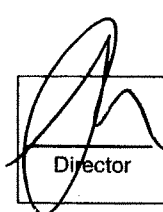
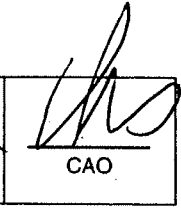


COUNCIL AGENDA/INFORMATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> Closed	Date: _____	Item # _____
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Director	CAO

3

DISTRICT OF WEST VANCOUVER
750 - 17TH STREET, WEST VANCOUVER, BC V7V 3T3

COUNCIL REPORT

Date: July 10, 2007 File: 0117-20-ATCS
 From: Geri Boyle, Manager, Community Planning
 Subject: **Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group Recommendations**

RECOMMENDED THAT:

1. The comments and recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group be received; and
2. The comments and recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group be referred to staff, together with public input received on the proposed Strategy, for a report in September 2007 on final recommendations for a Strategy and an implementation program.

Purpose

To provide Council with the comments and recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group.

1.0 Background

1.1 Prior Resolutions

On December 18, 2006 Council received the proposed Ambleside Town Centre Strategy and on January 22, 2007 Council discussed the document and referred it to the public for comment. Public consultation included a Town Hall Meeting on February 15, 2007 and establishment of a Working Group.

1.2 The Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group

The mandate of the Working Group is to:

- Review the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy document, within the context of the Ambleside Park Vision Plan and the Arts and Cultural Strategy, and provide advice on any issues that should be addressed or on any

modifications or improvements that could better achieve the goal of the Strategy; and

- Comment on and/or recommend a communications and public process strategy.

The Working Group consists of eleven West Vancouver residents appointed by Council's Community Engagement Committee: Dolly Cartwright, David Chard, Michael Evison, Karl Gustavson, Rob Harrington, Aileen McManamon, Donal O'Callaghan, Selena Shannon, Joachim Waibel, Chuck Walker and Ava Yazdani. It includes individuals with a background in architecture and commercial property development, land owners and business owners in Ambleside, a resident, the Chamber of Commerce, the Ambleside Business Association and two youth. Together these residents bring to the Working Group a varied background reflective of community interests, along with professional expertise relevant to the key issues facing renewal of Ambleside.

2.0 Policy

2.1 Policy

The Official Community Plan (OCP) establishes the policy of reinforcing the role of Ambleside as West Vancouver's Town Centre (Policy LE2). The OCP also identifies, as a priority, a review of the Ambleside Town Centre to identify measures that could strengthen and enhance its role.

2.2 Reference to Corporate Business Plan

The Corporate Business Plan 2006-2008 calls for completion of an overall area plan for Ambleside, including a Business Area Revitalization Plan (Special Projects, Goal 1).

3.0 Analysis

3.1 Discussion

Following an initial orientation session on February 13, 2007, the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group met 10 times. The Group broke into 4 sub-groups in order to better cover the issues and review material: Streetscape, Sustainability, Business Viability and Density. At the April 24th meeting the Group received a delegation from the Ambleside and Dundarave Resident's Association (ADRA) and from the strata owners of property at 1402 Marine drive and 215 14th Street.

While the Group began as eleven individuals with specific ideas, over the many meetings and discussions, it became evident that the members all shared a similar vision – creating an exceptional vibrant liveable town centre that includes housing and amenities for citizens of all ages and abilities, has strong ties to the ocean and parks, and celebrates arts and culture.

Working together the members focused on reaching consensus and aimed for policies that reaffirmed this vision. The Group concluded that it supported the policies set out in the proposed Strategy, with refinement of a number of them. The key refinements recommended are:

- The District provide professional resources to help develop a BIA proposal, build community support and provide assistance during the initial start-up phase.
- The District should adopt a sustainability strategy, like Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, as a basic standard for new buildings in the Ambleside Area.
- Encourage storefronts on the lanes by exempting from FAR square footage (say 400 to 600 sq. ft.) off the lane
- Rather than require 2nd storey office space, provide incentives for the creation of office space through density bonusing (up to 0.5 FAR) and relax the parking requirement for non-ground oriented office space from 1 per 400 sq. ft. of floor area to 1 space per 600 sq. feet of floor area
- Provide incentives to encourage the renovation of smaller sites including a Development Permit process specific to renovations and waiving the parking requirement for small additions
- Establish a baseline density where design criteria and parking requirements are met.
- To address social sustainability, use density bonusing to secure rental housing units, require a certain percentage of accessible units in residential buildings, and encourage a mix of unit sizes from small (approximately 450 to 700 sq. ft.) to larger units (up to 1500 sq. ft.)

