



District of Maple Ridge

TO: His Worship Mayor Ernie Daykin
and Members of Council
FROM: Chief Administrative Officer
SUBJECT: North Albion Area Plan – Open House Summary

MEETING DATE: June 18, 2012
FILE NO:
MEETING: Workshop

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At the March 27 2012 Council Meeting, a resolution was passed that outlined the process for consideration and public consultation related to proposed bylaw amendments to the Albion Area Plan Zoning Matrix. The proposed amendment is to include two new single-family residential zones within the existing Low and Low-Medium Residential land use designations that would provide opportunities for higher single-family residential densities.

In addition, Council also endorsed a process for considering in-stream development applications that would see all applications that had not proceeded to Public Hearing to be on hold, pending Third Reading of Official Community Plan Amending Bylaw No. 6910-2012.

Pursuant to the approved public consultation process, an open house was held on Wednesday May 30, 2012 at Samuel Robertson Technical School and was attended by approximately 160 people, 78% of which stated that they are residents of the Albion neighbourhood.

Generally, there appears to be support for the proposed Official Community Plan amendments. In addition a range of other land use and servicing issues were identified during the course of the open house and through a short questionnaire.

On May 14, 2012, the Planning Department presented a report to Council on the scope and process for the Amenity Zoning Study which is assessing its potential use across Maple Ridge which will include a market assessment of the potential to achieve Community Amenity Contributions in the North Albion Plan area, beyond the standard development cost charges. That work is currently being prepared by the consulting firm CitySpaces, and is anticipated to be completed in mid July. Based on the feedback received at the Open House the consultant has been advised to continue and complete the assessment on North Albion.

Base on the feedback from the public information open house it is recommended that the proposed density amendments be advanced to the next stage of the process which is the preparation of an Official Community Plan Amending Bylaw and First Reading report to Council. That report will also include a discussion on the opportunities for Community Amenity Contributions within the North Albion Area and will enable further discussion with Council prior to First Reading of the North Albion OCP amending bylaw.

RECOMMENDATION:

That staff be directed to prepare an Official Community Plan Amending Bylaw and First Reading report to advance the proposed Albion Area Plan amendments to the next stage of the process and for the First Reading report to include a discussion of the potential to achieve Community Amenity Contributions in the northern portion of the Albion Area Plan.

DISCUSSION:

a) Background Context:

At the March 27, 2012 Council Meeting, Council passed the following resolution:

“That Option #3 Albion Matrix Amendment Process, as outlined in the report titled “Density Review Process for North Albion” dated March 19th, 2012 be endorsed;

That the process for the processing of in stream rezoning applications in the study area, as outlined in the report titled “Density Review Process for North Albion” dated March 19th, 2012 be endorsed;

In respect of Section 879 of the Local Government Act, requirement for consultation during the development or amendment of an Official Community Plan, Council must consider whether consultation is required with specifically;

- i. The Board of the Regional District in which the area covered by the plan is location, in the case of a Municipal Official Community Plan;*
- ii. The Board of any Regional District that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;*
- iii. The Council of any municipality that is adjacent to the area covered by the plan;*
- iv. First Nations;*
- v. School District Boards, greater boards and improvements district boards; and*
- vi. The Provincial and Federal Governments and their agencies*

and in that regard it is recommended that the only additional consultation to be required in respect of this matter beyond posting of the proposed Maple Ridge Official Community Plan Amending Bylaw No. 6910-2012 on the District’s website, together with an invitation to the public to comment, is the following:

- i. Referral to the School Board; and*
- ii. An open house.”*

The following excerpt identifies the proposed changes for the Albion Zoning Matrix, with the proposed additions shown in **bold** text:

LAND USE DESIGNATION	ZONE
Residential Low Density	RS-1d One Family Urban (Half Acre) Residential RS-1 One Family Urban Residential
Residential Low – Medium Density	SRS Special Urban Residential RS-1b One Family Urban (Medium Density) Residential RT-1 Two Family Residential R-1 Residential District
Medium Density Residential	R-1 Residential District CD-1-93 Amenity Residential District RM-1 Townhouse Residential RM-4 Multiple Family Residential RMH Mobile Home District

Included in the March 27, 2012 report was the public consultation process that identified an open house would be held in April or May 2012.

b) Open House Update:

Pursuant to the approved process, an open house was held on Wednesday May 30, 2012 at Samuel Robertson Technical School and was attended by approximately 160 people, 78% of whom are residents of Maple Ridge.

Advertisement for the open house was run in both the Maple Ridge Pitt Meadows Times and The News in the May 11, 18, 25 and 29, 2012 editions; details of the open house and accompanying information was posted on the District’s website as of May 10 and a questionnaire available on the District’s website from May 30 to June 11, 2012.

The information panels presented at the open house provided an overview of the proposed new residential zones to be added to the Albion Zoning Matrix and are included in the report as Appendix A. This information has been available on the District’s website since May 30, 2012 and can still be found under the Area Planning section.

A questionnaire was also provided at the open house and was available online from May 30 to June 11, 2012. It included questions related to the types and densities of residential development that participants felt would be appropriate within the north Albion Area, examples elsewhere within the Albion Area Plan area that were felt to be good housing models and suggestions on ways to improve the walkability within the area. The full summary of the responses received from the Questionnaire are attached as Appendix B.

Questionnaire Summary

As indicated, approximately 160 people attended the open house with 59 questionnaires being completed for a response rate of 37%. The following is a summary of the feedback received for each of the four questions.

