

Varsity View Local Area Plan Meeting #2
Wednesday, January 13, 2010
Brunskill School Library
101 Wiggins Avenue South
7:00 pm

Attendees: Ken MacLeod, Ann Coxworth, Bryan Tastad, S. Fourney, Brian Noonan, Cathy Watts, Patty England, Brenda O'Connor, Laurence Thompson, Patricia Mathias, Tammi Densby, M. Amos, Paula Kotasek and Chris Schulz – Planners, Shirlene Palmer – Recording Secretary

1. Welcome and Introduction

Meeting began at 7:05 p.m.

Paula Kotasek introduced herself as a co-presenter and Chris Schulz as the facilitator of tonight's meeting and welcomed everyone.

Chris asked everyone to introduce themselves and state how long they lived in Varsity View as well as what they hope to learn from the Local Area Plan.

The purpose of tonight's meeting is to discuss land use and zoning.

2. Meeting Agenda and Handouts

No changes were made to the agenda.

The Planning Education Program Brochures were available for anyone who is interested in learning about planning in Saskatoon and the tools used to regulate development in the city.

The draft Work Plan was also handed out to the participants.

3. Blog

Chris stated the Varsity View blog has been created to keep all the stakeholders informed as the LAP process goes forward. Blog site can be found at: <http://vvlap.blogspot.com>

4. Land Use and Zoning Presentation
Paula Kotasek – Planner

All of the laws governing planning and development originate from the Province of Saskatchewan. The Province provides those laws to Municipalities in the Planning and Development Act, 2007.

The Official Community Plan is a statutory (legal) plan, adopted by bylaw, to define, direct, and evaluate development in Saskatoon, ensuring that it takes place in an orderly and rational manner, balancing the environmental, social and economic needs of the community. It is intended to guide the growth and development of Saskatoon to a population of approximately 310,000 residents.

The contents of the Official Community Plan include:

- City Form, Structure & Development Phasing
- Safe Growth and Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Land Use Designations
- Residential, Commercial & Industrial Land Use Policies
- Holding Areas and Transitional Land Use
- Parks & Open Space
- Community Services & Facilities
- Transportation
- Public Utilities
- Local Area Plans
- Urban Design & Design Review
- Heritage
- Constraints to Development
- Social Development
- Implementation
- Specific Area Policies

Land Use Designation can be any of the following:

- Residential
- Suburban Centre
- Transition Land Use Areas
- Special Use Areas
- Urban Holding Areas
- Direct Control Districts
- Mixed Use Areas
- Commercial Areas
- Industrial Areas

The existing land use in Varsity View consists mostly of low density residential with some medium density residential, some office/institutional and a few commercial uses.

Tim Steuart, Senior Planner, Development Review Section

The Zoning Bylaw contains specific regulations controlling the use and development of land. The City is divided into a number of different zoning districts each with their own set of land use and site development requirements.

Cities began adopting Zoning Bylaws in the 1920's. They were originally developed to address the issue of public health and safety. Council approved Saskatoon's first Zoning Bylaw in 1930.

There are six broad zoning districts in Saskatoon,

- residential
- institutional
- commercial
- industrial

- specialized
- overlay

Each zoning district contains a list of uses allowed in a particular zoning category. The 4 general categories are:

- Permitted use
- Discretionary use
- Prohibited
- Accessory use

Development Standards establish certain minimum and maximum project requirements, which must be met before a development may proceed. Typical Development Standards can be categorized as site requirements, building requirements, parking standards, landscaping standards, sign standards and use specific requirements.

Specialized zoning tools include zoning by agreement, Direct Control Districts (i.e. Preston Crossing) and Architectural Control Districts (i.e. River Landing is the first ACD in Saskatoon)

The Planning and Development Act contains provisions for uses and buildings which have been lawfully established, but which are affected by the adoption or amendment of the Zoning Bylaw.

There are two types of non-conformity:

- Uses
- Buildings

Public involvement is encouraged in development plan, zoning bylaw amendments and discretionary use proposals.

Questions:

- **Does the proposed residential for the University of Saskatchewan (U of S) on 14th Street and Cumberland Ave fall under City zoning? Do the same rules apply?**

The residential area (currently under construction) will go ahead as planned, as it is part of the U of S residences. The rest of the College Quarter such as the proposed theatre project, boutique hotel, commercial, etc will be one level above zoning, which is Concept Plan. A new neighbourhood concept plan will be developed by the U of S to include land use, servicing issues, traffic, impact on neighbours etc that must go out to the public as well as be approved by City.

There are three main issues that will be discussed:

1. The impact on residential surrounding the project
2. The traffic design to alleviate issues, so there is a master plan in regards to transportation and parking.
3. Servicing such as water.

The U of S will hire professionals to study what is in place and then a public information meeting will be held. Most likely the neighbourhoods of Varsity View, Grosvenor Park and Greystone Heights will be invited to the outline of what is being proposed to get their feedback.

Comment:

- Concerned about the increased traffic if all that is proposed is built. The general traffic flow and busyness of the area.

Tim stated from the proposed concept plan put out to the public it seems the grad residences will be at the south end with parking in the middle, it is student directed with pedestrian linkages with some restaurant and shops focused towards university students which is currently under served by commercial in the area.

