

Varsity View Local Area Plan Meeting #8
Wednesday, October 20, 2010 at 7:15 pm
Brunskill School Library - 101 Wiggins Avenue South

Attendees: Marianne Amos, Karen Butler, Ann & Ewen Coxworth, Brent Custer, Barb Giles, Don Hamilton, Anne Hardy, Zoe Litman, Susan Hatfield, Charlie Clark, Patricia Mathias, Brian & Donna Noonan, Brenda O'Connor, James Perkins, Laurence Thompson, Cathy Watts, Allan Woo, Maya Wagner, Barb Wouters, Dave Billard, Mark Shuttle, Wilma Clark, Paige Triffo, Shalene Herron, Anu Bhargava, Eldon Siemens, Kevin Kitchen, Pamela Larson, Nancy Johnson – Community Consultant, Alan Wallace, Paula Kotasek and Mark Emmons – Planners, Shirlene Palmer – Recording Secretary

1. Welcome & Introductions

Meeting called to order at 7:15 p.m.

Paula Kotasek introduced herself and Mark Emmons as co-facilitator. She thanked the Community Association for allowing the LAP to join following their monthly meeting. She welcomed Al Wallace, Manager Neighbourhood Planning Section, Tim Steuart, Manager Development Review Section, James Cook, U of S, Pamela Larson, Planning Student U of S, Nancy Johnson, Community Development to tonight's meeting.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is:

1. Provide feedback on the development proposal for 100 block Main St from Mark Kelleher, BlackRock Developments.
2. Receive information regarding construction of the Phase 2 of the University of Saskatchewan Undergrad residence project.
3. Review the topics that have been reviewed during the LAP.

2. Agenda & Ground Rules

Through this Local Area Plan we have created Foundations for Success (or ground rules) to specify how meetings will be conducted. It ensures that group members feel comfortable in sharing their concerns, opinions and ideas with the group.

1. Listen to each other with respect
2. One person speaks at a time and no side conversations
3. Everyone has an equal voice
4. Let everyone speak
5. Stay focused
6. Speak loudly

3. Development Proposals

Mark Kelleher, BlackRock Developments

Mr. Kelleher approached the Community Association and the Local Area Plan Committee to address regarding a proposed development. The site the development is proposed on is 1004, 1010 & 1014 Main Street. 1004 & 1010 are zoned RM3 but 1014 zoned R2.

Mr. Kelleher advised the committee he would like to propose a rezoning from R2 to RM3 at 1014 Main Street. This site would be consolidated with adjacent parcels currently zoned RM3

to allow for the development of a multi-unit dwelling. He would like the opportunity to build a nice, high quality multi housing building on this site.

An example of a recent redevelopment in North Park his company did was handed out. An old house was removed and nice townhouses were built on the site. Prior to the development Mr. Kelleher spent time with the residents in the area to make sure they were happy with the redevelopment and asked for their concerns and suggestions.

Questions:

- **What type of building is currently at 1002?**

The site is currently a multi-family dwelling.

Mr. Kelleher stated the development requires all three sites due to the space required for underground parking for residents and installation of an elevator. Two sites would not be large enough. Currently the two sites zoned RM3 could have an apartment built there but if the rezoning on the third site is grant residents will be guaranteed to have a nice complete built there.

- **What range will the cost be for purchase of these units?**

Mark noted all will be two bedrooms between 911 and 1191 sq feet. The price range would be around \$300,000 depending on which size.

- **What is the response from the other tenants on the block?**

Paula stated Mr. Kelleher has not yet applied for the rezoning, this meeting is just preliminary. Once he has applied to the City of Saskatoon for a rezoning, a public meeting will be set up for stakeholders in the area.

Mr. Kelleher noted he plans on trying to talk individually to all stakeholders in the immediate area as he has done on past developments for their concerns and suggestions.

