

Planning Handout

February 2015

The Advisory Planning Commission is an advisory body which makes recommendations to City Council. The Commission does not have the power to rezone property or make policy decisions.

Function

New Westminster's Advisory Planning Commission reviews applications and advises Council on the following:

- proposed neighbourhood and community plans;
- amendments to the above plans;
- rezoning applications;
- heritage revitalization agreements;
- draft City policies and procedures which relate to planning and development; and
- any other planning matters referred to it by Council.



Authority

The Advisory Planning Commission (often referred to as 'APC') is established under the terms of the Local Government Act to advise City Council on matters relating to community planning, zoning, subdivision and building regulations.

Commission members are appointed by Council for three-year terms and serve without remuneration.

Composition

The Commission is made up of nine citizens appointed to the Commission by Council. Development Services Department staff advise the Commission on technical matters and the policy implications of various courses of action. The assistance of other City departments is available upon request.

Meetings

The regular meetings of the Advisory Planning Commission are scheduled on the third Tuesday of the month at 5:30 pm or 6:30 p.m. Special meetings are convened when needed.

Commission meetings are open and inclusive, especially when surrounding property owners have been invited to express their views on matters affecting their property or neighbourhood.

All property owners and occupants within 100 metres of the subject site are notified by mail of the application and meeting date. A sign is also posted on the site concerning the application.

Procedure

In dealing with any particular item on the agenda, the Chairman of the Commission conducts the meeting in the following manner:

1. A staff member from the City's Development Services Department explains the application with the assistance of maps or illustrations.
2. The Chair of the Commission summarizes whatever correspondence has been received regarding the item in question.
3. The principals involved in the application present their proposal to the Commission and to any members of the public who are present.

4. Members of the Commission may question the applicant.

5. Adjoining property owners and delegations present are invited to question the applicant or present their point of view.

6. Members of the Commission may question the property owners or delegations.

7. When the questions to the public and the applicant are complete, then members of the Commission discuss the item and make their recommendation.

Minutes

Minutes are kept and the Commission's recommendations are forwarded to City Council in the form of a report. City Council makes the final decisions on all rezoning matters after receiving the advice of the Advisory Planning Commission. (Some exceptions maybe dealt with solely by Council.)

