3254" be read a third time.

BEFORE THE QUESTION WAS CALLED, Council discussion ensued regarding the following:

- ensuring proper screening of headlights looking south;
- requirement that applicant provide Council with traffic management plan and traffic impact assessment prior to adoption of the bylaw.

In response to a question from a Council member, Mr. Johannsen advised that, in response to concerns that the two remaining properties to the west of this development will be orphaned, staff looked at their feasibility for redevelopment and determined that if the lots were combined, although it would result in a smaller site than a standard building site, the dimensions are such that the site would be viable for apartment or townhouse development.

THE QUESTION WAS CALLED and the motion was

CARRIED

9. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

- a. Out of Province Conference Request, 2023 Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) Global Summit

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT City Council authorize Francis Cheung, Chief Administrative Officer to attend and speak at the 2023 Intelligent Community Forum (ICF) Global Summit in New York City from October 25 – 27, 2023.

CARRIED

10. **NEW AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

a. Motions/Notices of Motion

1. 208th Street Hill Safety Measures – Motion from Councillor Albrecht
It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT

1. Staff request ICBC for speeding and red-light cameras at the intersections of 48th Avenue and 208th Street, and 45A Avenue and 208th Street (pending this signal's installation) or other applicable locations to provide tangible and measurable evidence that proves speed is a real and serious concern along this corridor.

2. Staff review and explore engineering safety improvements, traffic calming, dedicated bus lanes or any other measures that will slow down traffic at Grade Cres and 208 Street specifically, along 208th Street Hill and other locations along 208 Street in general, including the associated costs as part of Langley City's new Transport 2045 plan.

BEFORE THE QUESTION WAS CALLED Council discussion ensued regarding the following:

- using this process as a template for addressing similar issues on 200 Street;
- it is a long process to get ICBC to provide speed cameras;
- importance of keeping this issue top of mind regionally.

THE QUESTION WAS CALLED and the motion was

CARRIED

2. Councillor Albrecht provided notice of motion as follows:

THAT Council authorizes the Save Our HandyDART Coalition to add Langley City Council as a signatory to the Coalition's open letter to the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Rob Fleming, which directs the TransLink Board to:

1. *Fulfill TransLink's original pledge to limit the percentage of taxi trips to 7% or lower of total HandyDART trips.*
2. *Provide accessible, affordable and increased HandyDART transportation as part of the government's commitment to implement the Accessible BC Act.*

3. *Develop and conduct an unbiased Public Sector Comparator (PSC), with the full participation of HandyDART riders and workers, to compare the costs and benefits of insourcing to continued outsourcing as TransLink promised in 2016.*
4. *Develop and implement a plan to bring HandyDART in-house as a subsidiary of TransLink, including providing provincial and federal funds for permanent facilities for an expanded and electric HandyDART fleet.*

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

See Consent Agenda

12. **ADJOURNMENT**

It was MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the meeting adjourn at 7:47 pm.

CARRIED

Signed:

MAYOR

Certified Correct:

CORPORATE OFFICER