

REPORT TO COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL
ON CITY SERVICES AND BUDGETS

MARCH 15, 2007

A Regular Meeting of the Standing Committee of Council on City Services and Budgets was held on Thursday, March 15, 2007, at 9:30 a.m., in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall.

PRESENT:	Councillor Peter Ladner, Chair Mayor Sam Sullivan Councillor Suzanne Anton Councillor Elizabeth Ball Councillor David Cadman Councillor Kim Capri Councillor George Chow *Councillor Heather Deal Councillor B.C. Lee Councillor Tim Stevenson
ABSENT:	Councillor Raymond Louie, Vice-Chair (Leave of Absence - Civic Business)
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE:	Judy Rogers, City Manager
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE:	Denise Salmon, Meeting Coordinator

*Denotes absence for a portion of the meeting.

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets meeting of February 15, 2007, were adopted.

RECOMMENDATION

1. 2007 Property Taxation: Land Assessment Averaging (VanRIMS No. 05-4200-10)

The Committee had before it, as background, an extract from the minutes of the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets meeting of February 15, 2007, regarding the above-noted matter, and the related Administrative Report dated February 5, 2007. At that meeting Council instructed staff to place advertisements advising the public that Council will consider enacting an averaging by-law and invite input at today's meeting.

Council received an update from Ken Bayne, Director of Financial Planning and Treasury, who provided background information, highlighted changes to the Land Assessment Averaging By-law before Council later this day and circulated information graphs in a document entitled

"Distribution of Estimated Changes in 2007 Property Taxes With and Without Averaging" (on file in the City Clerk's Office).

The following delegations spoke against land assessment averaging, noted this is not solving the problem, advised of personal impacts and stressed the need to address the issue of "hot spots" created by speculation in regard to rezonings:

Sharon Townsend, South Granville Business Association
Deanna Geisheime, Art Works Gallery (material filed)
Ed Des Roches, Vancouver Fair Tax Coalition Co-Chair

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NOTE FROM CLERK: The relevant by-law was subsequently approved at the Council meeting immediately following the March 15th City Services and Budgets meeting.

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2. Property Tax Policy Review Commission - Interim Report (VanRIMS No. 08-3000-01)

The Committee had before it a Policy Report dated March 8, 2007, in which the General Manager of Corporate Services/Director of Finance presented, for information, the interim recommendations of the Property Tax Policy Review Commission, and recommended staff report back with an analysis of these recommendations for Council's use as part of their decisions concerning the 2007 tax distribution.

Karen Levitt, Manager of Financial Planning, introduced Stan Hamilton, Chair, Property Tax Policy Review Commission. Mr. Hamilton provided Council with an overview of the Commission's interim report and highlighted its two recommendations:

- that the City of Vancouver continue the Land Assessment Averaging Program; and
- that the City of Vancouver adopt a policy to shift between 1% and 2% of the 2007 tax levy from the non-residential to the residential class.

Mr. Hamilton also responded to questions from Council regarding the direction of the Commission's final report, and noted the importance of a long-term strategy.

Ed Des Roches, Co-Chair, Vancouver Fair Tax Coalition, and Bob Laurie, Board of Trade, and Vancouver Fair Tax Coalition, expressed encouragement that Council is engaged in a process to address the imbalance between the residential and non-residential classes, noted the potential for a serious economic problem if this inequity is not addressed, and expressed the hope the Commission's recommendations would move the City toward a more equitable long-term policy.

MOVED by Councillor Capri
THAT the Committee recommend to Council

- A. THAT Council receive the Interim Report of the Property Tax Policy Review Commission for information.

- B. THAT Council direct staff to report back on April 19, 2007 with an analysis of the recommendations for 2007 that are contained in the Interim Report of the Property Tax Policy Review Commission.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
(Councillor Deal absent for the vote)

3. West Broadway Sidewalk Rehabilitation and Street Trees (VanRIMS No. 13-4300-01)

The Committee had before it an Administrative Report dated March 8, 2007, in which the General Manager of Engineering Services, in consultation with the City Arborist, outlined the further review (as directed by Council on October 19, 2006) of options and budgets for sidewalk treatments on West Broadway which retain a high number of existing trees, increase permeability of sidewalk surfaces, and allow for future installation and maintenance of large trees. The City Manager recommended acceptance of this report.

