



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

Time: 4:00 p.m.
Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall
Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Councillor Linda Barnes
Councillor Derek Dang
Councillor Evelina Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Greg Halsey-Brandt
Councillor Sue Halsey-Brandt (via teleconference)
Councillor Ken Johnston
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Harold Steves

Director, City Clerk's Office – David Weber
Call to Order: Mayor Brodie called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

RES NO. ITEM

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

SP10/3-1 1. It was moved and seconded
That Council resolve into Committee of the Whole to hear delegations on agenda items (4:01 p.m.).

CARRIED



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

RES NO. ITEM

2. Delegations from the floor on Agenda items.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Jim Wright, 8300 Osgoode Drive, President of the Garden City Lands Coalition Society, spoke in favour of Part 1 of the proposed staff recommendation regarding the Garden City Lands (GCL), funding to be provided from the Community Legacy and Land Replacement Reserve. He advised that although the Society's Board of Directors unanimously supports the staff recommendation in principle, the Society asks that the following concerns be addressed prior to the funds being spent: (i) any problems with the agreement be resolved; and (ii) the City show its commitment to using the GCL for ALR-permissible purposes. Mr. Wright read from his submission that is attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 1.

In reply to a query from Committee, Mr. Wright stated his belief that particular uses for the GCL, such as trails and sports fields, could exist with the Agricultural Land Commission's (ALC) approval.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Susan Match, President of City Centre Community Association, was in favour of the City acquiring all of the GCL. She spoke of the City's growing population and was of the opinion that the community needs a variety of spaces, particular green space. Ms. Match offered her support and advised that the Association is very interested in knowing what uses the City foresees for the GCL and noted that the Association would like to be involved.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Jim Lamond, Chair of the Richmond Sports Council, supported the proposed decision to acquire the GCL. Mr. Lamond referenced the City's decision to purchase the Brighthouse Estates and highlighted what that acquisition did for the community.

In response to queries from Committee, Mr. Lamond stated that the GCL should not remain completely as-is, and commented that Minoru Aquatic Centre and Minoru Arenas need to be upgraded, and the GCL could accommodate new structures.



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

RES NO. ITEM

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Arzeena Hamir, 8480 Dayton Court, advised that the Richmond Food Security Society and the Garden City Lands Coalition supported the purchase of the GCL so long as the lands remain in the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR). Ms. Hamir spoke of the community's interest in growing food and the well-attended food events and fundraisers.

In response to queries from Committee, Ms. Hamir stated the following:

- the Food Security Society and the Garden City Lands Coalition believe that the City has enough major City facilities and sport fields, and if there is a community need for more in the future, those facilities could be built on non-ALR land;
- the City could acquire farmland in the outskirts of Richmond for a better price, however, the GCL is a unique urban agricultural parcel due to its central location; and
- it would be nice to see the Terra Nova Rural Park back in ALR.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Carol Day, 11631 Seahurst Road, spoke in favour of staff's recommendation to purchase the GCL. She was of the opinion that there was no better use for the Community Legacy and Land Replacement Reserve fund, which was created to replenish the City's land inventory. Ms. Day commented that the acquisition of this land would create a legacy that generations would enjoy for years to come. Ms. Day noted that the price and acquisition of the land is a good deal for all the parties involved. Ms. Day read from her submission that is attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 2.

In response to queries from Committee, Ms. Day was of the opinion that (i) the GCL should remain in the ALR, with exceptions to sport fields, which would require special applications to the ALC; and (ii) if the proposed purchase of the GCL were to go to referendum, it would pass with an overwhelming majority.



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

RES NO. ITEM

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Nancy Trant, 10100 No. 3 Road, stated that the GCL should remain in the ALR, and be purchased by the City. Ms. Trant believed that the proposed land acquisition was an excellent use of taxpayers money. She stated that the GCL would enrich Richmond and noted that surveys indicate that Canadians want home grown food, and the days of processed, imported foods are over.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Derril Gudlaugson, 8351 Fairfax Place, supported the purchase of the GCL but expressed qualified support for staff recommendation one. Mr. Gudlaugson stated that should the GCL be acquired and funded from the Community Legacy and Land Replacement Reserve, the GCL should remain in the ALR.