- **If this rezoning is passed will it not set precedent for lots of sites like this to be rezoned?**

Tim Steuart noted in certain situations it could set a bit of a precedent, but all applications are considered on their own merits and just because a rezoning is applied for does not mean it will be automatically guaranteed. There is a process to go through and the file step being City Council approving the bylaw.

Mr. Kelleher stated he has looked at various other site options and feels this is the best fit and would benefit all involved.

- **Infill in Saskatoon, with the way it is growing, is inevitable, smaller houses will be moved for redevelopments. If there are any concerns are you willing to address them with the neighbourhood residents?**

Mr. Kelleher stated he would be happy to meet and discuss concerns; it is more than just the property or site, it is about the community being happy.

➤ **Will any types of environmental features be implemented in this redevelopment?**

Mark K noted he has a large file on various types of environmental features that can be used. Since development would be facing south he would like to use a hydronical boiler system; the pricing is higher but getting better all the time. The hydronic panels would preheat the water for heating the building as well as the domestic water for showers. Mr. Kelleher is an Energy Star Certified owner so any developments he does are high efficiency.

➤ **Would this be a senior's complex?**

No, it would be for anyone.

Mark Kelleher noted if you have any further questions to feel free to contact him:

Email: Mark@BlackRockPads.ca

Phone: 955-6635

U of S Undergrad Residences – Phase 2

James Cook, U of S

Tim Steuart, City of Saskatoon

James and Tim are here tonight to share some information regarding the undergrad residences located behind the Williams Building.

Tim noted following a public information meeting where the College Quarter was outlined there were many comments. Generally they were positive but also some concerns. The U of S has done some more work to address some of the concerns such as parking, building heights, etc. There will be a public meeting regarding Traffic concerns in late November/early December. This meeting will focus on those aspects of the development

Questions:

- **A few years ago we heard about a multipurpose room to be included within this part of the development. Is this true and if so will the neighbourhood be able to rent it?**

There will not be any kind of multipurpose room or building, it will just be the common area for students to have meetings or study as it is an open room concept. There may be rooms to book through the Williams Building.

Comments:

- One issue is there is a lack of multipurpose space for community activities neighbourhood. The U of S is usually not cooperative with sharing any space with us; it would be nice to have cooperation between the community and the University of Saskatchewan.

4. Review

Paula Kotasek, Senior Planner, City of Saskatoon
Mark Emmons, Senior Planner, City of Saskatoon

Paula again thanked the Community Association for having us attach our meeting to the end of theirs. She asked if there were any people attending for the first time to please make sure to mark address on sign in sheet so information will be sent out.

Paula noted she had some completed Local Area Plans (LAPs) from other neighbourhoods for anyone to look at. She noted the Varsity View one will have a bit of a different format. The same information will be included but it will be more visual, more graphic.

Paula reviewed the nine steps to create a LAP which were discussed in detail at the initial meeting November 25, 2009. We are currently at step five, Identifying Issues & Setting Goals.

The role of the Local Area Plan Committee (LAPC) is to set topics for the work program, through discussion and exercises identify issues, strengths and weaknesses in the neighbourhood and reaches consensus on content of report – goals, information and recommendations. This is your community and you know it the best.

The role of the Local Area Plan Planner is to arrange speakers, provide communication to the LAPC, summarize discussion and data, draft the LAP, vets recommendations with Civic Departments and takes the report through approval process.

Mark read the Varsity View LAP Vision Statement:

Varsity View is a historic neighbourhood centrally located close to the river, the downtown, the University of Saskatchewan, and Royal University Hospital. Its historic roots stem from the adjacent University of Saskatchewan campus. The neighbourhood is characterized by an eclectic mix of character housing, a vibrant school which attracts families from all areas of the city, a high amount of rental accommodation, and a mature urban forest. The residents are diverse in terms of age, culture, education level, and income. This adds to the overall vitality of the neighbourhood.

Varsity View is a safe neighbourhood with activity at all times of the day. It is a high energy, active neighbourhood which is amenable to cycling and walking. Its central location also accommodates transit usage.

