

CITY OF BURNABY

TO: MEMBERS OF COUNCIL
FROM: HIS WORSHIP, MAYOR DOUGLAS P. DRUMMOND
RE: REVIEW OF ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. THAT Council endorse the changes in procedure proposed for the Advisory Planning Commission as outlined in Section 2.0 of this report.
2. THAT the Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw be amended to reflect nine Commission members appointed by Council as follows:
 - (a) a member of the Burnaby Board of School Trustees;
 - (b) a member of the Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission, other than a Councillor; and
 - (c) seven residents of the municipality chosen from the community at large.

REPORT

1.0 Background

Council, in accordance with Section 989 of the Local Government Act may, by bylaw, establish an Advisory Planning Commission to advise Council on all matters respecting land use, community planning or proposed bylaws and permits that are referred to it by Council. Burnaby's Advisory Planning Commission was established in 1963 and, under guidelines adopted by Council in 1980, all items referred by Council to a Public Hearing are to be referred to the Commission for consideration of land use policy solely. At present, the Commission is comprised of eleven members, one member of the Board of School Trustees, a member of the Burnaby Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission and nine residents from the community at large. The Local Government Act prohibits council members from being a member of the Commission, therefore, the Advisory Planning Commission Bylaw directs the Commission to communicate with Council through the Mayor.

2.0 Proposed Changes in Procedure

In recent discussions with Commission members it was suggested that some minor changes in procedure may allow the Commission to function in a more constructive, but still advisory, role.

The first initiative the Commission is interested in pursuing is largely administrative but will provide greater opportunity to give informed, fully considered opinions on matters referred to the Commission through earlier engagement. Specifically, this would require that initial rezoning reports that do not recommend advancement to a Public Hearing be referred to the Commission as background information and, when feasible, Commission meetings be scheduled one week earlier than has been customary in order to provide more lead time between the Commission's meeting and the Public Hearing.

The second initiative would involve inclusion of the Advisory Planning Commission in public consultation processes that are approved by Council in connection with matters of land use. This would entail Council giving direction that broad planning initiatives that are expressly approved by Council to be the subject of a public consultation phase be also referred to the Advisory Planning Commission for comment. Examples of topics to which this would apply include matters such as consideration of area development plans, area rezoning proposals, Town Centre plan reviews, major text amendments of the Zoning Bylaw, and amendments to the Official Community Plan. If approved, the Commission will be included in the public input process, by way of review of the printed material, a staff presentation if desired, and the provision of comments by the Commission to Planning staff to be part of the public input reportage via the staff report to Council that is customarily prepared following receipt of all the public input and feedback resulting from the consultation process. In this way, the Commission will have the opportunity to submit comment and provide its perspective on a broader array of community planning topics, as part of an approved public consultation.

3.0 Proposed Change in Commission Composition

It is recommended that Council consider a reduction in the number of members who constitute the Commission from the current total of eleven members to nine. It is felt this reduction will still ensure a broad and representative cross-section of the community while affording a leaner, more streamlined advisory body which is more in line with the size and constitution of most other committees, commissions and boards that serve this community.

Respectfully submitted,

