



MINUTES
OAK BAY ADVISORY PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, APRIL 3 2018 AT 5:00 PM
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, MUNICIPAL HALL, 2167 OAK BAY AVENUE

MEMBERS PRESENT

Andrew Appleton
Pam Copley
Patrick Frey
Virginia Holden

Kristina Leach
Michael Low
Kris Nichols
Tim Taddy

MEMBERS ABSENT

STAFF PRESENT

Deborah Jensen, Acting Director of Building and Planning
Krista Mitchell, Building and Planning Clerk

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm.

2. Adoption of Minutes from March 6, 2018

It was moved and seconded that the minutes from March 6, 2018 be adopted as amended.

The motion was carried.

None opposed.

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items

The agenda was approved as presented.

4. Old Business

Follow Up From Joint APC / Council Discussion

Commission members advised communication is important, and asked for further clarification on how Commission members will provide feedback on larger land use applications that proceed directly to Committee of the Whole, and how a 'routine' application will be defined.

D. Jensen confirmed that a staff report that set out the four recommendations considered at the Advisory Planning Commission was approved by Council, and that over time, staff and the Commission members will continue to refine what constitutes a minor application.

The Chairperson commented she has been attending Committee of the Whole and Council meetings, is available to answer questions on behalf of the Commission, and will report back on any relevant discussions at Council.

5. Information / Discussion Items

a. Heritage Conservation Area Working Group Update

P. Frey noted the working group is meeting weekly to focus on guidelines, address issues that could affect land use and have OCP implications, and noted another public consultation session will be held when the report is completed.

b. APC Membership

D. Jensen noted that the District has not yet advertised for vacant volunteer positions.

Commission members advised the vacant position should be filled by a person who is a renter, a person under the age of 35, or a person with an environmental perspective.

c. In House Training – Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

T. Taddy provided a summary of the Floor Area Review recommendations that subsequently amended the Zoning Bylaw to reflect those recommendations. He noted the changes impacted RS-4 and RS-5 zoned properties, but also included general amendments affecting properties in other zones. Some of the comments were:

- Previous “fixed floor area” model allowed floor area variances, this was changed so density could not be varied.
- Amendments intended to clarify rules for builders, staff and Council; reduce number of variance applications; and address concerns about large houses on small lots.
- FAR was intended as an incentive for owners to retain a house.
- Accessory buildings included in FAR calculation as a maximum of 7% of the lot.
- Deck calculations have been amended to not count decks less than 0.6 m as part of floor area, and encourage these lower decks so they do not visually encroach on neighbours.
- Rear yard setbacks were changed to stop houses stretching back on long lots, which allows the rear yard streetscape to be maintained.
- Allowed eaves to encroach further into the side yard setback as the 18” limit is insufficient for rain protection and limits architectural styling.
- Below grade stairs must be 5 feet from the property line, allowing for an increase in green space and less impact on encroachment toward the neighbour’s property line.
- Atriums space with a ceiling height greater than 14 feet is counted twice for gross floor area, to limit the scale of the house.
- Average natural grade for decks is calculated using the smallest rectangle containing the deck.
- Garage exemption amended to keep garages in scale, but allow for a wider garage.
- Verandas are encouraged to provide an inviting space with a presence on the street, so are exempted from floor area calculations.
- Basement exemptions were addressed in an attempt to preserve older homes.

d. Application Review Checklist

The Chairperson commented that final edits to the draft checklist will be brought to the next meeting.

e. Policies / Procedures

None

f. Building and Planning

- Applications

D. Jensen advised a development variance permit application for occupiable height and building height will proceed directly to Committee of the Whole.

- Secondary Suites (*update from Council discussion*)

D. Jensen commented that secondary suites are included as a Council strategic priority; and Council received a report at their last meeting indicating the process would take approximately 13 months, to be initiated after the heritage conservation area process is complete.

Commission members noted considerable information is available from the Official Community Plan process, and that Oak Bay is one of the last municipalities in the Capital Regional District that does not permit secondary suites.

It was moved and seconded that an in house training session be done on housing affordability and the use of housing strategies.

The motion carried.
None opposed.

6. Information Items

Commission members noted that they could attend Heritage Commission meetings as an observer on a rotating basis, allowing for the exchange of information between the Commissions.

Commission members also noted the Oak Bay Community Association held two sessions on housing affordability, which was well attended, and another session will be held to try and include north Oak Bay residents.

7. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the APC is scheduled for Tuesday, May 1, 2018.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30 pm.