Varsity View strives to maintain its diversity, heritage, and architecture. Varsity View will be a model sustainable community.

Some interesting neighbourhood statistics:

- Population – 3,611
- Homeownership (estimate) - 38.7%
- Average House Price - \$284,710

- Average Household Income - \$50,587
- High proportion of 20 to 29 year olds & 85+ (due to Luther Tower)
- Neighbourhood Area – 312.7 acres
- 16.7 acres of park space
- Dwelling Units per Acre – 5.98
- Most dwellings built prior to 1960
- High proportion of University diploma or degree holders

The LAP Report Structure:

- Overview, History and Neighbourhood Statistics
- Goals & Discussion Reports
 - Overview
 - Goals
 - Background
 - Recommendations

Land Use Review

The land use map sets the overall land use policy for the neighbourhood. All core or established (LAP) neighbourhoods have their own land use map.

The zoning map applies the land use map with specific regulations regarding use and development standards (building height, setbacks, parking standards).

Most of Varsity View is low density (R2 which allows for 1 & 2 unit dwellings), with some office institutional (M2 – Offices, clinics), medium density residential (RM4 & RM3), District Commercial (B2 – serves neighbourhoods commercial needs), Luther Towers approved under an old multi-family zoning district and Arterial Commercial (B4 – 8th between Wiggins Ave and Ewart Ave).

Paula asked committee if there were any potential changes the neighborhood would like to see.

Questions:

- **What is RM4 and what is the area on the map that has it?**

Paula stated RM4 is medium density residential with a maximum height of 15 metres building. This area is at the corner of College and Clarence but is currently vacant.

- **How many stories is 15 metre high building?**

Paula stated usually a story is equal to 3m so a 15m would be about a 5 story building.

- **There are many homes that are violating what they are zoned for. How does this get by the City?**

Paula noted any additions require a permit and once completed an inspector will go check to make sure fits specifications. Once initial inspection is complete the City does not go back and check again unless complaint is called in. If there is a complaint an inspector will go check and if not to correct specifications the appropriate action is undertaken.

- **If addition is built onto original house do all the same rules apply such as set back, lot coverage, etc?**

Paula stated all zoning specification must be followed.

- **What is the zoning on Clarence Avenue?**

It is zoned RM3 which is multi unit up to 12 metres.

- **On Clarence and 15th Street someone moved another house in their backyard. Can this be okay?**

A complaint would have to be called in and an inspector would then inspect the property.

- **What is the allowed lot coverage?**

Paula noted it is 40% for the principal building but if there is a detached garage then the rear yard coverage is calculated.

- **Can churches build anywhere without worrying about zoning? Is there any restriction of what they can do?**

Alan Wallace stated places of worship are allowed in most zoning district and there are few restrictions. They can have bake sales, rent it out, etc., so they have pretty free range. If for some reason they opened up a store within the building the City would check into this.

Comments:

- It was noted by committee member that it is their responsibility to report things that may not be against zoning/development regulations to the City. This is the only way the City will know what is happening.

Paula asked if there was anywhere in the community that could be densified or changed?

- Committee member noted along Cumberland along park side, small shops might be nice, something like Broadway. She also noted she does not live on Cumberland so stated this may be an issue for them.
- Committee member brought forward to remember what we want to see in the community in 10, 15, or 20 years. There are people who follow the rules and those that do not. It would be nice if there were some type of guidelines that could be shown to prospective developers.

Paula noted in the City Park LAP added a section titled “Considerations for Land Use Changes”. This would be community desires or concerns to City Administration when they receive rezoning requests to look at when considering the request e.g. reminder to consider parking, if it is already bad, busy streets need to make sure there are pedestrian crossings. This information could then also be provided to prospective developers.

Parks and Urban Forestry Review

Mark noted Varsity View's deficiency is 3.11 hectares but this doesn't count Cumberland Park as it is a District Park or Brunskill and Bishop Murray school yards.

