

June 12, 2012

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To: City Manager

From: General Manager Planning and Development

Subject: **Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan – Phase Three - Update**

For: **Council-in-Committee**

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive the report dated June 12, 2012 of the General Manager Planning and Development entitled "Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan – Phase Three Update" for information.

Report Purpose:

This report summarizes public feedback from public engagement events associated with Phase Three of the Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) update process.

Strategic Goal:

This report supports the City's corporate objectives to strengthen neighbourhoods and enhance the sustainability of City services, transportation systems and infrastructure.

Executive Summary:

In the Spring of 2012 the City conducted six public engagement events to provide opportunities for public feedback on the MNP update. The feedback received from these and past public events will be used to inform the MNP update. A completed draft MNP will be brought forward for Council's consideration in Fall 2012.

Background:

The Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan is being updated through a process involving four phases:

Phase One – Existing neighbourhood conditions and site analysis (*completed*)

Phase Two – Updated vision, guiding principles and policy options (*completed*)

Phase Three – Preferred land use concept, policy and design directions (*completed*)

Phase Four – Completion of the draft Plan for Council's consideration

The June 7, 2011 Report to Committee that provides MNP Update process and phasing details has been forwarded to Council under a separate cover.

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Background cont'd/

Phase Three, which has just been completed, involved consultation with area residents, property owners, businesses, the development community and the public. Key public engagement events, using a variety of consultation techniques, provided numerous opportunities for public review and feedback on the MNP update. Staff also used a number of methods to communicate and publicize the events (Attachment 1).

The public engagement events included:

- » **Public Talk** – with neighbourhood residents and property/business owners (Wednesday, February 22, 2012);
- » **Urban Design Workshop** – with neighbourhood residents and property owners (Saturday, February 25, 2012);
- » **Festival du Bois** – with attendees of this community event (Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, 2012);
- » **MetroQuest Digital Engagement Tool** – with interested parties in the Maillardville area and surrounds (March 5 to 31, 2012);
- » **MCCRAC Presentation + Round Table Discussion** – with members of this Advisory Committee (Wednesday, April 25, 2012);
- » **Public Open House** – with neighbourhood residents and property/business owners and other interested individuals (Wednesday, May 23, 2012).

Public Engagement Events

Public Talk and Urban Design Workshop

This Public Talk event, held at Rochester Elementary School, provided background for the subsequent Urban Design Workshop and focused on ideas regarding 'neighbourhood character', 'sense of place', history' and 'authenticity', as well as describing and defining urban design. This event, attended by over 80 people, help in establishing the foundation for the forthcoming development of new development permit design guidelines and streetscape standards that will be included in the MNP.

The Urban Design Workshop, held at Maillard Middle School and attended by approximately 40 members of the community, was structured to provide an interactive opportunity for the public to explore possibilities related to the future of Maillardville's neighbourhood character, history, authenticity and sense of place. The key objectives included understanding the special places or 'hearts' in Maillardville, identifying important linkages in the community, identifying a preferred neighbourhood greenway alignment, discovering improvements that can be made to the public realm experience, and prioritizing key design features that will assist in defining the character of the community.

Public Talk and Urban Design Workshop cont'd/

Public Feedback and Findings

Feedback from the Talk and Workshop can be summarized into 11 key findings:

- » balancing a diversity of needs along Brunette Avenue in the Neighbourhood Centre, including through-traffic, a 'Main Street' environment, parking management, gathering spaces and sidewalks, and access to transit, cycling routes and other neighbourhood linkages;
- » attaining the critical mass of area residents to support local-serving 'Main Street' businesses;
- » improving neighbourhood livability through better walkability and quality pedestrian experiences;
- » ensuring an appropriate amount of space for cyclists and pedestrians;
- » establishing a multi-purpose east-west neighbourhood greenway network;
- » recognizing neighbourhood character through an authentic approach to building;
- » utilizing landscaping as a way of defining Maillardville;
- » reflecting, complementing and preserving Maillardville's hillside identity;
- » incorporating high quality materials in both buildings and the public realm;
- » focusing on and designing to a human scale; and
- » centering urban design efforts on Maillardville's 'hearts,' which include Laval Square, Brunette Avenue 'Main Street', Heritage Square/Mackin Park and linkages to Fraser Mills.

Festival du Bois + MetroQuest Digital Engagement

Planning and Development staff attended the 2012 Festival du Bois and launched the Maillardville digital engagement activity – an iPad-based version of the MetroQuest digital engagement tool. This version was used at the Festival and a web-based version was linked to the City's website for the remainder of March 2012. 284 people contributed their ideas through the use of this engagement tool.

This public engagement activity was added by staff in response to Council's January 10, 2012 discussion regarding public consultation process improvements. The objective of these events was to raise awareness of the Maillardville planning process and to continue the public discussion on neighbourhood character, the authenticity of design and prioritizing of key urban design features.

