



## SAINT JOHN CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

**DATE:** Wednesday, March 30, 2011

**TIME:** 6:00 p.m.

**LOCATION:** Brunswick Square Storefront

**PRESENT:** Anne McShane  
Patty Higgins  
Sara Mudge  
Heather Quinn  
Ann Crozier  
Derrick Mitchell  
David Drinnan  
Gerry Lowe  
Barry Harbinson  
Peter McGuire  
Shawn Peterson  
Andrew Miller

**STAFF:** Jacqueline Hamilton, Deputy Commissioner  
Sarah Herring, Planner  
Jody Kliffer, Planner  
Mark Reade, Planner

**REGRETS:** Mokhtaria Benhatchi

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### **1.0 Welcome and Review of Regrets**

The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:06pm and advised that Mokhtaria Benhatchi was unable to attend the meeting.

### **2.0 Approval of Agenda**

It was **MOVED** by Barry Harbinson, **SECONDED** by Councilor Peter McGuire to approve the agenda as circulated.

**CARRIED.**

### **3.0 Adoption of Minutes**

It was **MOVED** by Barry Harbinson, **SECONDED** by Andrew Miller to adopt the March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2011 minutes as circulated.

**CARRIED.**

### **4.0 Review of Municipal Plan Outline (CAC memo attachment one)**

Staff provided CAC members with a copy of the draft outline and orientation to the key components of the Municipal Plan. The Municipal plan is organized into 6 key sections:

Section 1: Introduction discusses the Saint John context, the Plan SJ process, the role of the Municipal Plan and elements and structure of the Municipal Plan.

Section 2: A New Direction includes the Vision and Directions, Growth Strategy Vision and the Goals of the Municipal Plan.

Section 3: City Structure shows the transition between the Growth Strategy towards the Municipal Plan, and includes a map of the Growth Strategy Areas in hierarchical order (this illustration will be explained at the April workshop).

Section 4: Land Use Policies (categories to be determined).

Section 5: City Wide Policies includes policies Economy, Environment, Transportation and Mobility, Municipal Services and Infrastructure, Community Facilities, Arts, Culture and Heritage and Urban Design that will apply throughout all areas of the City.

Section 6: Implementation includes guidance and governance, review periods, future studies, functional planning, community engagement and phasing.

Staff explained that this Municipal Plan outline was still in the draft process, but that they wanted to have it reviewed by the CAC and to discuss potential topics in preparation for the April workshop. Policy content was developed based on previous public comment and best practices.

Anne McShane commented that the policies represented her ideals and questioned if they could all be included in the Plan. Jacqueline explained that the policies would be prioritized into short term and long term and would be reviewed to ensure that they are achievable and measureable. It is possible that all of the outlined policies could be included as long as careful attention

was given to make sure that policy statements are written with steps given for implementation through zoning, studies and neighborhood plans.

The strengthening of incentive programs was discussed as being a tool to influence and persuade developers and to place a focus on the development of potential infill properties. Jacqueline explained although the Plan is a cultural shift and the industry will have to adjust accordingly, the Municipal Plan is a 25 year plan and it is the priority of the City to make investments to catalyze the change and create the climate that developers will want to invest in.

## **5.0 Review of City wide policy directions (CAC memo attachment two)**

### **5.1 Economy**

The Economy section will focus on community aspirations around quality of life, diversification, the location of industry and starts to lay out the economic land use framework. It is designed to ensure that we have an adequate land supply in the right places and with the right mix and range of uses. Designations and policies will be developed to concentrate office uses, specialty retail, arts and cultural facilities in Uptown, and cluster health and research along with learning around the Regional Hospital and UNBSJ.

There are at least two future studies that have been identified by staff as being required:

1. Economic Development Strategy that is complementary to the Municipal Plan, which has already been started by Enterprise Saint John, but remains in progress.

2. Industrial Parks Master Plan will look at long term developments, the best locations for business parks uses to be clustered and the strengths and roles of each of the Industrial Parks.

(Explain - zoning of heavy industrial, adult entertainment, enforcing by laws and developers to follow rules-zoning would control the use of the buildings, avoid industrial sprawl)

### **5.2 Environment**

#### **Air**

Most environmental issues and enforcement are outside of the City's jurisdiction, but we can regulate land use and the location/existence of heavy industry in the City. The biggest impact we can have on air quality is through transportation and better densification to lower emissions. Sarah explained that a potential policy in our new Municipal Plan could direct us to work with other levels of government to

encourage them to promote clean air initiatives but that at the municipal level we cannot set the emission standards.

Anne McShane asked if the City will be able to communicate with the Province about how they regulate emissions and to request their findings.

