



REPORT TO COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

JANUARY 25, 2007

A Special Meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on Planning and Environment was held on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall.

PRESENT:

- Councillor Kim Capri, Chair
- Mayor Sam Sullivan
- Councillor Suzanne Anton Vice-Chair
- Councillor Elizabeth Ball
- Councillor David Cadman
- Councillor George Chow
- Councillor Heather Deal
- Councillor Peter Ladner
- Councillor B.C. Lee
- Councillor Raymond Louie
- Councillor Tim Stevenson

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:

- Judy Rogers, City Manager
- Brent MacGregor, Deputy City Manager

CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:

- Denise Salmon, Meeting Coordinator

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At this point in the proceedings, following discussion, Council unanimously agreed, as per prior agreement, to recess at 1:00 p.m. for an hour lunch break, and again at 6:00 p.m. for an hour dinner break, if required and adjourn at 10:00 p.m. unless there are less than five speakers remaining.

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MOVED by Mayor Sullivan,

THAT the hearing of delegations be completed this day, and Council discussion and decision be referred to a Regular Meeting of Council.

postponed

POSTPONEMENT MOVED by Councillor Louie,

THAT Mayor Sullivan's motion be postponed until after the hearing of speakers, at which time Council can decide whether to discuss, and make a decision on this matter, or refer same to an upcoming Regular Meeting of Council.

CARRIED

(Councillors Anton, Ball, Ladner and the Mayor opposed)

1. a. **Downtown Eastside Housing Plan - Report Back on SRO Stock**
(VanRIMS No. 11-2200-21)
- b. **Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report**
(VanRIMS No. 11-3500-10)

Due to time constraints at its meeting on December 15, 2006, Vancouver City Council agreed to postpone the above-noted reports to the first available Standing Committee meeting in January. Accordingly, the Committee had before it:

- an Administrative Report dated November 29, 2006, in which the Director of the Housing Centre in consultation with the Director of Legal Services, the Director of Finance, the Director of Real Estate Services, Director of Licenses and Inspections, and the Director of Planning provided an update on the implementation of the Housing Plan for the Downtown Eastside relating specifically to SRO hotels and put forward a series of recommendations and an item for consideration to improve livability in SROs and keep them open until they can be replaced by better-quality low-income single housing.

The City Manager presented for Council's consideration that staff be directed to research for a potentially suitable hotel where use of Section 23 of the Standards of Maintenance By-law might be appropriate and recommended approval of staff's additional recommendations.

- a Policy Report dated November 30, 2006, in which the Director of Housing, in consultation with the Director of Legal Services and the Assistant Director of Licenses & Inspections, recommended amendments to remove from Schedule A of the SRA By-law those properties for which Council approved exemptions and conversion/demolition permits since the By-law was last amended, and also provided an update on the administration of the SRA By-law. The City Manager recommended approval.

Jill Davidson, Senior Housing Planner and Cameron Gray, Director, Housing Centre, provided Council with an overview of the reports, and noted Housing Centre staff Ben Johnson and Catherine Wong were present and available to respond to questions, as was Barb Windsor, Deputy Chief License Inspector.

Ms. Davidson, Ms. Windsor and Mr. Gray responded to questions from Council related to Section 23 of the Standards of Maintenance By-law and the scope of that by-law's regulatory powers, rationale for the increase of the conversion fee, potential for funding from senior levels of government, the number of SRAs closed down as a consequence of City by-laws, the possibility of an advocacy office in the City for those who rent, and options for amending by-laws and the Vancouver Charter to address maintenance issues in SRO stock.

At 11:05 a.m., due to a disruption in the Council Chamber, Council recessed. The meeting was reconvened at approximately 11:25 a.m.

The above noted reports were presented to Council concurrently. Comments from the following speakers have been consolidated and address both reports.

Susan Henry, First United Church
Joan Morelli
Ian McRae
Bharbara Gudmundson (brief and material filed)
Kim Kerr, Executive Director, DERA
Wendy Petersen (brief and material filed)
Sister Elizabeth Kelliher (brief filed)
David Eby, Pivot Legal Society (material filed)
Thomas Malenfant, Anti-Poverty Committee
Martha Lewis, TRAC
Michael Clague, Director, Carnegie Community Centre (brief filed)
Tammie Tupechka, Neighbourhood Helpers Downtown Eastside
Sheila Baxter (material filed)
George Maltais
May Kossoff
Ayisha Faruk
Leslie Stern
Jim Lehto, Urban Design & Development Consulting Ltd. (material filed)
Patrick K. Prinster (material filed)
Buddy Lee (material filed)
Grant Gibson (material filed)
Dr. Pratt-Johnson, Chair, Homelessness and Mental Health Committee
St. Andrews Wesley United Church (brief filed)
Miriam Mowet
Brian Slater
Aaron Jasper, West End Residents Association and Renters at Risk Campaign
Brent Granby, West End Residents Association
Doug Aason, Chair, Vancouver Urban Core Community Workers Association
Susan Neeves
Leslie Kemp
Andy Yan (material filed)

- nothing concrete is being done to house Vancouver's homeless; most evenings First United Church provides shelter for up to 100 people;
- housing, not shelters needs to be built and not only occupants of SROs, but the homeless need to be thought about;
- replacement homes need to be provided in condominiums that developers build downtown; the disabled and the elderly currently living in the DTES cannot afford to move elsewhere;
- SROs are key components of the housing spectrum and viable financial purchases for the City;
- a moratorium needs to be put in place immediately on any properties designed as social housing to ensure no more loss of SROs through either demolition or sale;