This is based on park space allocation for "new" neighbourhoods and many older neighbourhoods are deficient because they were planned before this standard existed. This is a numerical assessment. To determine needs, the Community Development Branch would need to do a Park Space Assessment. The Varsity View LAP could consider recommending this be done.

Neighbourhood Safety

Mark noted the LAPC created an action plan to gather additional information by doing safety audits of Raoul Wallenberg Park, Albert Park, Albert Recreation Unit (not part of neighbourhood but wasn't included in Nutana LAP safety audits), Present Murray Park, Brunskill School/Kinsmen Children's Centre.

Questions

➤ **What is a Safety Audit?**

Mark stated a Safety Audit is when people from the community along with City staff walk through areas of the neighbourhood and complete a booklet of your perceptions of safety and suggestions on how to improve things.

Mark noted overall the consensus was the neighbourhood is safe but will still be part of LAP.

Traffic, Parking & Circulation

A map with traffic volumes has handed out. The data was collected by road counters and is the average daily traffic volume from 1997 to 2008.

Also handed out was a map of total vehicle collisions from SGI that shows the total collisions that occurred in Varsity View from 1988 to 2007. The highest concentrations are along the streets with the highest traffic volumes (College Drive, 8th Street, Cumberland Ave & Clarence Ave). There are collisions at most if not all the intersections.

Questions:

➤ **With the new developments south of the city the traffic has increase tremendously along Clarence Ave. Is there any way to get more information on the traffic along Clarence Ave. from College Drive all the way down to new developments? If we could get more information it would be helpful.**

Paula and Mark noted the City has been studying Clarence Avenue but not through to Varsity View to their knowledge, however they will check into it.

➤ **Why does the section between 15th Street and Temperance Avenue have such high traffic?**

Mark stated he does not know for sure but it is most likely the section that traffic is using to exit Varsity View.

- **Would like to echo the issue of more traffic on Clarence Ave. since south development. One major issue on Clarence now especially with the increased traffic is pedestrians crossing safely. Is this something we can put into the recommendations?**

Mark noted issues of pedestrian crossings can definitely be addressed by LAP recommendations. These are exactly the type of issues that need to be considered.

Comments:

- It has been noticed that more and more traffic is using 12th Avenue to avoid 8th Street as well as schools zones. Another street being used as a taxi route is 14th Avenue to get through the area quickly.
- It was noted that a more up to date traffic count is required as the traffic has really increase in the last couple of years which is not considered in this count. Also a more up to date vehicle collisions count would be great too.

Paula noted the traffic volumes are from the City so she will check to see if there is a more up to date count. The vehicle collisions count is from SGI so she will have to check with them.

Questions:

- **Can the vehicle collisions report be divided by what type of collision it is?**

Paula noted this current report does not indicate if the collision involved a bicycle, pedestrian or another vehicle.

Comments:

- Councilor Clark stated all of Clarence Avenue has been an issue since the south development and is being looked at by the City, counts are underway. Recommendations from the LAP would be very beneficial and could help with this issue.
- Clarence Avenue is very dangerous for pedestrians. Since the road is four lanes, with trees close to the roadway it is difficult for vehicles to see pedestrians and vice versa and is dangerous for all. Not sure what can be done but needs to be reviewed.
- Sidewalk west side of Clarence close to College Drive is very dangerous for waiting at as the grass has grown over so the sidewalk is very narrow and it gets worse in winter with the snow.

Paula will follow up with Public Works to check into this area to see what can be done.

Comments:

- With Clarence and College being border streets and now the south development Varsity View's traffic has increased due to people trying to get from one area to the other, shows lack of foresight by City.
- If you add Cumberland Avenue developments to the above statement then that is a third border so this needs to be planned for by the LAP.
- Committee member noted University has decreased student parking so more students will be parking on the streets.
- Most references are to students parking in the neighbourhood but reminded that there are many others, staff of U of S, staff of hospital, construction people, etc

- The hospital raised their parking prices and now nobody wants to pay to park so we as residents have to pay for our parking permits and yet they all park for free.