The Growth Strategy recognizes the interconnectedness between the systems that make up Saint John (such as infrastructure, environment, land use and finance) making it possible to plan for a more sustainable future. Understanding the impacts and connection between each element of sustainability is a best practice for good urban planning strategy.

Sara Mudge discussed that we could possibly enforce a maximum on emissions, but Sarah Herring explained that then the onus of enforcement rests with the City and we do not have the expertise or man power to do so. Shawn Peterson noted that if we could not regulate the emissions we should still collect the data and then we could at least compare it on an annual basis.

Under the Provincial *Clean Air Act* “the minister is responsible for the administration of this act and may designate others to act on the ministers behalf” and since the City is not designated by the minister we do not have the authority to enforce this *Clean Air Act*.

Anne McShane stressed that she does not necessarily feel that the City must be the ones to regulate it, but if we were assured the Province was regulating it on a regular basis then that would be ok. Sara Mudge stated that if other communities can put by-laws in place that state that they do not allow combustion appliances over a certain amount, or basically you cannot own them, then that is something we should think about.

Sarah Herring discussed that these issues could be addressed through the zoning by-law, for example that pulp mills are a prohibited use (this was done in Fredericton), but that the by-law couldn't say not pulp mills of blank ppm's are a prohibited use, because then you would have to be able to regulate the emissions and it is just not possible.

Sara Mudge discussed that Saint John has the same rights as other communities to put bans in place, for example that we do not want any more pollution-based industry and then lobby the Province to reduce what is already in place. Jacqueline warned that that would be a major step and community support would be a must. Dave Drinnan agreed and added that if we want to encourage the community we must first collect the data to enable us to do so.

### **Water**

One of the goals in the Environment policy section is to partner with the Province to improve to process of identifying, designating and protecting significant wetlands. As a City we can protect wetlands through the zoning by-law, by placing the appropriate buffers around them to redirect development, but we need to have help from the Province as well as they determine which areas are designated.

Other policies discuss supporting the Marsh Creek Restoration Initiative and limiting residential development on existing flood plains. Separate studies will need to be done regarding Floodplains as well as Storm water management.

### **Energy Efficiency**

Heather Quinn asked if the City has any influence on the layout of streets to encourage solar power in terms of where development takes place and where a house is situated on a lot. Jacqueline responded that we could develop design guidelines for future developments. Sarah Herring added that there could be encouragement and possibly incentives given to those that use renewable energy and energy efficient design.

## **5.3 Transportation & Mobility**

Mark Reade explained that transportation and mobility cover a broad range of topics from active transportation, public transit, and roadways, to the movement of goods and services.

One of the suggestions heard from public engagement workshop was that a great focus should be placed on moving towards active transportation. A recent study was completed by the city entitled the "Bikeways and Trails Master Plan", so we included many of the recommendations that were made in that study such as better connections into the Uptown, north-south connectivity over the Throughway and imposing increased standards for new development including of bike parking spots in addition to changed vehicle parking standards.

Gerry Lowe asked if parking could be dedicated to taxi's, specifically around the Uptown club scene, so that the taxi's can pull off the street and avoid double parking. It would be helpful in cutting down on the noise for residents that live close to those establishments as well as convenient for people trying to get a cab.

Further studies and plans will need to take place such as a Transit functional plan, and a feasibility study into ideas like a commuter rail system and bringing back the Harbour ferry. J

Mark noted that in order to prioritize improvements to roads, an update is needed to the current transportation plan to tie in all elements for a more holistic plan. He outlined that street design guidelines would need to be reviewed as a better balance between pedestrian and vehicle travel is needed. The idea of traffic calming and improving some of our traffic signals to decrease unnecessary greenhouse gas emissions was also discussed.

Gerry Lowe raised the issue of the intersection and traffic congestion at the top of Garden Street and Paddock Street and how the addition of a traffic officer during supertime could relieve those problems.

The Committee also discussed different parking requirements for different parts of the City, along with a possible two-tier parking rate system with lower rates for those residents living within city limits.

Andrew Miller questioned if regulations could be put in place to address ad hoc parking lots. Sarah Mudge suggested that potentially through the addition of licensing requirements the issue of makeshift parking lots could be better controlled.

Sara Mudge pointed out that we need to look at accessibility and improving some of our design standards better for wheelchair and stroller access. Parking meters are poorly designed and not accessible for handicap citizens, especially at key areas as the Uptown and Hospital.

Heather Quinn asked if the commuter rail idea could be expanded to include day trips between Moncton and Fredericton, she has co-workers that commute daily from other cities to Saint John. Jacqueline explained that it might not be something that the City could fund solely, but that especially when we are writing the implementation chapter that cooperation with other neighboring cities to discuss mutual interests is important.