The Working Group's comments and recommendations are presented by policy in the attached Appendix A.

3.2 Next Steps

The comments and recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group, along with those provided by the public at the Town Hall meeting and at the various meetings and presentations held in the past 6 months now need to be evaluated and integrated into a set of final recommendations for a Strategy for Council consideration. This work can be undertaken by staff with a

report back to Council in September 2007. A proposed implementation program would be included in the report.

4.0 Options

Council may:

- (a) Receive the recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group and request a staff report on final recommendations for a Strategy and an implementation program (recommended); or
- (b) Receive the recommendations of the Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group and request further information.

Author:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Geri Boyle", is written over a horizontal line.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Ambleside Town Centre Strategy Working Group Comments and Recommendations

No.	Policy	Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.1	Development Strategy		
5.1.1	Assist in the development of a Business Improvement Area program with local business owners, to promote the area and to encourage an attractive mix of retailers and services.	√	Add to Recommendation: Recommend that the District assist the business community with the establishment of a BIA by providing professional resources to help develop a BIA proposal, build community support and provide assistance during the initial start up phase. The committee felt that assistance to the business community would facilitate the process.
5.1.2	Update regulations to support building restoration, renewal and sustainability.	√	Add to Recommendations: In relation to sustainability the Working Group provides the following recommendations. . Adopt a sustainability strategy, like the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification as a basic standard for new buildings in the Ambleside area . Allocate staff time and resources to continued development of sustainability strategies. . Expand Transit connections into the community through the use of smaller shuttle buses.
5.1.3	Make community objectives clear in order to reinforce desired objectives and to allow increased building permitting predictability.	√	Add to Recommendation: . In order to increase predictability the Working Group recommends defining the time frame for securing a Development Permit if all criteria established in the Development Permit are met.
5.1.4	Introduce a policy for securing community amenity in new development.	√	Further Comment: Working group supports the concept of community amenity. They also feel greater clarity needs to be provided as to when community amenity contributions would be required. ie.. for sites greater than 220' desiring density beyond the base 1.75 FAR. Potential amenities to be provided. . Access to conference and meeting rooms. . Coffee shop dedicated to youth – open till midnight with potential to display youth art, youth bands and open mike nights. . WV Chamber of Commerce / Visitor Centre with provisions for art displays.

No.	Policy	Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.2	Land Use		
5.2.1	Create a compact, more intense, convenient and interesting commercial area a. Focus on a more vibrant core	√	Further Comment: There is support for a more compact core. Consideration should be given to the 1300 block as a gateway block. See 5.2.3 for greater detail. Further comments on uses . Flexibility: Build in flexibility for retail spaces by concentrating smaller, secondary spaces off the lane and by exempting square footage from the Gross Building Area (400 to 600 sf) for small shop frontages in lane for businesses such as cobblers, barber shops, lawn mower repair, and artist space. . Uses: It was felt that in general land uses are not an issue other than adding a hotel and art galleries (public and private) to the permitted uses. . There was a concern that residential owners should not be able to restrict uses like restaurants in mixed use buildings.
5.2.1	b. Require commercial use on the second storey facing Marine Drive in the core to ensure adequate supply of office space		New Recommendation: To maintain an adequate supply of quality office space the following incentives are being recommended. . racter buildings. . Provide incentives for the creation of office space through density bonusing (Up to .5 FAR bonus) where feasible. ie. larger sites or sites that have met other form and height controls. . Or/and by relaxing the existing requirement (1/400sf. Parking) to 1 parking space/600 sf for second storey office and above.
5.2.1	c. Encourage renovation of existing small scale buildings where redevelopment is not feasible	√	Refinement of Recommendation: There is strong support for building restoration and renewal in the Ambleside area. The following are refinements to the 5.2.1 Policy. . Encourage renovation of smaller sites (frontages up to 50') by waiving the Development Permit for renovations only. Staff and Design Review Committee review and approval would be required. . The Working Group supports the renovation and addition to small scale buildings by waiving the parking in lieu requirement for small additions eg 1000 sf. or less. . For new construction that does not meet the parking standards, require cash in lieu parking funds.

