

DUNBAR RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

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January 30, 2008

Mayor Sullivan and Councillors
City Hall
453 West 12th Avenue
Vancouver, B.C. V5Y 1V4

Dear Mayor Sullivan and City Councillors:

Re: Ecodensity Charter

We are writing to reiterate our serious concerns with the City's EcoDensity initiative and to request that Council take action to address these concerns, which are shared by neighbourhoods across the city.

Our concerns are twofold: first, the lack of meaningful community involvement in formulating the initiative and, second, the undue reliance on development and density as a means to environmental sustainability. We believe that the Charter simply promises to decrease Vancouver's environmental footprint through promotion of development in a document that contains no means by which its promised ameliorative effect on urban sprawl and transit problems can be measured.

Dunbar has been a neighbourhood of primarily single family dwellings supported with small commercial areas. This was the vision of civic leaders who, in 1908, established Dunbar as a neighbourhood within the municipality of Point Grey. It remained the vision for Dunbar when Point Grey amalgamated with the Municipality of Vancouver in 1929. And the essence of the original vision remained unchanged when Vancouver City Council approved the Dunbar Community Vision (DCV) in 1998.

Today, in 2008, the guiding principles of the DCV are what continue to make Dunbar a neighbourhood that works. However, these principles are threatened by the draft EcoDensity Charter and Initial Actions put forward by Council on November 26, 2007.

On December 19, 2007 you received a letter endorsed by the Dunbar Residents' Association (DRA) and many other community groups throughout the City. This letter explained in detail the concerns of these groups regarding many of the proposed EcoDensity Initial Actions as well as the Charter itself. At this time we would like to reiterate the over-arching concern that residents of Dunbar have not been afforded due process in the development of the EcoDensity Charter and Initial Actions.

We refer you to Section 20 of the Dunbar Vision – Community Involvement in Decision Making: *Community residents should have more input, and more timely*

input, into decision making about changes in their community, such as development projects, transit planning, street and traffic changes and park design.

We are dismayed that this Vision direction, which received 91% agreement (the strongest support of all the Vision topics), has not been followed by the City with regard to the EcoDensity initiative. Certainly a plan with such massive implications for our neighbourhood and our city requires extensive and meaningful consultation with residents.

Dunbar is not a community averse to change, but the substantial changes that the EcoDensity initiative as currently proposed would bring to our neighbourhood require meaningful involvement of citizens and genuine consideration of their feedback. To date, this has not occurred.

At the very least, the EcoDensity initiative should be put to a neighbourhood-by-neighbourhood survey which solicits detailed feedback, similar to the process undertaken in developing the community visions. In this case, the survey would be limited to questions relevant to the EcoDensity initiative.

To this end, we urge you to demonstrate your commitment to, and respect for, the citizens of Vancouver by:

- (1) rejecting the EcoDensity Charter and Initial Actions on February 26th, and
- (2) directing staff to work with community members to develop an Eco-Density related survey that gives each neighbourhood their rightful say in the planning of how EcoDensity will work best in their community.

We are confident that such a positive and inclusive process will result in recommendations that will keep Dunbar a neighbourhood that will continue to work well for generations to come while meeting the responsible sustainability objectives that we all support.

We look forward to your favourable response.

Yours truly,



Susan Chapman
Co-President
Dunbar Residents' Association

Cc Mr. Brent Toderian