Questions:

- **Luther Tower staff are parking on side of street they are not suppose too. By 9:00 am if you leave home there is nowhere to park when you return. They even use visitor parking passes to which gives them more parking, this is easy to check as they have a staff parking pass and then also a visitor parking pass. Can anything be done about this, can the City monitor it?**

This would have to be discussed with Luther Towers as it is their parking and visitor parking passes. If you have no luck with them contact the City to see if something can be done on our end.

Comments:

- Observation over the last years the parking has intensified, even over the last year the number of cars has increased dramatically. The likelihood of getting a ticket is not high so they park; we need to step this up.
- The reality is there are too many cars driving and parking in the neighbourhood, we have to look at the bigger picture. How do we reduce the number of cars users, encouraging alternate transportation.

College Quarter

Concept Plan is forthcoming from the U of S. Mark and Paula have collected feedback and forwarded to the University. The LAP will include information regarding the project and summary of the discussion that took place.

James Cook presented information at an earlier meeting as well as tonight, as well as the Community Meeting will be coming up shortly.

Does the LAPC wish to re-visit this topic?

Comments:

- Don't feel they have addressed traffic, where kids will attend school that move into area, how to deal with increase issues with College Quarter.

Mark noted he hopes many of these issues will be addressed at the community meeting in November. As James stated they will be focusing on traffic issues.

Questions:

- **How much input do we have, or do we have any?**

Mark noted they won't necessarily do exactly what this group wants, but it is hoped suggestions will be taken into consideration to help possibly find some middle ground just as Mark Kelleher noted in early session.

Comments:

- Mark Kelleher brought to the committee and asked what could be done to benefit all while U of S seems only concerned about themselves.

- More discussion is required on how everyone is going to move from the neighbourhood into campus. College Quarter is not part of Varsity View but it will have a huge impact on the neighbourhood and U of S needs to take some responsibility in trying to keep it safe for the residents as well as students.
- They feel that the University has not addressed traffic concerns, where kids will attend school that move into area, how to deal with increased issues such as parking, that will result from College Quarter.
- The University seems to be moving very quickly, which is frustrating to the community.
- The Community feels as though the University has not addressed any of their concerns. The comment in this regard was “they talk at us – not to us”.
- The playing fields at Cumberland & College are used by many people in the City. The concern with this area is the loss of greenspace.
- Perhaps this area (Cumberland & College) should be left as the neighbourhood is deficient in greenspace. There will be new families moved into the area, in particular at the grad student residences.
- Discussion is required regarding pedestrian movement from College Quarter and Varsity View onto campus. There is a concern for students as well as residents.
- Many community members were at the open houses and asked questions but they were not answered. Why the residences could not be at Preston Crossing or other areas U of S owned, and they were not willing to address these questions.
- When the community talked to the University a year ago when they were getting ready for this phase and they didn’t listen at all.
- It was noted the purpose of the residences is to try to attract more students to help the economy so if this happens there will still be lots of traffic and cars as students will still be in the outlying areas of Saskatoon.
- It was also noted that the University is building additional residences, primarily to attract new foreign students.

Questions:

- **At what point does the development of U of S become part of Saskatoon. At what point does this become urban land (i.e. under City jurisdiction)?**

Al Wallace noted as long as the U of S developments serve the university it is not required to seek zoning approval, it remains “special use”. If it is intended for the general market, such as Preston Crossing they are then treated like a business or a developer and have to follow the same rules and regulations as any other business.

The City is on the same page as the community, feeling the U of S is moving very quickly. Phase 2 of the undergrad residence project will go forward as planned but they have been asked to wait on the Grad Residence until a concept plan is adopted. A concept plan will have to be submitted prior to any more development beginning. The servicing of this area cannot handle any more development so this will have to be looked at prior to anymore being done as well. The U of S is working on a 100 year plan which will be good infill, this is just the start but the City will work closely with them to ensure proper development takes place.