AMBLESIDE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS – JULY 2007

5.2.1	d. Change Clyde Avenue from Service Industrial zoning to a mix of commercial and residential use	√	Further Comment: There is support for changing the uses on Clyde Avenue. . Consideration should be given to uses like shoe repair, lawn mower repair, hardware stores etc. . Consideration should also be given to providing a higher amount of residential in this area on the second storey and above.
5.2.2	Support more vibrant and attractive commercial, civic and service components	√	Further Comment: The District should encourage a food store remain in the Ambleside area and consider the following uses not currently in the C2 zoning for the area. . Boutique Hotel (1300 block or 1600 block) . Art galleries (public or private) – the current zoning only identifies a photography gallery. The current definition of gallery needs to be expanded.
5.2.3	Increase the proportion of residential use, particularly in the periphery of the current commercial area, emphasizing its role as a "living" Town Centre:		Refinement of Recommendation: There is support for more residential in the 1800 block. The Working Group recommends the following . For the residential encourage a mix of unit sizes from small (approx. 450 -700 sf) units to larger units (up to 1500sf.) 1300 block: (south side) the Working Group see this block as a gateway to Ambleside. The working group believe a mix of the following uses would be appropriate for this area . Boutique Hotel . Commercial – food store (like a Meinhardt's or Capers) or commercial related to a hotel; . Arts & Culture; . High quality office building; . Residential . Additional public parking Police Station: In relation to the police station building the Working Group recommends that the current building is not essential to the 1300 block or the Ambleside commercial area. In consideration with the police board and staff explore other centrally located sites to free up land in the 1300 block for uses that would strengthen the area.

No.	Policy	√ Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.2	Land Use (continued)		
5.2.4	Expand the variety of cultural experiences within the commercial area, encouraging the role of a Town Centre cultural village. a. Encourage provision of cultural and community use spaces as part of larger new development as a community benefit	√	Further Comment: There was unanimous support for a "Collections" Art Gallery. It is seen as a big benefit to differentiating Ambleside as unique from other areas. In order to achieve the gallery space the Group recognized the need to have higher density to offset this as a community benefit. Consideration should be given to an Art Gallery location as only its entrance would be an activity generator on the street.
5.2.4	b. Creation of entrance and place defining buildings and public squares on 14 th Street and upon the waterfront	√	Further Comment: There is support for the concept of a Festival Street that could be closed to traffic on special occasions i.e. Harmony Arts. But would maintain existing parking and traffic movements at other times. Also consider one or two designated residential / short term parking spots for drop off on 14th Street. Consider a similar approach for activity nodes on 17 th street too.
5.2.5	Strengthen the waterfront's role in the Town Centre, with increased cultural and recreational activity and stronger functional links a. Expand the Civic Area from the Ferry Building up to 14 th – including a possible plaza on 14 th /Marine	√	
5.2.5	b. Encourage commercial activities on the north / south streets	√	
5.2.5	c. Use arts and culture as a vehicle for linking the commercial area to the waterfront	√	
5.2.5	d. Use the north / south streets to provide visual access to the waterfront	√	

No.	Policy	√ Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.3	Building Form		
5.3.1	Enhance identity through Ambleside-specific development guidelines	√	Further Comment: Refer to Design Review Committee for Comment