Public Feedback and Findings

The users of the MetroQuest program were asked to select and rank/prioritize a series of urban design features and to provide further comment regarding their selections. This resulted in the following findings:

- » the highest ranked urban design feature was 1) Sense of Safety, followed by 2) Sidewalks and Public Spaces, 3) Protection of Views, 4) Quality of the Pedestrian Experience and 5) Neighbourhood Greenways;

Festival du Bois + MetroQuest Digital Engagement cont'd/

Public Feedback and Findings cont'd/

- » amenities such as community gardens, local-serving retail and restaurants and public places to congregate were identified as highly desirable;
- » smaller, more modest single family lots and other housing options were viewed as necessary to accommodate first-time home buyers;
- » revitalization of Maillardville's Main Street was identified as paramount; and
- » the building of sidewalks and streetscape finishes was considered a priority.

MCCRAC Presentation + Round Table Discussion

The Maillardville Commercial and Cultural Revitalization Advisory Committee (MCCRAC) held a special meeting to hear a presentation by staff and the project consultants and hold a Round Table Discussion. The presentation and discussion were based on material from the Public Talk and the Urban Design Workshop held. The intended outcome of this event was to identify the special places in Maillardville and important linkages in the community, to discuss the direction regarding architectural style and to confirm the key design features that help define Maillardville's character.

Committee Feedback and Findings

The Round Table discussion resulted in several key findings:

- » it is paramount to revitalize Maillardville's Main Street and preserve Maillardville's heritage;
- » create a critical mass of population to support the growth of a local shopping street;
- » recognize neighbourhood character through authentic and quality building design, materials and streetscape finishes; and
- » improve the character and livability of the neighbourhood through high-quality pedestrian and public gathering spaces.

Public Open House

The Maillardville Public Open House, held Wednesday, May 23, 2012 from 4:00 to 8:00 pm at Place Maillardville, provided the public with an opportunity to review display panels and speak with staff and the project consultants regarding proposed guidelines and policies organized under six policy themes:

1. Urban Design Guidelines & Streetscape Standards
2. New Areas for Housing Choices and Medium-Density Residential
3. Heritage Preservation and Expression
4. Experiences for Parks and Outdoor Recreation
5. Neighbourhood Urban Greenways
6. Watercourse Protection Area

Public Open House cont'd/

The event was well attended with over 150 signatures recorded on the Sign-in-Sheet. About half of the attendees completed the Response Form which are summarized in general below. A copy of the completed Response Forms and the Open House (OH) Panels has been placed in the Councillor's office for information. These OH Panels are also posted on the Maillardville webpage www.coquitlam.ca/maillardville.

Public Feedback and Findings

Feedback and findings regarding the six policy themes are detailed below.

1. Urban Design Guidelines and Streetscape Standards

New urban design guidelines, principles and streetscape standards were presented at the open house, and nearly all respondents expressed support for these guidelines and proposed directions for streetscape finishes. Roughly three quarters of respondents expressed general support for the proposed development of design guidelines for three key areas or "hearts" of Maillardville as well as all housing choices and medium-density multi-family housing forms. Some respondents also expressed a desire for urban design guidelines and streetscape standards that respond to Maillardville's history and heritage.

2. New Areas for Housing Choices and Medium-Density Residential

New and expanded Housing Choices areas and new medium-density residential areas within Maillardville were presented at the open house. Approximately three quarters of the respondents expressed general support for expanding medium density, multi-family and Housing Choices into the proposed areas of Maillardville. Regardless of a respondent's support or opposition, concerns were expressed by some that new Housing Choices or medium-density residential development could impact views and mature tree cover, create traffic congestion challenges in the area, increase demand for on-street parking, impact heritage buildings and open space on lots, and increasing demand on limited community amenities.

3. Heritage Preservation and Expression

A vision for heritage management, as a means of conserving and celebrating Maillardville's rich historical and cultural heritage, was presented at the open house. A majority of respondents expressed general support for the proposed vision. However, despite the respondent's support or opposition, some expressed regret that heritage resources have been lost and encouraged the community to find new methods and strategies of preserving remaining heritage resources.

Public Open House cont'd/

Public Feedback and Findings cont'd/

4. Experiences for Parks and Outdoor Recreation

More than three quarters of the respondents expressed general support of the five suggestions for improving park, recreation and culture experiences in Maillardville. Information presented suggested new park and outdoor recreation experiences for Burns and Rochester Parks. Those experiences that generated the most interest included outdoor exercise spaces, community gardens, outdoor pool and water play, picnic areas and nature play and discovery. Public art, trees, a bike park, sand volleyball and walking trails were also identified by a number of respondents.

