

PUBLIC INPUT ON COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS

1410-04
Report - Council

L. Layne, San Lorenzo Avenue:

Support for Increasing Student Housing at University of Victoria (UVic):

- This is a great initiative; it will be well received by UVic and Camosun College.
- Living on campus allows students to meet others and would be beneficial to their education; they would feel part of campus life and it gives students a sense of belonging.
- Making it possible for more students to live on campus is supportable.

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Report - Council

SUPPORT FOR INCREASING STUDENT HOUSING AT THE UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA (UVic)

Report from Councillor Haynes dated September 12, 2016 recommending that Council send a letter to the Premier of BC and to the Ministers responsible for Housing and Finance recognizing the recent contributions to the region for housing the homeless and for affordable rental housing, and request that the Province undertake necessary changes to remove barriers for provincial post-secondary institutions wishing to increase their supply of on-campus student housing, and request to meet with the Premier and her Ministers to discuss this matter; and send letters to the same effect to the University of Victoria, Camosun College, the Mayors of Oak Bay and Victoria, the Capital Regional District Chair and local MLA's.

Councillor Haynes stated:

- There are difficulties housing the approximately 38,000 students in the region.
- Both UVic and Camosun College would appreciate being able to build housing on their lands; currently, they cannot build because any debt taken on by the school is reflected in a line item on the Provincial debt.
- The request is to remove the barriers to enable schools to borrow money.
- This is an opportunity to support schools who wish to build student housing without impacting the municipal tax base.
- It would be another opportunity that the municipality has to address housing in the region.

MOVED by Councillor Haynes and Seconded by Councillor Plant: "That Council:

- 1) **Send a letter to the Premier of British Columbia and to the Ministers responsible for Housing and Finance requesting they undertake the necessary changes to remove barriers to the University of Victoria and other campuses of secondary education in BC that wish to move forward on increasing the supply of student housing; and,**
- 2) **Send letters to the same effect to the University of Victoria, Camosun College, the Mayors of Oak Bay and Victoria, the Capital Regional District Chair and local MLA's."**

MOVED by Councillor Brownoff and Seconded by Councillor Haynes: “That the motion be amended to include: to the Ministers responsible for Housing, Finance and Advanced Education.”

Councillor Brownoff stated:

- UVic has a relationship with the Ministry of Advanced Education therefore they should also receive a letter.

Councillor Wergeland stated:

- He wonders if it is appropriate to request senior levels of government to make changes; housing is an issue but it may be more appropriate to focus on what the municipality, itself, can do.

**The Amendment to the Motion was CARRIED
with Councillor Wergeland OPPOSED**

Councillor Brice stated:

- The Provincial Government has announced that funding will be available for affordable housing; it may have been more appropriate if UVic was asking Saanich for support.
- Informing the Provincial Government that student housing is needed is supportable; the Provincial Government may wish to reconsider allowing post-secondary institutions to go into debt to build student housing.

Councillor Brownoff stated:

- It may have been more appropriate if UVic had asked Saanich to raise our voices with them to establish housing on campus; UVic's priority is to provide housing to first time students.
- The ultimately goal of the Campus Master Plan is to create a village.
- UVic will have to enter into discussions with the Province in relation to their housing needs.

Councillor Murdock stated:

- He is happy to support a way to advocate for housing for the Saanich student population; currently, there is an inadequate supply of housing.
- Oak Bay and Victoria are also looking at student housing as an issue; he looks forward to hearing more details on Provincial funding.

Councillor Sanders stated:

- It would have been preferred to have UVic ask the municipality for support and to have given the Advisory Committees a chance to discuss.

Mayor Atwell stated:

- Letters like this may serve a purpose for those who have not thought yet of the issue; this is an opportunity to build a coalition to make things happen at the Provincial level.

**The Main Motion was then Put and CARRIED
with Councillor Wergeland OPPOSED**