

Council Chambers
City Hall, Saskatoon, Sask.
Friday, March 24, 2000
at 10:20 a.m.

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF CITY COUNCIL

PRESENT: His Worship Mayor Dayday in the Chair:
Councillors Atchison, Harding, Heidt, Langford, Maddin,
Steernberg, Roe and Waygood;
City Manager Richards;
City Solicitor Dust;
City Clerk Mann;

Moved by Councillor Atchison, Seconded by Councillor Mann,

THAT Council go into Committee of the Whole to consider a report of the General Manager, Community Services Department dated March 16, 2000.

CARRIED.

Council went into Committee of the Whole with His Worship Mayor Dayday in the Chair.

Committee arose.

His Worship Mayor Dayday, Chair of the Committee of the Whole, made the following report:

THAT while in Committee of the Whole, the following report was considered and dealt with as stated:

“TO: Special Meeting of City Council
FROM: General Manager, Community Services Department
DATE: March 16, 2000
SUBJECT: Request for Approval of Concept Plan - South Downtown Area
Submitted by Princeton Developments Ltd.
FILE NO. CK. 4130-2

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1) that City Council resolve that the Concept Plan as submitted by Princeton Developments Ltd. for the South Downtown Area be approved, in principle; and,
- 2) that the Administration be requested to commence discussions with Princeton Developments Ltd., the

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Meewasin Valley Authority, and other possible partners as to feasible projects, timing, and funding for development of the riverbank lands.

BACKGROUND

Clause 5.1 of the South Downtown Revitalization Agreement between the City of Saskatoon and Princeton Developments Ltd. specifies that Princeton shall submit for approval of City Council and all other regulatory authorities a concept plan, development plan, and any necessary plans of subdivision detailing the proposed redevelopment of the South Downtown Area as a mixed-use development in accordance with the DCD1 Guidelines and that Princeton agrees that such plans shall, wherever possible, be consistent with the 1990 Report of the Mayor's Task Force on the South Downtown Development. In this regard, Princeton has submitted a Concept Plan illustrating an overall scheme for redevelopment of the South Downtown Area.

Princeton has also submitted for approval under the DCD1 Guidelines a more specific development plan for that portion of the City Lands, commonly referred to as Block 146. A separate report and recommendation respecting Princeton's application for approval of the redevelopment of Block 146 will be submitted for consideration by the Municipal Planning Commission for its meeting to be held April 4, 2000, and subsequently for consideration by City Council at a special meeting to be held April 6, 2000 at noon in the Council Chambers.

DISCUSSION

The Concept Plan (Refer to Attachment 1) and accompanying written overview of the plan (Refer to Attachment 2) for redevelopment of the South Downtown Area as submitted by Princeton portrays a redevelopment scheme which envisages a mixed-use area intended to achieve the Mayor's Vision of South Downtown, which set out a mission to "strengthen and invigorate downtown Saskatoon by creating a focus for the social and cultural activities of the City". Specific goals of this mission were defined as:

- to create a transition between the commercial intensity of the downtown core and the tranquillity of the riverbank parks that will encourage interaction between people, throughout the day, seven days a week, year round;
- to provide the public direct access to the river in a uniquely urban environment, where people live, work, and play; and,
- to draw people to the downtown by creating an atmosphere that is new, different, and exciting.

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Princeton's Concept Plan for the South Downtown Area

As indicated in their submission, Princeton is proposing an overall redevelopment scheme which, if implemented, would provide for a series of building envelopes (two to eight stories in height) containing various mixed-land uses, as well as roadway dedications, streetscaping, and riverbank development opportunities. For the area north of 19th Street (Block 146), the scheme would include:

- 100,000 sq. ft. of building floor area for the purpose of an entertainment centre including cinemas, food retailers, bookstore, restaurants, and an above-grade parkade.

For the area south of 19th Street, the scheme would include:

- 175,000 sq. ft. of building floor area for the purpose of various retail spaces and restaurants at grade, and offices
- the development of a hotel at the corner of 19th Street and 2nd Avenue together with the provision of underground parking
- the development of various residential structures containing 400 dwelling units, some of which would be in mixed-use buildings
- retention of the Gathercole Centre, except for the northwest wing which would be demolished to provide for an outdoor market with portions of the Gathercole Centre to be developed as an indoor market similar to the Forks in Winnipeg
- extension of 2nd Avenue southerly to a proposed east-west extension of Spadina Crescent from 3rd Avenue to a termination point east of the Idylwyld Drive Bridge or, if feasible, to Avenue C via a link below the Idylwyld Drive Bridge
- the provision of several local roadways to service all of the proposed and existing development sites including the Clinkskill Manor

For the riverbank area, the scheme includes the provision of various riverbank public spaces and uses including an east-west extension of the Meewasin Trail, amphitheatre, pavilion marina, and landmark towers at the visual terminus of 2nd Avenue and 3rd Avenue. This scheme is essentially the same as identified in the 1990 Report of the Mayor's Task Force on the South Downtown Development.

