

north shore news

District of North Vancouver halts growth, for now

Council set to debate pace of development in district

Jeremy Shepherd / North Shore News

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File photo Mike Wakefield

There will be no new developments in the District of North Vancouver — at least, not for the next two weeks.

Council was set to debate the pros and cons of a new 35-unit apartment Monday (Feb. 2) when the Draycott Road development had the rug pulled out from under it.

The project will sit at a red light until council holds a state-of-the-district discussion on the pace of development, scheduled for Feb. 16.

The time to take an overview of development in the district is long overdue, according to Coun. Lisa Muri, who called for the deferral.

“(The OCP) was continually sold to the community as something that would happen over a 20- (to) 25-year time span and it does not feel like that at all,” she said, prior to casting a minority vote against 23- and 19-storey towers at the Grouse Inn site in Lower Capilano in June 2014.

Muri has also railed against a silo mentality in the district, beseeching her colleagues to take City of North Vancouver

developments into account.

Pressing pause on this application — which has been in the district pipeline for two years and was one vote away from a public hearing — is somewhat nonsensical, according to Coun. Roger Bassam.

“We’re refusing the public the right to get to the public hearing,” he said.

The community supports the traffic-reducing development, according to Bassam.

“Here we are, shooting ourselves in the foot,” he said. “There’s no correlation between the development in the District of North Vancouver and the traffic problems that we have been experiencing.”

Coun. Robin Hicks joined Bassam in voting against the deferral.

Mayor Richard Walton agreed to support a “short deferral only” in the hopes of finding consensus in council’s expectations for development.

However, the mayor pointed out that the current rate of development trails behind the levels set out in the district’s official community plan.

For MacKay-Dunn, the time has come to discuss development and its effects on traffic congestion.

“Apologies to the proponent, but I believe it to be in the best interests of all of us to have a full and fulsome discussion on this very, very important issue,” he said.

While Muri and MacKay-Dunn were frequently on the short end of development votes in the last term, they were joined in their call for a deferral by first-term Couns. Jim Hanson and Mathew Bond.

“It would be wrong to approve any development for any further advancement until there’s been an open and public debate by this council,” Hanson said. “No more development, at least for two weeks.”

The deferred development, a five-storey apartment building on a Draycott Road cul-de-sac, is also set to come back to council Feb. 16.

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