Item No. 4 – 2010 Capital Budget and 5 Year Financial Plan (2010-2014)

Lorraine Bell, 10431 Mortfield Road, stated that this parcel of land is central to the City and doesn't have to resemble any other park. She was of the opinion that the purchase price is not a lot of money as the cost is 1/60th the cost of most single-family dwellings currently being built in Richmond. Ms. Bell was in favour of acquiring the lands, and wished to see the lands remain in the ALR.

- SP10/3-2 3. It was moved and seconded
That Committee rise and report (4:59 p.m.).

CARRIED

BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

- 4. **2010 CAPITAL BUDGET AND 5 YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN (2010-2014)**
(File Ref. No.: 03-0970-01, Xr.:12-8060-20-8568) (REDMS No. 2810772, 2812129)

- SP10/3-3 It was moved and seconded
(1) That the Council-approved 2010 Capital Budget be amended to increase the land acquisitions by \$28.17M to \$59.17M to accommodate the purchase of Garden City Lands, funded from the Community Legacy and Land Replacement Reserve.



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

RES NO. ITEM

- (2) *That the Council-approved 2010 Capital Budget be amended to increase the amount of strategic land acquisitions by \$2.82M to \$5.42M, funded from the Capital Reserve-Industrial Use.*
- (3) *That the Council-approved 2010 Capital Budget be amended to include the costs relating to the Lubzinski exhibit in the amount of \$0.30M, funded from the Steveston Road Ends Reserve.*
- (4) *That the Council-approved 2010 Capital Budget be amended by \$2.80M to include an increase in grant and developer funding for a number of miscellaneous projects.*
- (5) *That the 5 Year Financial Plan (2010 – 2014) be approved, that the 5 Year Financial Plan (2010 – 2014) Bylaw No. 8568 be introduced and given first, second and third readings and that staff undertake a process of public consultation as required in Section 166 of the Community Charter.*

The question on Resolution SP10/3-3 was not called as Council expressed their views on the proposed acquisition of the Garden City Lands and staff's recommendations.

The question on Part 1 of Resolution SP10/3-3 was then called and it was **CARRIED** with Councillors E. Halsey-Brandt, and G. Halsey-Brandt opposed.

The question on Parts 2 to 5 of Resolution SP10/3-3 were then called and they were **CARRIED**.

ADJOURNMENT

SP10/3-4

It was moved and seconded
That the meeting adjourn (5:47 p.m.).

CARRIED



Special Council Meeting

Monday, March 8, 2010

RES NO. ITEM

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, March 8, 2010.

Mayor (Malcolm D. Brodie)

Corporate Officer (David Weber)

Presentation to March 8, 2010, special meeting of Richmond council

Jim Wright

Richmond

Mayor and councillors,

I wish to address the staff recommendation "That the Council-approved 2010 Capital Budget be amended to increase the land acquisitions by \$28.17 million to \$59.17 million to accommodate the purchase of the Garden City Lands, funded from the Community Legacy and Land Replacement Reserve."

I'm the president of the Garden City Lands Coalition Society, and our board of directors unanimously supports the recommendation *in principle*, with at least two reservations.

1. With the previous Garden City Lands agreements, the detailed agreements turned out to be worse for Richmond than what the citizens expected. Although the legacy land replacement funding needs to be approved today, we ask that any hidden problems be resolved before the money is actually spent.
2. The price for the Garden City Lands is moderate only because of the Agricultural Land Commission decisions to keep the property in the ALR. It is troubling that council has *not yet* shown its commitment to using the property for ALR-permissible purposes by designating the property as Agricultural in Metro Vancouver's Regional Growth Strategy. We ask council to commit to ALR-permissible uses for the Garden City Lands before *completing* the purchase as a community legacy.