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5.3.2	Building Height a. Encourage intensification and sense pedestrian scale by allowing buildings to be three storeys, but providing for a fourth in some circumstances where criteria can be met.	√	Refinement of Recommendation: The Working Group supports 3 storeys outright with 4 storeys conditional on criteria being met. The Working Group sees the need to allow greater density in the Ambleside area to assist with revitalization. It is critical that the potential for density be tied to building form. The baseline density is up to 1.75 where design criteria and parking requirements are met. Not all sites, for example, small sites, may be able to achieve the baseline density. The 1300 block (South side), 1400 block (North side) and 1600 (South side) have the potential for greater density. In order to achieve greater height, public amenities must be secured. Part of a re-zoning application should include the assessment of how density, height, and massing could be distributed on the site to determine the most appropriate building envelope for each of these sites. Part of an initial site assessment should include view analysis. It was also felt that providing economically viable and functional premises for today's operating standards (high enough ceilings with sufficient size and frontages) and attracting key businesses that will signal resurgence in the area need to be addressed.
5.3.2	b. In some very restricted circumstances, consider higher buildings if local community benefit is enhanced.	√	Refinement of Recommendation: To address social sustainability. Rental Units: Rental units should be secured through density bonusing of up to .5 on sites where feasible. i.e. larger sites or sites that have met other form and height controls. Accessible units: consider up to minimum of 10 % accessible units (designed to Level 3 accessibility standards) in residential buildings with 10 units or more. The remainder of units should be to as close to Level 2 standards as possible. Provide incentives for additional public parking in larger new developments thru density bonusing.
5.3.2	c. Building height and site width minimums. . Lots up to 60' have potential for two storeys . Lots between 60-120' have potential for three storeys . Lots 120' to 220' have potential for 4 storeys . On sites greater than 220' there is more flexibility to produce a more attractive addition to Ambleside	√	
5.3.3	Building Form Controls a. Maintain a sense of intimacy and interest on the street via terracing of upper storeys and a requirement for the façade of the building to have the appearance of small scale business frontages at street level.	√	Refinement of Recommendation: As per adjacent changes. Further Comment: The Working Group encourages mid-block pedestrian pass thru's to the rear lanes. These need to be animated with windows, weather protection, adequate lighting and wide enough to be comfortable and safe.
5.3.3	b. Consider sunlight on street, views toward both the water and the mountains in guidelines.	√	
5.3.3	To regulate building heights the following would be required . View analysis . Provide transition in scale to adjacent buildings . Buildings with residential uses across the lane would be limited to three storeys . Set back the upper storeys (3 rd and 4 th floors) . Modulate the 4 th storey volumes – 4 th storey to occupy a combined maximum of 60% of overall block	√	

No.	Policy	Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.4	Waterfront	√	
5.4.1	Continuous walk in proximity to the water	√	Further Comment: Working Group recommends opening up the the feel of the community gardens.
5.4.2	Reduce or eliminate the impact of vehicular access on Argyle	√	Add to Recommendation: When adjacent alternate parking is available.
5.4.3	Enhance natural shoreline	√	
5.4.4	Provide pockets of arts and culture themes	√	Further Comment: Consider small scale food services and arts related retail in enhanced Ferry Building and Silk Purse spaces.
5.4.5	Continue the current waterfront acquisition policy	√	
5.4.6	Improve functionality of the Boat Ramp / Sailing Centre	√	Further Comment: Group supports improvements to the Boat ramp area as it is an important public access point. Encourage food and beverages in updated Sailing Club facility.
5.4.7	Possible future ferry and train connections	√	

