

## **CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL**

### **NOTES OF A SEMINAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Held in the Council Chamber  
on Tuesday 8 August 2006 at 9.30 am**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sue Wells (Chair),  
Councillors, Sally Buck, Graham Condon, David Cox,  
Barry Corbett, Anna Crighton, Pat Harrow, Bob Shearing,  
and Norm Withers, and Community Board member  
Yvonne Palmer (from 10.45 am).

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from  
Mayor Garry Moore, Councillors Helen Broughton,  
Carole Evans, Bob Parker and Gail Sheriff.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Steve McCarthy (Environmental Policy and Approvals Manager),  
John Buchan (Building Control Manager),  
Leonid Itskovich (Energy Manager), and  
Brian Roff (Building Approvals Manager).

#### **REVIEW OF THE BUILDING CODE**

Presenters John Buchan (Building Control Manager) and Brian Roff (Building Approvals Manager) spoke to a PowerPoint presentation of points collated as a result of an extensive public consultation process. The views of Councillors were sought as to whether or not further consideration should be given to the points raised in the presentation. A draft submission would be prepared based on the resulting feedback from the seminar: this submission to be pre-circulated to all Councillors for consideration and Council “sign-off” prior to the lodging of the submission by the 31 August 2006 closing date.

During the presentation the following points and comments were noted:

- The meaning of the word “accessibility” in terms of the Building Act has replaced the word “disability”.
- Submission: It is difficult for the Council to know what the downstream consequences may be based on the information currently available.
- Heritage and accessibility compliance issues were discussed (eg original (hand-crafted) round door knobs already in place, when lever-action handles could be mandatory: sympathetic positioning of access ramps, layout difficulties etc). Need provision to allow for a degree of reasonable compromise and application of common sense. Incentives for retention of heritage buildings (tax relief?) raised.
- Educate public toward “forward-thinking” when making a purchase (eg encourage 65 year olds. to envisage future requirements.)
- Currently 14% of NZ population in “disabled” category, and increasing. Already insufficient car parking facilities available.

- The general consensus was that although there were issues (surrounding EPH in particular), and the proposed demographic change was a good concept, the Council was reluctant to be too prescriptive. The meeting was advised that a national requirement should cover these concerns, and there was some provision under the Code for regional variations to allow for local climate etc.
- Building Code prescriptive at a local level re sustainability and environmental issues (eg passive solar). The lack of interface in some circumstances between the City Plan and the Building Code needs to be recognised, and “gaps” identified.
- Minimum standard for rental properties?
- **Wellbeing** requirements - “... building meets the cultural requirements of the intended occupants ...” debated. Submission to state that health and safety matters should not be compromised because of cultural issues.
- **Noise levels** – submission to cite issues with heat pumps as an example.
- **Industrial noise levels** and lack of noise insulation/affect on residents – should this be covered under the Building Code? (eg steel works operating from 6.45am). Steve McCarthy happy to discuss Yvonne Palmer’s concerns further.
- **CBD noise levels** cause for concern in some instances. The Council will have an opportunity to submit on this topic.
- Submission: The CCC would like to have discretion to make decisions on some issues eg accessibility and heritage, subject to the receipt of advice from qualified conservation architects.
- Issues with change of use to residential properties under the City Plan discussed. Agreed a degree of “overall” flexibility was an ideal objective.

#### NEW ZEALAND BUILDING CODE OBJECTIVES

The following comments were noted:

- **Indoor temperature** – Staff will prepare a range of options including residential (inadequate temperature 16 degrees), and requirements based on standard of insulation.
- **Planting of evergreens within proximity of building** and effect on temperature of a residence? Vancouver example cited. The CCC submission will seek a response to this aspect.
- **Lack of access to, within, and from the building** – look at this for submission, as members aware of situations which could be improved.
- **Exposure to noise etc** – capture in submission.
- **Poor indoor air quality** - additional requirement - supported.
- **Lack of awareness** of the outdoors- view issues.
- **Unwanted entry** – security. Those present considered that the Insurance Council would deliver this. Raises issues of egress in an emergency – need common sense to prevail.
- **Inadequate electricity services** – agreed sensible encourage at source, with provision for flexibility.