We realize that the proposed expenditure is for a higher price than the assessed value of the property. At this stage, the causes are water under the bridge. One example occurred in the December 8, 2008, council meeting that turned down the draconian proposal that might have extended the old purchase agreement. A couple of council members suggested, with Musqueam and Canada Lands Company CLC leaders and lawyers nearby, that a Richmond offer to buy the Garden City Lands would need to be at the land value of the Walmart property at Alderbridge and Garden City Road. In effect, they suggested a Garden City Lands value of over \$400 million. The obvious effect was to inflate the speculative value of the property.

On the basis of legal advice to the Garden City Lands Coalition Society, I can also say that there are *some* legal risk factors that justify a price above the assessed value, although the bigger factors are political. In any case, the reality is that the agreed-upon price is no more than one-tenth of the going rate in Richmond's city centre. The parkland is needed to retain the City's livability standards for the large Richmond population that is projected in the OCP. Getting it all in one parcel in the City Centre, like Central Park in New York City, is a unique opportunity for Richmond.

Furthermore, the legacy fund for land replacement is already in place, and this is exactly what it's there for. It is the legacy from the Richmond Council that bought the Brighthouse Estates in 1962, largely in order to provide green space. A *bit* of the proceeds from the sale of the last remnants of that vision of Bob McMath and his fellow council members will buy a very large green space that carries on their legacy. There could be no more fitting use of the legacy fund.

I think you will find and eliminate any kinks in the agreement. I think you will strengthen the commitment to ALR uses of the lands. In that context, we ask you to use a bit of the land replacement fund. In doing so, you will celebrate and invigorate one of our city's greatest legacies.

Mar 8th, 2010 Monday, March 8, 2010.

To Richmond City Council

Re: Purchase of Garden City Lands through Community Legacy Land Replacement fund

The Community Legacy Land Replacement fund was created to replenish the city's land inventory it is fitting that the approx 141 million dollars received from the sale of the Brighthouse Estates / Oval lands can now create a lasting legacy for generations to come by using a fraction of those funds to purchase the 136 acre's known commonly as the Garden City Lands .

City Council back in the early 60's had the for sight to purchase Brighthouse estates to insure the city would have green space that would act as lungs for our fair city. Now this council has an opportunity to purchase an amazing 136 acre jewel in the heart of our metropolitan city for the fair price of \$ 59.17 million dollars . The history books will state that this council, had the for sight to make smart decisions for the future needs of the people of Richmond . Years from now this purchase price will seem a bargain as property value's continue to sore with the Metro Vancouver area now considered the most livable city in the world . When you compare prices in Vancouver with other major cities like Hong Kong, New York and London for example our prices are low and can only go up , in the future.

During the public hearings 93 % of people polled wanted to keep the Garden City lands green and in the 150 applications received by the Agricultural Land Commission 96% wanted the same thing. City council can vote to have another public hearing but I think I can speak for an overwhelming majority of Richmond citizens when I say , Yes this is money well spend.

Richmond needs a Stanley park of our own and the Garden City Lands are our last opportunity to achieve this essential goal. I know this is a lot of money but this council has made tough choices in the past and if you just do that math this is the right thing to do. You sold a mear 18.5 acres for 141 million and can purchase a whopping 136 acres for only 59.17 million , this is a good deal for Richmond .We have a signed sales agreement with the Musqueam and the Canada Lands Company now is the time to seize this opportunity.

Imagine Vancouver without Stanley park..... can you visualize sky scrapers all along the shoreline, multi level parking garages ,endless shopping malls..... what a shame it would have been if the green space we all take for granted now was simply not saved all those years ago.

This council has proven it is capable of creating legacy's and this legacy will be the one you will be most proud of when you look back years from now. Be remembered like the council in 1962 for thinking ahead and making a choice to save green space for our childrens children and their childrens children.

Carol Day