#### **5.4 Municipal Services & Infrastructure**

Mark Reade highlighted that there are twelve policy areas concerning Municipal Infrastructure, such as protective services, utilities, solid waste management etc. He explained that the City should adopt a developer-pay type policy, which states that the developer or property owner may be required to contribute to or assume full cost of off-site infrastructure required to service the development. Where a significant development is planned the City may need to make a strategic investment if there is a wish for development in a particular area.

Also, it should be required that all development in the primary development area must hook into City water and sewer, to eliminate

wells and septic. No extension of services is planned outside the outlined primary development area.

The Plan will also address:

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- Continuing with the implementations of improvements outlined in the 1999 Water Strategy and 2010 Action Plan for Safe Clean Drinking Water including watershed protection and better control of land use in those areas.
- Solid waste management, setting limits on garbage and executing curbside recycling pickup as well as annual neighbourhood clean up campaigns (this is also discussed in the Environment Section).
- Co-locating trenches for utilities and underground services for new development, also for transformer stations have design sensitivity towards the surrounding residential areas. Work with Enbridge Gas to ensure that we have better opportunities for natural gas around the city. Andrew Miller questioned if we might request that Enbridge Gas follow a design standards when it comes to their natural gas markers, perhaps adding shrubs or just choosing a better location could fix the problem.
- Utilizing the GIS model to determine where new fire stations and police facilities should be developed, minimizing emergency response time by ensuring alternative access point when planning new roads or evaluating development proposals.

### **5.5 Community Facilities**

Jody Kliffer explained that the community facilities section was drafted keeping in mind that the primary focus would be on building opportunity areas and improving the quality of life and community amenities.

Community facilities need to be reflective of our diversity, as our cultural background is changing and should include all age groups as well. The policy has been divided into a different hierarchy of green spaces as they serve different purposes and geographical areas.

Recreational facilities will have a broad policy that will then trigger the need for a recreational service plan as there is a lot of detail involved, premised on the correct sizing of the facility and possible repurposing. The section on Community spaces and facilities serves as a guideline for what these spaces should provide to the population, where gathering spaces and community gardens should be, and to co-locate these spaces to maximize their potential.

There are quite a few schools in the City that are facing potential closures in addition to those that have already closed and remain vacant. We need to look at alternative uses for vacant school buildings and look into co-location of community services.

Sara Mudge asked if federal funding will be sought for community centers, and pointed out that realistically we cannot depend on government funding for all of these opportunities and that self-sufficiency is important. Jody acknowledged that we will have to explore creative ways to provide funds.

Dave Drinnan questioned how we could set appropriate targets for recreation facilities. Jody and Jacqueline explained that the Technical Background Report includes an inventory of what recreational facilities exist in the city compared to nationally-recognized standards (based on the number of facilities for the population), but we do not have a recreational strategy in place that takes it to the next level.

Sara Mudge suggested that the City adopt a “resident first” model, where if you are coming from outside of the City you would have to pay to use the recreational facilities. Anne McShane requested that we show our recreational inventory at the Workshop, so that it is visible to the citizens what exactly our park supply is for example.

CAC members expressed that in order to keep sustainability within the opportunity areas it is important that schools in those areas of the City that require development remain open. Peter McGuire explained that many schools are anchors in the community and when they close up, the kids get bussed to a neighboring school taking away from their current community. Barry Harbinson responded saying that it’s a provincial budget issue as the populations are dropping and enrollment is not present for the school to justify staying open. Many schools are too large and too energy inefficient.

Sarah Herring reiterated that part of the focus will be on co-location of community centres and schools, that when the end of the school day comes that the school could be used then as a community centre, to bring in extra income and make better use of the existing facility.

#### **6.0 Review of April 14<sup>th</sup> Workshop- Storefront Panels, CAC support**

Panel questions were provided to CAC members for their review. Staff noted that the purpose of the April 14<sup>th</sup> workshop is to focus on the transition from the Growth Strategy to the Municipal Plan. It is important that during the workshop key questions are posed on the outline topic areas to get into the direction of policy issues.

Anne McShane asked if there will be examples given as some questions are very open ended. Jacqueline replied that examples would be given and there will be discussion prior to the Workshop at the April 13<sup>th</sup> CAC meeting. CAC members are asked to be available as resource people the night of the open house.

## **7.0 Other Business**

### **7.1 Port Land Use Plan**

Mark Reade will be scheduling a meeting for the CAC and PAC to provide their comments on the Port Land Use Plan.

## **8.0 Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for April 13<sup>th</sup>, 2011 at 6:00pm in the Plan SJ Storefront. The *Putting the Plan to Paper* workshop is scheduled for April 14<sup>th</sup> at Barnhill Elementary.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:29 pm.

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Jacqueline Hamilton,  
Deputy Commissioner of Planning & Development