Question 1: Do you support the proposed zones in the Albion Zoning Matrix, which allow for a slight increase in density in the Albion Area Plan?

Yes	23 responses	39%
No	36 responses	61 %

If yes, can you please tell us why you support the density increase? If no, can you please explain why you don't support the additional density?

51 responses were received for the second part of Question 1.

Question 2: What kind of housing forms would you support in the North Albion Area?

Townhouse	1 response	2%
Small lot Single-Family	9 responses	17%
Medium to large lot Single-Family	23 responses	43%
Other	20 responses	38%

Comments received in the "Other" category included:

- 12 responses in support of all the suggested housing types, including townhouses
- 5 responses for a mix of large and medium lot residential and village commercial
- 1 response for agricultural use
- 1 response not supporting any of the housing options

Are there any housing types that currently exist within the Albion area that you think are more appropriate than others?

38 responses were provided for the second part of Question 2

Question 3: Are you a resident of the Albion Area?

Yes	46 responses	78%
No	13 responses	22%

If you are a resident of Albion, do you walk in your neighbourhood? If so, to what destinations? Please explain any changes that would improve the walkability in your area.

40 responses were provided for the second part of Question 3.

Question 4: Please provide any other comments or suggestions you may have.

37 responses were provided for Question with the full record included in Appendix B.

The open house was well attended by area residents with the feedback received suggesting there is some support for the proposed higher single-family residential densities. Additional comments also identified concerns related to the future extension of infrastructure through the north portion of the Albion neighbourhood, additional parkland and neighbourhood commercial needs, and concerns related to safe pedestrian routes.

c) Policy Implications:

The participation at the open house suggests that area residents and landowners are very interested in the future of the north Albion Area. The majority of the feedback received at the open house suggests there is general support for the increase in single-family density.

In addition, many participants were not clear on how new development generates development cost charges that fund infrastructure improvements.

As outlined above, feedback was also received related to the need for additional parkland, concerns related to conservation areas and regulations, future road network and pedestrian connectivity and the potential for additional neighbourhood-scale commercial uses.

Amenity Zoning Study

As part of the Planning Department's 2012 Work Program, Council directed a review of Amenity Zoning and its potential use in Maple Ridge. This review began in May 2012 and is anticipated to be completed by the fall 2012 and incorporated into the Zoning Bylaw Review.

As part of the Study, CitySpaces Consulting has been hired to review the tools that are available under the *Local Government Act*, summarize the pros and cons of the various approaches, identify key priorities for the District and provide Council with a detailed information package on the options and economic impacts of an amenity zoning framework.

The CitySpaces team will also be undertaking a market review of development impacts of Amenity Zoning and will be using examples from the North Albion neighbourhood to aid in that assessment. Staff provided an update to Council on the Amenity Zoning Study on May 14, 2012 at which time it was anticipated that the market review would be completed in time to include in the North Albion Area Plan update. However, that work is still in process and not expected to be completed until mid-July. The market review will provide important information on the question of the financial viability of single-family residential developments and whether or not the District can anticipate amenity zoning contributions (also known as Community Amenity Contributions) in addition to the standard development cost charges.

This information will be very useful in assessing the mechanisms that the District may utilize to provide the level of hard and soft services identified during the May 30 open house.

In-stream Development Applications

Council will recall that as part of the work discussed at the March 27, 2012 Council meeting, a process for considering in-stream applications while the North Albion Area Plan amendments were being considered was presented. The following process was approved by Council:

“2. Applications that are in-stream or new, but have not proceeded on the Public Hearing, are proposed to be deferred until such time as the Albion Area Plan Amendments proposed are presented at Public Hearing and given Third Reading by Council.”

It is recommended that the process for considering in-stream development applications in the North Albion Area Plan Study Area be maintained.

d) Interdepartmental Implications:

The Engineering Department provided information on the proposed road network, final design cross-sections and several pedestrian network interim solutions as well as the proposed sewer and water system. The extension of sewer and water infrastructure was a key theme that arose at the open house and as part of the comments received on the completed questionnaires. Many residents asked when these services would be extended but did not necessarily understand that development enables the District to collect development cost charges that fund additional infrastructure improvements.

An evaluation of the potential densities and associated development cost charges would be beneficial to determine the extent to which the provision of new infrastructure (roads, sewer and water) can be achieved within the north Albion area. While the District will require infrastructure upgrades and extensions to service approved development applications, what is not yet known is whether or not it is financially viable for developers to develop within a predominantly single-family housing form. A separate report on the options for servicing of the north Albion area is currently being prepared and will be submitted for Council's review in conjunction with the next stage of the process.

e) Alternative:

That the proposed amendments to the Albion Area Plan, outlined in the March 27, 2012 report to Council, not proceed to First Reading.

CONCLUSIONS:

The feedback received at the open house event and through the questionnaire suggests that there is general support for the proposed amendments to the Albion Area Zoning Matrix to add two new single-family residential zones. In addition, a wide range of opinions and suggestions for residential densities, infrastructure improvements and additional parkland provisions within the Plan area were also received. As such, it is recommended that the North Albion Area Plan process be advanced to the next stage for staff to prepare an Official Community Plan Amending Bylaw and First Reading report.

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Concurrence: J.L. (Jim) Rule
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The following appendices are attached hereto:

- Appendix A: North Albion Open House Panels
- Appendix B: North Albion Open House Questionnaire Results