



COMMUNITY INFILL PANEL

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 15, 2017

MEETING INTRODUCTION

On the evening of Wednesday, February 15, 2017, the Community Infill Panel held its seventh meeting at the Commonwealth Community Recreation Centre. The group convened to discuss recent infill-related motions passed by Mayor Don Iveson and Councillor Scott McKeen. Panel members were split into two groups to discuss their opinions on the motions. Dan Boric, Planner, facilitated discussions about the recent motions made by the Mayor at Urban Planning Committee on February 1, and by Councillor McKeen at City Council on February 7, 2017. Highlights of the discussions have been recorded below. The next Community Infill Panel Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, April 12, 2017**. The highlights of the Panel's meeting have been recorded below.

RECENT INFILL MOTIONS

Mayor Iveson's Motion:

"That in anticipation of Evolving Infill 2.0, Administration bring a framework to Committee for addressing areas where more diverse and affordable housing opportunities should be clustered - perhaps a "Missing Middle Overlay" (and/or base zone revisions) for mature areas where higher heights, smaller front setbacks, bigger building pockets and more flexibility for multi-family buildings could be warranted, such as: pre-war areas with taller existing homes, areas near transit nodes and corridors, areas with deteriorating housing stock that would benefit from revitalization, and/or areas with existing clustered ground-oriented multi-family zoning."

Councillor McKeen's Motion:

"The City's infill goals are to revitalize mature neighbourhoods, create more affordable housing options relative to the neighbourhood, and to attract families to areas that I've heard referred to as child deserts.

In the case of narrow lot subdivision in mature neighbourhoods (all zoning types), four desirable neighbourhoods host 31.7 percent of the narrow lots approved between 2013-2016. The two neighbourhoods that saw the highest percentage of subdivision resulting in skinny lots were in Ward 6. In contrast, some mature neighbourhoods in the Ward and elsewhere within the city's established communities have seen none of this type of development to date.

In light of the uneven application of subdivisions resulting in skinny lots in communities across the city, can Administration bring back a report in the third quarter of 2017 on creative ways the City might employ to encourage this type of infill in areas with, currently, limited private market uptake that are in need of revitalization and new housing stock.

The report should:

Analyze the land economics influencing lot subdivision applications across the city.

Review the literature and programs used in other municipalities to encourage opportunities for equitable distribution of small scale infill development in different neighbourhoods.

Include an evaluation of tax and/or other financial tools that could be explored to support additional opportunities for areas experiencing relatively low rates of infill growth.

Include an evaluation of non-financial tools and/or incentives that could be employed to enable infill, via lot subdivision or other methods, in areas that are not experiencing needed growth."

WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSION – GROUP 1

- It was initially unclear if the Mayor was singling out specific geographical areas or providing indicators for where infill could go (pre-war areas with taller homes, etc).
- It appeared to the group that the Mayor may be speaking to locating infill near TOD areas
- Though the Mayor's motion speaks to indicators or conditions for where infill could go, it was unclear if he meant that other medium to high density built forms could be located here as well
- It was noted that though Council could suggest where infill should go, it may be prudent to leave this up to the market to determine where it will go
- It was further noted that the market should help guide where infill should go as it will be the market that will actual build the homes
- Builders build where it makes sense and where they can make a profit. This is why some areas are not experiencing infill
- With this in mind, when a builder is successful in one neighbourhood, they will likely keep building in that neighbourhood because it is more predictable and offers some degree of assurance. In addition, this may be a neighbourhood where the target market / buyer is located
- In terms of moving forward, it would be important to explore the indicators for infill and to facilitate new infill using these indicators. For example, indicators may include proximity to parks, schools, transit, commerce, employment, demographics, etc.
- It can't be expected that infill happens ad hoc across the city – there are indicators driving
- Understanding the indicators will help guide policy changes to allow medium and high density developments to be located in neighbourhoods
- It was noted that mixed dwelling forms are being built in developing neighbours through the RMD – Mixed Dwelling Residential Zone, so why can't this be accommodated in existing neighbours while respecting character and massing of these neighbourhoods?

WORLD CAFÉ DISCUSSION – GROUP 2

- It was interpreted that the Mayor's motion is directing new infill to specific areas and wants to "up-zone" these areas accordingly
- In terms of Councillor McKeen's motion about why infill isn't happening in certain neighbourhoods, it was noted that again, it could be due to market considerations
- The group suggested that there could be an incentive created to help persuade builders to develop in certain neighbourhoods, including financial and / or regulatory
- Like the first group, the second group acknowledged that the Mayor is speaking to "triggers" or "indicators" for where and how infill should be developed, including market, social, etc.
- In exploring the "affordable" component of the motions, the second group noted that affordability is relative to the market, and not speaking to social housing
- The group noted that in regards to why infill not happening in certain neighbourhoods, more time is needed to allow this to unfold. Redevelopment doesn't happen overnight
- In exploring Councillor McKeen's motion, the group noted that this is merely a data analysis and reporting exercise as the motion seeks to answer very specific questions, whereas the Mayor's motion is more of a planning exercise that requires solving a problem
- The group noted that the motions are related because the information received in responding to Councillor McKeen's motion will help guide the solutions required for the Mayor's motion, including the framework for where more diverse and affordable clusters of housing could be located

SYNTHESIS OF THE WORLD CAFE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE INFILL MOTIONS

The two world cafe discussions about the infill motions helped to provide clarity about what the motions are trying to achieve and how to approach the motions.

Both groups indicated that though the motions speak to affordability, this is in relation to relative affordability of housing, and not specifically speaking to social / assisted housing. It was noted by the groups that the market has a strong influence in directing infill to particular neighbourhoods, which is why builders locate to these areas.

In exploring the motions, both groups noted that investigating tools and incentives to help guide infill to other areas would be beneficial. A key theme with both discussions was about indicators or conditions for infill. Both groups stressed that infill doesn't happen in a vacuum and that there are outside factors that both incentivise and deter infill from happening in certain neighbourhoods or in certain forms. Understanding these conditions and using these conditions to incentivise and guide future infill, especially as it relates to medium and high density built forms is imperative.

CONTACT WITH CITY ADMINISTRATION

Any new ideas between meetings, questions or concerns can be directed to **Dan Boric** or **Claire St. Aubin**. Contact methods include:

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Additionally, scanned copies of notes for inclusion in upcoming meetings can be emailed

**The next meeting will be held on
November 9, 2016 at 5:30pm.
The duration of the meeting will
be 2-3 hours maximum.**

MEETING DATES

Wednesday, March 9, 2016

Wednesday, May 11, 2016

Wednesday, July 13, 2016

Wednesday, September 14, 2016

Wednesday, November 9, 2016

For more information on Edmonton Infill, please visit:
www.coeinfill.ca