- **Lack of space for person activities** – supported – need minimum living space for residential building, plus provision of reasonable storage space, although recognised the market would govern this to some extent.
- **Lack of facilities for personal needs** - indicate in the CCC submission that the Council is going to steer away from prescriptive measures.
- **Building maintenance** – supported in general terms, and see what comes back. Recognised there could be issues with access/maintenance of “leaky” buildings. May well support once the Council has seen the provisions in detail.
- **Building and/or construction materials being appropriate for future adaptation** – understood to mean building/construction materials can be recycled in the future. The Council considered this was a low priority until the details become available, and considered the wording does not help the Code meet the “clarity” requirement.
- **Conservation and efficiency of energy used for water heating** – the Council will have an opportunity to submit on the affordability of proposals. The Council’s EPH energy sources policy states, “The Council shall consider ...”
- **Conservation and efficiency of energy used for space conditioning** – supported.
- **Conservation and efficiency of energy used for lighting** – (eg computer-run buildings which manage energy consumption) – supported.
- **Water conservation and efficiency** – agreed to leave with staff.
- **Reuse of waste-water** – define waste-water – is this ‘grey’ water, and if so what does it contain?
- **Conservation and efficient use of materials** – supported, but aware cost factors can be disincentive.
- **Whole-of-chain environmental impacts** - supported, but aware of potential costs.
- **Provision for recycling of recycling materials** – supported.

Discussion:

- Concern was raised at the cost implications for TLAs (ie resources for additional licensing, monitoring and certification). The seminar was advised that all costs are “on-chargeable” to consumers. Submission to reiterate that “affordability” will be a fundamental element, and include “sensitivity”, and “practicality” as key words.
- The concept of a “how achievable’ check list was mooted: staff advised that some costs can be anticipated.
- Need for the Council to take a very minimalist view, given likely increase in costs.
- Old methods worked well – no leaky buildings. Learn from history, and existing sound buildings.
- Central government again putting compliance costs on ratepayers.
- Will the review make provision for managing situations involving substandard existing buildings and amenities e.g. rental properties?

The seminar concluded at 12.25 pm.

# CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

## NOTES OF A SEMINAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices,  
on Tuesday 8 August 2006 at 1pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Norm Withers (Chairperson),  
Mayor Garry Moore (from 2.26pm),  
Councillors Helen Broughton, Sally Buck, Barry Corbett,  
Pat Harrow, Bob Shearing and Sue Wells.

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from  
Councillors Graham Condon, Carole Evans, Bob Parker  
and Gail Sheriff and Mayor Garry Moore for lateness.

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Phil Clearwater (Community Board)

### COUNCIL HOUSING STRATEGY OPTIONS

In opening the seminar the Chairperson advised that its purpose was to update progress on the Council Housing Strategy and seek the Council's views on options as to which housing needs the Council should focus on in the future. This direction will enable staff to go forward and develop a draft strategy.

Alan Bywater provided a PowerPoint presentation covering:

- Goals and context.
- Research findings.
- Consultation findings.
- Strategy principles.
- Areas of need for strategy to focus on.
- Downstream issues.
- Timeframe.

In the discussion that followed questions and comments were made in respect of:

- Given that Auckland City Council had withdrawn from the social housing market, was this Council getting a fair share of Government funding?
- Was the housing programme sustainable in the long-term in respect of the Council's social housing provision being rates neutral?
- Why was the formula provided by staff two years ago now not satisfactory and having to be changed?
- The historical involvement of the Council in social housing was accepted but it would in the future need to be clearly self funding and self perpetuating.
- Given the number of houses the Council had, it had to be recognised that the housing added to the fabric of Christchurch and was now the envy of other cities. If anything it should be strengthened in the presentation.

- Was there an opportunity for development of further partnerships in the housing portfolio with individuals contributing a percentage of equity into a dwelling.
- There was nothing about distinguishing between the dwellings that constituted a permanent home for some people, as opposed to those that were more transient.

#### **FUTURE DIRECTION FOCUS**

In response to a question posed as to where the Council's policy on social housing should be situated, comments received included:

- Status quo with perhaps a slight leaning towards the provision for the elderly (recognising that people are now living longer than their predecessors).
- As a second tier other forms of housing might be made available for refugees or for other persons who are likely to struggle to obtain suitable accommodation for their needs.
- Projections would need to be modified to take account of 'baby boomers', as this could impact on requirements up to 15% if trends followed through.
- The homeless and the old, as well as the homeless and the young, should not be distinguished.

#### **OUTCOME**

There was general support for continuance of a social housing policy directed principally towards the elderly, but not ruling out other sectors of low income, disabled, refugee, where the circumstances of the need could be justified.

#### **DOWNSTREAM ISSUES**

- There was a need to change people's perception that the Council's current housing policy was related to social housing in a wider sense, not just that of the elderly.
- A form of housing trust be established with appropriate membership.
- The housing stock could be re-examined to see whether those for instance on high value land should be re-established on land more appropriately priced, ie through the rationalising of the housing stock benefit could be gained.

The seminar concluded at 3.01pm.