Rhys Williams, Manager, Street Design, with the aid of an overhead presentation, provided an overview of the report, stressed this is a rehabilitation, not a revitalization project, and along with Paul Montpellier, City Arborist, and Tom Timm, General Manager of Engineering Services, responded to questions from Council related to the rationale for use of Persian Ironwood to replace the Lindens that require removal, noted recent root scans will allow for additional trees to be saved, and advised further increases to the permeability of the sidewalks and/or utility strip are not feasible due to the low permeability of the local soils. Ian Adam, Assistant City Engineer, Streets, provided details related to the impact of adjacent commercial patios on the project.

The following speakers expressed concern with various aspects of the project:

Randy Sharp, Landscape Architect (material filed)
Cornelia Oberlander (material filed)
Tony Puddycombe
Mel Lehan
Julie Martz
Charles Dobson
Greg Booth, Upper Kitsilano Residents Association
Naomi Pauls
Robert Haines
Malcolm McSporran
Roger Gale
Jean Gordon
Cathy Marr
Bill Vick
Larry Bengé

At the conclusion of remarks by Roger Gale, it was

MOVED by Councillor Cadman

THAT as it is now 1:00 p.m., Council recess for lunch and reconvene at 2:00 p.m. to continue the hearing of delegations.

CARRIED

(Councillors Cadman and Chow opposed)

Points raised by the foregoing speakers included the following:

- a safe permeable paving alternative which admits vital air and water to the rooting zone can be used by the City at a cost savings to what is currently proposed;
- trees address storm water runoff and reduce pollution; we need large trees to give us shade and aesthetic pleasure;
- the Persian Ironwood will not grow to the stature of the Lindens, replace Lindens with Lindens to retain canopy size;
- loss of the Lindens will result in loss of the canopy developed over 30 years;
- recommend the City establish and fund a tree management program;
- focus should be on the trees, not the pavement, installation of a permeable paving system would save more trees;
- involve stakeholders in future projects earlier; community engagement and effective public consultation is necessary as we move forward on sustainability issues;
- let us work together with staff to save more trees;
- removal of trees in this era of climate change is an error - large trees and safe sidewalks can co-exist, save the large Lindens;
- tall healthy trees provide many benefits and contribute to a liveable urban neighbourhood;
- it is critical to choose the right trees to integrate with existing ones;
- the right trees and right pavers can prevent future problems; and
- this portion of Broadway has received very little tree maintenance since initial planting over 30 years ago; retain interlocking pavers and do maintenance similar to Granville Island.

MOVED by Councillor Cadman

THAT the Committee recommend to Council

THAT staff be requested to sit down with community members with technical expertise to determine if the number of trees to be lost can be reduced; and

FURTHER THAT the trees that will be replaced, be replaced with Linden trees.

referred

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NOTE FROM CLERK: Due to time constraints this motion was referred, as Unfinished Business, to the Council meeting immediately following the March 15th Planning and Environment Committee meeting.

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The Committee recessed at 1:00 p.m., reconvened at 2:02 p.m. and adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

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CITY OF VANCOUVER
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
STANDING COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON
CITY SERVICES AND BUDGETS

MARCH 15, 2007

A Regular Meeting of the Council of the City of Vancouver was held on Thursday, March 15, 2007, at 2:27 p.m., in the Council Chamber, Third Floor, City Hall, following the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets 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 Tim Stevenson

ABSENT: Councillor Raymond Louie (Leave of Absence - Civic Business)

CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE: Judy Rogers, City Manager

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report of Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets
March 15, 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. 2007 Property Taxation: Land Assessment Averaging
2. Property Tax Policy Review Commission - Interim Report
3. West Broadway Sidewalk Rehabilitation and Street Trees

Items 1, 2 and 3

MOVED by Councillor Chow

THAT the recommendations and actions taken by the Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets at its meeting of Thursday, March 15, 2007, as contained in items 1, 2 and 3, 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

BY-LAWS

MOVED by Councillor Cadman
SECONDED by Councillor Capri

THAT Council enact the by-law listed on the agenda for this meeting as number 1 and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign and seal the enacted by-law.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. A By-law to Average Land Assessments for 2007 (By-law No. 9449)

The Council adjourned at 2:32 p.m.

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