

Civic Affairs

Michael Benoit

LOC2007-0080 Ramsay Exchange

The RCA Board of Directors approved a letter on March 18 that is being sent to Torode Commercial Ltd., which outlines a number of concerns about the redevelopment of the old Dominion Bridge/Ramsay Crossing site. It is expected that a series of meetings will be held with the Civic Affairs Committee to discuss these concerns. The letter is lengthy, but here is an abbreviated list of the concerns.

1. Interface with the C.E.S. land uses to the south require a larger setback than indicated on their site plan.
2. Building heights on the perimeter of the site facing Spiller Rd. and 24th Ave. should be the same 10 m as the adjacent community, with heights increasing to the south and east of the site.
3. Shadowing on the adjacent community should be eliminated by adjusting building placement and height.
4. There should be more municipal reserve green space on the site, as a ratio of the density requested.
5. Road designation issues with community roads and intersections being enlarged to accommodate site vehicle traffic. We request that Dartmouth Rd. be the main entrance and exit point, and that another Transportation Impact Assessment (TIA) be done to describe the traffic effects on the entire community and also during Stampede and Saddledome events.
6. We request that Transit Oriented Design (TOD) principles be used to place the greatest heights and densities in close proximity to the approved future S.E. LRT station at Crossroads, with attention paid to efficient pedestrian and bicycle connections to the east and from the community.
7. We request safe and efficient pedestrian and bicycle connections to the regional pathway system along the Elbow River to the west of the site.
8. We request that the housing types included in the redevelopment reflect the community's economic and demographic diversity, with affordable, family, live-work studio, seniors and assisted living housing types available for purchase or rent. Also that commercial spaces include neighbourhood grocery and other community amenities.
9. We request that construction vehicles access be from Dartmouth Road during the estimated 10 year build time, and that contractors control the noise, dust and general impact on the community during that time.
10. Entrances to the site for proposed underground parking take into consideration existing road designations ie. lessen the impact on 24th Ave. and Spiller Road.
11. We request that the developer(s) contribute to the community through a Levy which will be used to improve or build other community amenities to support the population increase and the effect on the existing community.

The Committee requested that extensive environmental studies be conducted and shared with the community to ensure that groundwater migration and site contamination does not affect the surrounding community during excavation and construction.

The Civic Affairs Committee noted the positive aspects of the development; that the Dominion Bridge buildings were being renovated for use and that other "mixed-use development...complements and enlivens the existing established community of Ramsay and the greater Calgary community."

Community Neighbour Expands to Better Serve Calgarians

The City of Calgary Animal & Bylaw Services located on Portland Street in Ramsay is expanding. Bill Bruce, the Director of Animal & Bylaw, recently met with community representatives Judy Hellevang and Michael Benoit to share the exciting plans they have to add a 2500 square foot expansion onto the south end of their existing facility. The expansion to their current building will also be made of brick and corrugated metal siding and will be built in the area of their current, gated parking lot.

The expansion is the second phase of a promise Animal & Bylaw Services made to Council and Calgarians to actively control the cat overpopulation problem in our city. The first step, to pass the Responsible Pet Ownership Bylaw which includes cat licensing, enables Animal Services and their partners to reunite these identified cats with their owners. The bylaw also addresses the issue of nuisance cats by regulating that cats must remain on their owners' property.

The second phase of the plan is directly tied to the new expansion. All funds received from cat licensing will go directly back into caring for the cats being temporarily housed at Animal Services and then more excitedly, towards building and operating this no-cost spay and neuter clinic for eligible Calgarians who do not have the financial resources to spay or neuter their cats.

This facility will represent the first time in Canada that a municipal agency, with the full support of the vet community, will provide these services. Since transportation is often a deterrent from enabling citizens to get their pets altered, Animal Services will have a van to pick up and deliver the pets. This means that there will be very little extra traffic in the area so the impact on the existing community will be minimal.

The City of Calgary Animal & Bylaw Services is proud to be a resident of the Ramsay community and to be able to provide quality service to Calgarians. More information will be forthcoming regarding the anticipated spring 2008 clinic ground breaking and grand opening scheduled for the end of 2008.

DP2008-0570 C.E.S. "Surface Parking Lot"/Calgary Stampede Bridge and Tunnel Project

On March 12 the Civic Affairs Committee met with officials from the C.E.S. for a presentation of their plans to redevelop a brownfield site along 25th Ave. at the south end of Spiller Rd. As part of their Expansion Plans approved by City Council in 2006, the Stampede is building a new bridge across the Elbow River, an underpass under Spiller Rd. near 25th Ave. intersection, and a large back of house lot with entrances from Dartmouth Road and 25th Ave. S.E. Construction is set to begin after this year's Stampede, with an anticipated road closure of Spiller Rd. S.E. between 24th Ave. and 25th Ave. for 6 months to allow the underpass to be built to connect the back of house lot to the Stampede's present operations on the west and east banks of the Elbow River. Another closure of the regional pathway on the east side of the Elbow River is also required during bridge construction. Civic Affairs is in discussion with the Stampede to provide details for community improvements including a landscaped entranceway at 25th Ave. and Spiller Rd., upgraded fencing and greenscaping of the east bank operations boundary to replace the existing unsightly chain link and razor wire that greets visitors to our community along Spiller Rd. We are also hopeful that a sidewalk will be built on the east side of Spiller Rd. and that the west sidewalk interface with the regional pathway will be improved. We will lobby hard to keep the west sidewalk open during construction to allow pedestrians and cyclists to

access the only existing route to the Erlton LRT station via the regional pathway or the unfriendly 25th Ave. sidewalk. The CAC also has environmental concerns about the Elbow riverbank, and in 2006 the Ramsay Community Association supported the Stampede Expansion Plans in order to have promises that the Stampede would move their maintenance and storage facilities away from the riverbanks. We encouraged them to move their horse barn (Barn G) from the east bank onto their new back of house site. City Council was not entirely supportive of our concerns in 2006, and the CAC now finds itself arguing these same points with Stampede officials two years later. We will keep the community informed as events unfold.

My thanks to all the hard-working and dedicated Civic Affairs Committee members who have contributed countless hours over the past months and years.

Contact the Civic Affairs Chair if you are interested in becoming involved with the Committee.