- The U of S did a presentation to the Varsity View Community Association and stated the proposal is for undergraduate housing, amenity buildings such as a café. The neighbourhood is welcome as well but it is a walking/biking linkage for students.

Chris stated the specific plan for the U of S College Quarter will be presented at the April 14 LAP meeting as well as these issues can be discussed at the Traffic, Circulation and Parking at the June 9 LAP meeting.

Questions:

- **Will our feedback change any of these events or has it already been decided?**

Chris stated all feedback will be taken into consideration. If the plan needs to be changed - it will be changed. This is the time to address these issues.

Tim stated optimistically the College Quarter is a 20-year project.

- **What do all the symbols for zoning mean?**

R2 – one and two unit residential district

RM1 – low density multiple unit dwelling district

RM3 – medium density multiple unit dwelling district

RM5 – high density multiple unit dwelling district (e.g. high rises)

M1 – local institutional service district (e.g. offices but very limited to type of uses)

M2 – community institutional service district

M3 – general institutional service district (e.g. City Hospital)

B2 – district commercial district (medium range of usage)

B5 – inner-city commercial corridor district (e.g. 20th Street, Broadway, provides for 0 setback and few parking requirements)

IL1 – general light industrial district

IH – heavy industrial district

PUD – planned unit development, this is a long out of date district used in 70's

➤ **What constitutes a secondary suite?**

Tim stated it is a dwelling smaller than 65 square meters within another dwelling.

➤ **Is a homeowner allowed to build a second dwelling in their back yard?**

Tim stated as long as they meet all the set back regulations they are.

➤ **There has been talk of increasing density for the health of the city and good transportation, would changes to zoning be required to increase density in Varsity View?**

Tim stated if the city is going to grow it either has to grow out or up. In order for it to grow up more density in neighbourhoods will happen, but this can happen in a sensitive way. Many people are all for increasing density but not sure if they want it in their neighbourhood.

The City is just beginning a process that will roll out in June discussing how we should do significant infill in the city. People say: "can't you infill downtown?", but not all people wish to live downtown.

➤ **Times have changed and what were one family homes now have six students living in them and many of those have vehicles so there are a lot of parking in the street. In the future will these homes be required to accommodate all these vehicles?**

They cannot be forced to accommodate all the vehicles as long as all zoning is followed. This is part of living by the University, river and downtown. Hopefully we get smarter development and with the younger generation there is a better sense of environmental and lifestyle issues so there may be more use of bikes, bus or walking.

➤ **Noticed corner of College Drive and Clarence Avenue is zoned where a high-rise could be put. How many stories could it be and when was this zoned this way?**

Tim stated it could be a 4 story high-rise and this was always zoned has existed for a long time.

➤ **With slumping on the riverbank in this area would it be wise building a high-rise there? Underground parking would be required for sure in this area.**

Tim stated anyone who would want to build close to this area would require a geo-technical study to be completed to see what could be done.

Comments:

- Larger properties will be noticed if something is not done properly but concern is there will be a lot of smaller properties that will create extra suites and things and it will not look good.

Tim stated as long as property owners are following proper zoning bylaws they can develop whatever they wish on their property. The City has property maintenance bylaws with minimum standards that the fire department enforces but there are very limited rules. The province is reluctant to deal with design issues so the City doesn't have the tools to review design control. The City is working on getting some better infill guidelines.

Questions:

- **What can be rebuilt along the strip of Clarence Avenue of single family houses? What options are there for design as they would be ideal to build there are near downtown.**

The zoning for this area allows up to 3 story buildings.

- **Is there any type recognition for solar rights? If using solar cannot have a house blocking out the sun.**

Currently there is not, only zoning and development standards are in effect.

Comments:

- Not fair if sunlight is blocked from a property but also reduces property value.

Questions:

- **Why are two nights allotted to Neighbourhood Safety if it was not high on the list of issues? Parking should have two nights.**

Paula stated although most felt safe the Neighbourhood Safety meeting is now included in the LAP. The first meeting (Community Meeting) the neighbourhood will be flyered again. Some people only want to attend this meeting and not the rest of the LAP. If there are not enough neighbourhood safety issues to address one meeting can be cancelled but we want to make it inclusive to all in the neighbourhood. Another parking meeting can be added if required.

The work plan is only a draft and can be adjusted at anytime, want to keep flexible and fluent.

- **What does sidewalk accessibility fall under?**

Chris stated this would fall under the Infrastructure and Public Works meeting.

- **In urban agriculture, are chickens in backyard allowed?**

Under zoning they are currently prohibited. If this were to change it would have to be a citywide initiative.

➤ **Where community gardens would be looked at?**

This would be looked at under Community Development. It was noted a community garden will be started in the spring at Bishop Murray School.

Paula it was noted the Neighbourhood Profiles handout is missing some numbers. Copies of corrected ones will be available at the next meeting.

5. Vision

A summary of statements from the last meeting will be put onto the blog with some examples of other LAP visions. The committee is asked to review these and try to draft a vision statement for the next meeting.

6. Wrap Up and Next Meeting

Chris thanked everyone for coming out and being involved in the LAP process

7. Next Meeting: **February 10, 2010**
 7:00 – 9:00 pm
 Brunskill School
 Topic: Parks

Meeting adjourned: 9:00pm