- lanes in the DTES need to be cleaned up, not just flushed; flushing creates even more risk from disease for those living on the streets;
- those that care enough to save Stanley Park trees must also care enough to save those Vancouver residents at risk from further harm; all deserve a roof over their head;
- residents of SROs have a right to know if their building has been sold to a developer to provide sufficient time for relocation;
- Homeless Action Plan means you take action; the City should buy and upgrade three hotels as promised;
- create a replacement policy rather than a replacement fee; a pilot project is not enough;
- stop subsidizing developers who are gentrifying the Downtown Eastside; disincentives must be in place for purchasers of SRO properties;
- take every opportunity to leverage in regard to the Olympics;
- government should serve all levels of the population - work with senior levels of government; demand money for social housing;
- if the intent is to send a clear message to developers, and the SRA by-law is not in place soon, the market will have prevailed, there will be no SROs left due to gentrification;
- the City has no strategy to reduce homelessness, SRO stock is at risk and this is exacerbated by the Olympics - where is the implementation plan;
- designate the DTES as a special development zone that lays out the ground rules for non-market and market housing to generate affordable housing;
- create a community development corporation for the DTES area with authority to act with informed urgency to coordinate and leverage public and private sector financing for both housing and support services, utilizing a mixture of incentives and stipulations;
- Council should continue to consider market residential projects on a case-by-case basis, in the context of the SRA By-law;
- moratorium precludes other alternatives which may provide other public benefits and still allow the cause of low income housing in the DT Core to be advanced;
- the City should stop disincentives to developers of housing through the private sector;
- a moratorium puts projects on hold, allows poor living conditions to continue and limits future SRAs;
- the moratorium only hurts individual property owners, not the developer doing the conversion; the City cannot expect individual private owners to provide social housing; and
- costs of homelessness is horrific; housing, not homelessness, should be the number one legacy of the 2010 Olympics; and
- show the world Vancouver cares about its people.

Partway through the hearing of speakers, Council recessed at 1:00 p.m. for lunch, and reconvened at 2:00 p.m. to continue hearing from speakers.

Staff responded to questions from Council arising from the delegations' comments in regard to the number of hotels purchased in the DTES and by whom, the situation in regard to the Burns Block, the legal situation with respect to the Pender Hotel, City regulations available to address the issue of homelessness and bring SRO to minimum livable standards, and the City's ability to enforce such regulations.

MOVED by Councillor Stevenson
THAT the Committee recommend to Council

THAT, as the hearing of speakers is complete, Council refer discussion and decision on this matter to the February 13, 2006, Regular Meeting of Council.

carried

MOVED by Councillor Anton

THAT as the hour is 6:00 p.m., as agreed earlier this day, Council discontinue discussion of the referral motion and recess for a dinner break.

LOST
(Councillors Anton, Ball, Cadman, Capri, Ladner, Lee and Stevenson opposed)

The motion to recess having LOST, following further discussion, the Motion to refer was put and CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

The Committee adjourned at 6:05 p.m.

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CITY OF VANCOUVER
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT

JANUARY 25, 2007

A Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 6:06 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, following the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment meeting, to consider the recommendations and actions of the Committee.

PRESENT: Mayor Sam Sullivan
Councillor Suzanne Anton
Councillor Elizabeth Ball
Councillor David Cadman
Councillor Kim Capri
Councillor George Chow
Councillor Heather Deal
Councillor Peter Ladner
Councillor B.C. Lee
Councillor Raymond Louie
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CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE: Judy Rogers, City Manager
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CITY CLERK'S OFFICE: Denise Salmon, Meeting Coordinator

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MOVED by Councillor Stevenson
SECONDED by Councillor Anton

THAT this Council resolve itself into Committee of the Whole, Mayor Sullivan in the Chair.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Moratorium on SRA Conversions

Following the hearing of speakers at the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment meeting on October 19, 2006, Vancouver City Council referred, as Unfinished Business, discussion and decision on this matter to the future meeting of Council which would include the staff report on Single Room Accommodations.

Accordingly, this matter was before Council on December 14/15, 2006, and due to time constraints at that meeting, Council postponed discussion and decision to the Council meeting following the Standing Committee of Council meeting that will include the staff report on Single Room Accommodations. Accordingly, Council now agreed to postpone discussion and decision on the Moratorium on SRA Conversions to the February 13, 2007, Regular Meeting of Council.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of Standing Committee on Planning and Environment January 25, 2007

Council considered the report containing the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets. Its items of business included:

1. a. Downtown Eastside Housing Plan - Report Back on SRO Stock
- b. Single Room Accommodation (SRA) By-law Status Report

Items 1 a. and b.

MOVED by Councillor Chow

 THAT the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on Planning and Environment at its meeting of January 25, 2007, as contained in items 1 a. and b. be approved.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

RISE FROM COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MOVED by Councillor Deal

 THAT the Committee of the Whole rise and report.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADOPT REPORT OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

MOVED by Councillor Lee

SECONDED by Councillor Ball

 THAT the report of the Committee of the Whole be adopted.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The Council adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

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