With respect to the development of this area, further discussions between the City, Princeton, and other possible funding partners such as the Meewasin Valley Authority will be required to identify feasible projects, timing, and funding. Princeton has been made aware that your Administration believes that such discussions need to occur and partnerships established prior to any specific projects being approved and developed south of 19th Street. This action is essential in order to provide the framework and foundation for further marketing and development of the South Downtown Area. This aspect was noted in the 1990 Report of the Mayor's Task Force, which stated as follows:

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“A successful plan will result in enjoyable, functional public spaces and useable building sites. It will support the marketing plan by maximizing the value and liquidity of these sites within the context of the development’s overall objectives, and will create a positive interaction between the future buildings and the public spaces being designed. Because the buildings will take some time to develop, the public spaces must be designed to function initially without the buildings.”

Additionally, the scheme envisages the development of various pedestrian linkages, both functional and visual between the city’s downtown commercial core and the riverbank through various measures, including the provision of plazas (i.e. adjacent to the entry point to the proposed entertainment centre and along the riverbank area), streetscape features within and adjacent to roadways (2nd Avenue will be the most dominate north-south link) and, as previously mentioned, landmark towers which visually link the riverbank area to the downtown.

From an architectural perspective, proposed building facades are intended to create a complementary expression of the existing building character along 2nd Avenue south to the riverbank area. This design attribute together with streetscape enhancements will enhance visual integration of the South Downtown Area with the downtown area, and provide for a strong pedestrian link with the riverbank area. Additionally, the extension of Spadina Crescent, completion of the Meewasin Trail in this area, and the proposed public spaces (plazas, amphitheatre, and pavilion) along the riverbank will provide a strong pedestrian link between the downtown area and the Riversdale neighbourhood including Victoria Park, which has been previously identified as a facility which has significant city-wide public use opportunities.

A review team comprised of representatives of the Infrastructure Services Department and the Community Services Department has examined the Concept Plan as submitted by Princeton and has determined that the redevelopment scheme appears to be generally consistent with the DCD1 guidelines of the City’s Development Plan (Refer to Attachment 3 - Uses and Facilities for the DCD1 Area) and the 1990 Report of the Mayor’s Task Force on the South Downtown Development. In terms of the proposed internal roadway layout and access points, further detailed submissions by Princeton and analysis by the Infrastructure Services Department will be required prior to any approvals to be given for specific development projects.

In regards to the extension of Spadina Crescent to Avenue C in the Riversdale Neighbourhood, it should be noted that a recent feasibility study and report, which was received as information by City Council at its meeting held February 7, 2000, had indicated that while one of the options for extension of Spadina Crescent was technically feasible, it was considered impractical given the estimated cost of \$2.3 million and the need for significant geotechnical and environmental issues to be resolved. Notwithstanding this conclusion, the Riversdale South Design Plan, which is being initiated by the Land Branch to explore development opportunities for various City-owned lands east of Avenue C and south of 19th Street, has included in its scope of work a street design plan

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which would be flexible enough to facilitate the extension of Spadina Crescent should it be determined that such an extension is desirable. Moreover, at City Council's meeting held March 6, 2000, Deneen Gudjonson, Executive Director of the Riversdale Business Improvement District, had indicated that it is vital to proceed with the Spadina Crescent extension and requested that the issue be referred back to the Administration for further study of the options. City Council referred this matter back to the Administration to look at options.

It should also be noted that Princeton Development Ltd. had submitted its Concept Plan for the South Downtown Area to the Meewasin Valley Authority and in response received the attached January 12, 2000 letter from John Gerstmar, Resource Planning Coordinator, Meewasin Valley Authority, which indicated that the plans are consistent with Meewasin's vision for the area (see Attachment 4).

In conclusion, it is the opinion of your Administration that the Concept Plan as submitted by Princeton Developments Ltd. generally complies with the DCD1 guidelines and the 1990 Report of the Mayor's Task Force on the South Downtown Development and is continuing to work further with Princeton to facilitate the implementation of the redevelopment scheme for the South Downtown Area. While it is recognized that area concept plans need to be constantly refined through time, it is recommended that the Concept Plan be approved, in principle.

ATTACHMENTS

1. South Downtown Plan - Overview by Singleton Architect, December 21, 1999
2. Concept Plan - South Downtown Area - Princeton Developments
3. Uses and Facilities for the DCD1 Area
4. January 12, 2000 letter from John Gerstmar, M.V.A."

Moved by Councillor Atchison, Seconded by Councillor Heidt,

- 1) *that the Concept Plan as submitted by Princeton Developments Ltd. for the South Downtown Area be approved, in principle; and*
- 2) *that the Administration be requested to commence discussions with Princeton Developments Ltd., the Meewasin Valley Authority, and other possible partners as to feasible projects, timing, and funding for development of the riverbank lands.*

CARRIED.

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Moved by Councillor Atchison, Seconded by Councillor Heidt,

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

CARRIED.

Moved by Councillor Atchison,

THAT the meeting stand adjourned.

CARRIED.

The meeting adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Mayor

City Clerk