5. Neighbourhood Urban Greenways

A preferred option for a neighbourhood greenway network was presented, and roughly three quarters of the respondents expressed general support for the proposed concept and alignment. However, some noted that careful attention needs to be given to the crossing of busy streets such as Lougheed Highway and Blue Mountain Street, that greater integration into adjacent neighbourhoods is needed, that steep grades in some areas will pose a challenge and that improved pedestrian and bicycle connections to Braid Street SkyTrain Station are necessary.

6. Watercourse Protection Area

Nearly all respondents expressed support for the suggestion of developing a watercourse protection development permit area for creeks in the Maillardville area. Concerns that were noted by some of the respondents, such as watercourse improvements, access and protection of property and associated development opportunities, will be addressed with the completion and adoption of the Nelson Creek and Como Creek Integrated Watershed Management Plans.

Next Steps:

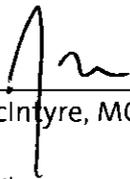
The feedback and findings from the May 23 2012 Public Open House indicates general support for the proposed guidelines and policies that have been developed to date. Feedback from public consultation process, including concerns noted by respondents, will be used to inform and complete the MNP update process. A draft MNP will be brought forward for Council's consideration in Fall 2012.

Financial Implications:

There are no immediate financial impacts associated with this report.

Conclusion:

A variety of public engagement events have been used in the first three phases of the MNP update process and, based on the findings of the May 23, 2012 Open House, it appears that there is general support for the proposed policy directions. Council's direction and the public's constructive feedback will be used to direct the completion of the MNP update in Fall 2012.



J.L. McIntyre, MCIP
RN/ms/lmc

Attachment:

1. Communications for Maillardville Public Open House, May 23, 2012
(Doc #1260947)

This report was prepared by Russell Nelson, Planner 2 and reviewed by Carl Johannsen, Manager Community Planning and Catherine Mohoruk, Manager Transportation Planning.

Phase 3 Communications Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan Public Engagement

**Public Talk: Wednesday, February 22, 2012 and
Urban Design Workshop: Saturday, February 25, 2012**

In preparation for this Maillardville Open House, staff applied a series communications to raise neighbourhood awareness of the pending events and included the following:

- 7,300 newsletters were sent to each household and business (including non-profit and institutional providers in the area) and property owners (both commercial and residential) within the Maillardville study area plus surrounds. The postal delivery began on Monday, February 13, 2012 and concluded on Wednesday, February 15, 2012;
- A total of three newspaper advertisements that announced the upcoming events;
- The Maillardville Plan Listserve (e-mail subscribers) were all been sent information regarding the upcoming events and received a couple more reminders over the days leading up to the event;
- Posters to public facilities/venues (e.g. schools, library, Place Des Art, Place Maillardville, churches, etc);
- Announcements of the events in Church Bulletins, School Newsletters (Alderson Elementary, Rochester Elementary and Maillard Middle School) and Parent Advisory Committee publications;
- Announcement with the Maillardville Residents Association website including an e-mail to all 300+ households who comprise their membership;
- Printed copies of the newsletter were available at the Poirier Library Reference Desk;
- The City's webpage for the Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan was updated and provide information regarding the plan process and publicized the events; and
- Postings were included on the City of Coquitlam's Facebook.

**Festival du Bois: Saturday and Sunday, March 3 and 4, 2012 and
MetroQuest Digital Engagement Tool: March 5 through 31, 2012**

- A total of three newspaper advertisements that publicized the availability of the web-based version of the digital engagement tool on the Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan webpage.

Public Open House: Wednesday, May 23, 2012

In preparation for this Maillardville Open House, staff applied a series communications to raise neighbourhood awareness of the pending event and included the following:

- 7,300 newsletters were sent to each household and business (including non-profit and institutional providers in the area) and property owners (both commercial and residential) within the Maillardville study area plus surrounds. The postal delivery began on Monday, May 14, 2012 and concluded on Wednesday, May 6, 2012;
- A Total of 4 newspaper advertisements that announce the upcoming Open House event on May 23, 2012;
- An article was authored and published by the Tri-City News;
- The Maillardville Plan Listserve (e-mail subscribers) were all sent information regarding the upcoming Public Open House and received a couple more reminders over the days leading up to the event;
- Posters to public facilities/venues (e.g. schools, library, Place Des Art, Place Maillardville, Churches, etc);
- Announcements of the events in Church Bulletins, School Newsletters (Alderson Elementary, Rochester Elementary and Maillard Middle School) and Parent Advisory Committee publications;
- Announcement with the Maillardville Residents Association website including an e-mail to all 300+ households who comprise their membership;
- Printed copies of the all Open House materials were made available at the Poirier Library Reference Desk;
- The City's webpage for the Maillardville Neighbourhood Plan was updated and provide information regarding the plan process and publicized the Public Open House event; and
- Postings were included on the City of Coquitlam's Facebook.