

Municipality of North Cowichan
Committee of the Whole
MINUTES

October 14, 2021, 4:00 p.m.
Electronically

Members Present Councillor Rosalie Sawrie, Chair
 Mayor Al Siebring
 Councillor Rob Douglas
 Councillor Christopher Justice
 Councillor Tek Manhas
 Councillor Kate Marsh
 Councillor Debra Toporowski

Staff Present George Farkas, General Manager
 Talitha Soldera, Director, Financial Services
 Michelle Martineau, Corporate Officer
 Jason Birch, Chief Information Officer
 David Conway, Director, Engineering Projects
 Rob Conway, Director, Planning and Building
 Barb Floden, Manager, Communications and Public Engagement
 Marla Laycock, Acting Director, Human Resources and Corporate Planning
 Clay Reitsma, Director, Engineering
 Chris Hutton, Community Planning Coordinator
 Chris Osborne, Manager, Planning
 Patricia Taylor, Planning Technician, Planning and Building

Others Present Sandy McPherson, Chair, OCP Advisory Group

1. CALL TO ORDER

There being a quorum present, the Chair called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

That the agenda be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

3. PUBLIC INPUT

Council received no public input.

4. BUSINESS

4.1 Official Community Plan Workshop - Policy Chapters

Robert Barrs and Suzy Lunn, the consultants from MODUS, provided a presentation which was appended to the agenda. The recommendations from the OCP Advisory Group meetings held on October 6th and 13th and highlights of the discussions from

those meetings were shared with the Committee, and what the next steps would be. General comments included the Diamondhead report, rural character, transportation, the Bell McKinnon Local Area Plan, the translation of the visions and goals into policies, concerns that the document appeared one-sided, long term impacts, referral periods for First Nation communities, and that some of the policies were beyond the scope of local government.

Also discussed the possibility of receiving some type of summary analysis / comparison with the current OCP and suggested changing the term “addictions” be changed to “substance use disorders” and that the reference to Equity seeking groups should be clear that the list was not exhaustive.

Chapter 2 – Visions, Goals, Principles & Frameworks

The Committee discussed scope creep, targets, and the aspirational language where Council has limited jurisdiction where their role would be one of advocacy.

Chapter 3 – Growth Management

The Committee discussed their concerns over the challenges that street parking can create, choice of verbs and how prescriptive some were and suggested the use of ‘consider’ versus ‘support’, subdivisions, that neighbourhood plans should be highlighted that they can be led by citizens or neighbourhood groups, concern over the policy regarding noise impacts under industrial designation, that consideration should be given to expanding the waterfront designation policy section, and the growth map was discussed in length which included some potential changes with the suggestion of adding additional detailed maps.

Chapter 4 – Resilient, Inclusive Communities

The Committee noted the use of ‘City’ versus ‘District’, that strategy development should be more high level, concerns over scope creep as it relates to land acquisition to accommodate community health services, and that they felt that identifying a staff position (hiring a social planner) did not belong in an OCP.

Chapter 5 – Attainable Housing: Diverse Housing Mix & Affordability

The Committee shared their concerns over housing and the amount of work that will be caused to create the future policies, and that clarity needed for designated areas and incentives. They also discussed second dwellings, strata conversions, and that the policy related to the Housing Needs Report should be removed or reworded as a regional collaboration with the CVRD. They also suggested changing ‘compensation’ to something more general so that it wouldn’t be interpreted as financial.

Chapter 6 – Regeneration & the Protection of the Natural Environment

The Committee discussed air quality practices, wildfire interface development, Ducks Unlimited, natural hazard areas (floodplain and slope development), and the requirement for developers to hire qualified environmental professionals. It was suggested that they differentiate between forest and forestry, that policy 6.3.2.a be amended or removed, that an urban forest strategy was needed, and that human impacts could be added to this section.

Chapter 7 – Food Security and Local Agricultural Systems

The Committee discussed indicators, encouraging sensitivity by farm neighbours, and suggested adding the Chemainus Farmers Market and the possibility of an agriculture committee to update the Strategic Agricultural Plan which was 20 years old.

Chapter 8 – Local Regenerative Economy

The Committee discussed the policies related to an economic development committee and economic development corporation. There were some concerns raised that the (non-traditional) chapter felt unbalanced and one-sided.

Chapter 9 – Sustainable Infrastructure

The Committee was satisfied with the chapter as drafted and had no comments.

The meeting recessed, by unanimous consent, at 6:11 p.m. and then reconvened at 6:22 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the municipality encourage and promote development plans and site layouts that incorporate conservation design and site-adaptive planning principles to cluster housing while allowing for the preservation and acquisition of open space, sensitive ecosystems, and natural features. CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the meeting be extended to 10:00 p.m. CARRIED

The Committee considered the following motion to replace policy 4.1.2.a.:

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the Committee of the Whole explore how the Municipality can work with senior levels of government, Island Health, social service providers and not-for-profit organizations to incorporate health and well-being considerations into current and planned municipal initiatives and projects. (Opposed: Justice, Marsh, Toporowski, Sawrie) DEFEATED

Mayor Siebring left the meeting at 7:33 p.m. and returned at 7:38 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT "and for carbon sequestration/capture" be removed from policy 6.3.2. (a). CARRIED

The meeting recessed, by unanimous consent, at 8:18 p.m. and then reconvened at 8:28 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT policy 8.3.2.c. be removed and that North Cowichan continue to work with the CVRD on economic development initiatives. (Opposed: Justice, Marsh, Sawrie) CARRIED

IT WAS MOVED AND SECONDED:

THAT the Committee of the Whole direct staff to proceed with completing the draft Official Community Plan (OCP) based on the policy framework presented in Attachment 2 to the Community Planning Coordinator's October 14, 2021 report and that the draft OCP be sent out for referral and public engagement, subject to policy and chapter amendments based on the feedback received from the Committee of the Whole and the OCP Advisory Group. (Opposed: Manhas, Siebring) CARRIED

5. NEW BUSINESS

None.

6. QUESTION PERIOD

Council received no questions from the public regarding the agenda item.

7. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 9:19 p.m.

Certified by Corporate Officer

Signed by Mayor