AMBLESIDE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS – JULY 2007

No.	Policy	√ Identifies Support	Comments/Further Recommendations
5.5	Streets and Parking		
5.5.1	Create a sense of arrival at 13 th and 19 th through medians and signage	√	
5.5.2	Consider re-aligning 13th	√	Further Comment: The Working Group feels the realignment of 13th is essential to future planning for the 1300 block area to enlarge the site and offset property line adjustment on the western end of the block. Other considerations for the realignment of 13th . Raise the grade at bottom of the hill to the same level as the rail line . Improve sidewalk on west side of 13th . Install sidewalk on the east side of 13 th . The Group also supports looking at alternative uses like a parking structure, community facilities and/or reconfigured tennis courts through study of the existing tennis court area.
5.5.3	Enhance the pedestrian environment by way of increased sidewalks and landscaping (setback buildings from street)	√	Further Comment: The Working Group believes that the 3' setback is a minimum. There could be cases where a greater setback may be warranted. Also portions of the building could create alcoves or arcaded areas at street level if they did not affect interior light to the buildings too much. Consider creative options to building forms and ensure consistent weather protection.
5.5.4	Maintain the existing street vehicular circulation within the Town Centre while enhancing parking	√	
5.5.4	a. Circulation		
5.5.4	b. Utilize curb extensions at corners	√	Further Comment: The Working Group supports the proposed corner extensions. Work with seniors and/or ACDI to determine the most appropriate crossing time length for the green light for people with walkers.
5.5.5	Parking and Traffic	√	Further Comment: The Working Group recommended the following for parking and traffic. . Consider varying the parking times throughout the Ambleside area, for example, some short term parking spaces (15 minutes), 1 hour along Marine Drive 14 th thru 18 th and increasing the parking times on all the other streets. . Secure additional public parking in new developments . Open up currently reserved rear lane spaces for public parking use . Consider more angled parking where feasible . Re-assess the need for parkades once the above has been completed. . Parking should be reviewed periodically. . In the creation of parking fund initiate regular reviews to ensure the money is utilized effectively. There is support for improving traffic efficiency through the following initiatives: . Coordinating traffic signals . Restricting left turns at peak hours. 15th Street needs special attention. . Do not restrict movement from Marine onto 13th . Find additional ways to slow traffic down . Carefully consider smaller shuttle buses. Check demographic profile to ensure it will be well utilized. Perhaps start with a pilot program.
5.5.6	Create attractive pedestrian and cycle links between Ambleside, Park Royal and Civic Centre Area	√	
No Policy	Other considerations related to streets and parking		Further Comments . There is an engineering challenge @ 15th and Marine Drive with settling of the street. . Consider a right out off Argyle Avenue at 15th in the short term through the creation of a turn lane where the existing planting is to provide a stacking area that is not on the tracks. . Underground parking to be well lit, light colour with clear accessibility to street level.
	Other considerations		

AMBLESIDE WORKING GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS – JULY 2007

	Accessibility	√	Further Comments: The group felt that part of providing better accessibility has to do with maintenance of the sidewalk and recommended the following: . The District should power wash the sidewalk twice a year at a minimum on Marine and Bellevue in the Ambleside area. . Encourage the business association, owners, tenants and businesses to keep premises tidy in front and rear of buildings. . Provide adequate timing of street lights for pedestrians to get across. . Ensure that there is enough free passage in front of shops where wares are outside the store on the sidewalk.
	Farmer's Market:	√	Further Comments: The Working Group supports the concepts of Farmer's Markets as an adjunct rather than competition to existing retailers. Site selection for a Farmer's Market should include consideration of – 14th, 17th, Parking Lot at John Lawson Park. (Note: Clyde Avenue has also been identified as a potential area) Farmer's Markets should be regulated to be fair to local residents and store owners.
	Bellevue Avenue	√	Staff should consider small round-about's for traffic calming as an alternative to stop signs.
	Street Trees and Plant Materials –	√	Consider the following: . There should be a palette of plant materials for the area – . Look at heaving of sidewalks. . Ground around the trees – if you are going to plant, planting has to be appropriate to the location and light . Infill street trees in locations where there are currently none. The Group felt that planting can act as an important unifying element of the street space.
	Masonic Hall site	√	Further Comments: The Working Group sees the Masonic Hall site as an anomaly in the area due to its proximity to the adjacent tower on one side and a one storey building on the other. It is also across the street from the BC Hydro sub-station. Additional height beyond the allowable three stories is recommended for a stand alone office building, seniors housing or parking. Four to five stories was felt to be a maximum height.

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