- **Why is the building being built by a private company? Does this mean it for market housing?**

Al stated it doesn't matter who is being contracted to do the work, it can be contracted out to private company but the residence is only for students of the U of S.

- **The U of S owns lots of property that is not so close to residential why didn't they build elsewhere such as by Preston?**

Councilor Clark stated this development is the first phase of this type of growth in Saskatoon; the City and U of S are both embarking on ways of tackling growth vs sprawl. He understands the frustration of the community but the U of S has put too much investment into this site and doesn't think they will consider another area. The community has to make sure the U of S is aware of what needs to be done with the development to not disrupt or to make sure the residents are comfortable. The LAPC needs to try to figure out how to improve the neighbourhood, what the issues are and we need to be specific.

Comments:

- Many community members were at the open houses and asked questions but they were not answered. Why the residences could not be at Preston Crossing or other areas U of S owned and they were not willing to address these questions.
- Yes we talked to them a year ago when they were getting ready for this phase and they didn't listen at all.
- It was noted the building of the residences is to try to attract more students to help the economy so if this happens there will still be lots of traffic and cars as students will still be in the outlying areas of Saskatoon.

Mark stated following the Community meeting, as it is specifically to discuss traffic issues, if LAPC's questions are not answered the U of S will be asked back to another LAP meeting to clear up the remaining questions.

The next meetings that will be taking place will be:

- U of S/Royal University Hospital & the Saskatchewan Children's Hospital
- Infrastructure & Public Works
- Neighbourhood Heritage & Culture
- Infill Guidelines

Mark asked if there were any other topics besides these ones that need to be discussed besides another meeting on College Quarter.

- What are we doing for the children of the neighbourhood? Seems like older neighbourhoods have to fundraise to put in a new play structure when the newer neighbourhoods just get them put in. The paddling pool at Albert Recreation Unit is a disgrace. Maybe need to discuss some types of rejuvenation of the neighbourhood.

Mark stated he would expect there would be some recommendations from the Safety Audit to encourage additional use of this area, although specifics are not yet identified.

Paula noted some of the other consultation projects and websites are:

- Saskatoon Speaks aims to provide the community with the tools to further understand where Saskatoon has come from, where we are as a city now and what opportunities and challenges face us as we continue to grow. Knowing the background and important information will help prepare citizen to engage in conversation about the future and the choices it will bring about how our city will grow and prosper.

The Community Voice Toolkit is another opportunity for citizens to join the conversation about what they value about Saskatoon and want to see preserved, and what they think needs improvement as we continue to grow over the next 50 to 70 years. Sharing your thoughts about your future Saskatoon will ensure a vision for our city that is clear, inclusive and desirable to all.

<http://www.saskatoonspeaks.com>

- Traffic Bridge Community Consultations
<http://www.skaskatoontrafficbridgeforum.ca>
- College Quarter Community Consultation
<http://www.usask.ca/collegequarter>

Questions:

- **How would the LAP take part in Saskatoon Speaks?**
Paula stated the Community Association and Local Area Plan Committee could complete a toolkit as one of their topics. They are designed to be done out in the communities.
- **It has been brought forward from Grosvenor Park residents as to when a LAP might be done in their area as they do not have a Community Association they do not want to be missed?**
Paula noted the City is again working on a list of neighbourhoods that require LAPs to be done. The LAPs are done by neighbourhood, not Community Associations so they will not be missed if require one.

Councillor Clark noted the ward meeting for Ward 6 will take place on October 27th at École Canadienne-Francaise at 7:00 pm.

5. Closing Remarks

Paula thanked everyone for coming out to the meeting. She stated the topic for the next meeting will be U of S/Royal University Hospital & the Sask Children's Hospital if a speaker can be arranged. If not, Infrastructure and Public Works will be discussed or perhaps the Saskatoon Speaks Community Voice Toolkit could be the topic at the next meeting.

6. Next Meeting: Wednesday, November 17, 2010
Topic: Saskatoon Speaks Community Voice Toolkit

Meeting adjourned: 9:30 pm