

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

NOTES OF A SEMINAR OF THE COUNCIL

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices
on Tuesday 8 May 2007 at 9.30am**

PRESENT:

Christchurch City Council:

Councillors Sue Wells (Chairman), Sally Buck, Barry Corbett, David Cox, Carole Evans, Pat Harrow, Bob Parker (to 10.30am), Bob Shearing and Gail Sheriff (from 9.43am).

Community Board:

Riccarton-Wigram Community Board member
Neville Bennett.

APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Mayor Garry Moore, Councillors Helen Broughton, Graham Condon, Anna Crighton and Norm Withers.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

The session was introduced by Jane Cartwright who advised that a result of the Commerce Committee invitation to revise input into the enquiry into Housing Affordability NZ, a submission was being developed. Further input was now being sought from members of an order that can be completed by 14 June 2007 Council meeting.

A Powerpoint presentation followed covering:

- Outline a process
- Review of Terms of Reference
- Council-wide submission – three parts
- Definitions
- Summary of Christchurch's work in lifestyles 2006
- Median personal income 2006 statistics
- Home ownership – a comparison with other major cities

The next session was divided into three parts with comments being sought from members.

(i) DIRECT RELEVANCE TO COUNCIL

- Could the Council intervene on its development contributions for first homeowners.
- What research did the Commerce Committee carry out into world trends which should be moved to more rental accommodation provided this was of good quality.

- The pattern of section prices did not necessarily follow the availability of land for development, but the Council was getting the blame but the supply chain should not be interfered with.
- In Australia there was more in the way of shared equity plans.
- People coming to Christchurch to live, appeared to be looking for single dwelling on a standard size section and therefore range of properties should be maintained.
- An easing up of the height restrictions should be examined, rather than buildings constantly spreading out.
- The increase in servicing costs of holding land may lead to some freeing up of property.
- If the Council can streamline its processes then the costs to the homeowner may reduce.
- The Council should not adopt a position where it is dictating to the landowner.
- Compliance costs were about 1% of the total cost of a building's construction.
- A deal should be struck with private developers that in return for allowing them higher buildings or they should provide a percentage of social housing in the development.
- Australia was providing tax deductibilities and the interest paid by a first home buyer.
- Shared equity could be good means given that parents were now funding homes for their children. The government, the banks and the Council needed to be further involved.
- Just who were the long-term tenants of rented houses – the number of rental properties was increasing with the split up of marriages etc.
- The government could assist in funding through the domestic purposes benefit etc.
- What was the situation regards with students who had student loans and trying to gain housing mortgage from the banks.
- It used to be that first home buyers bought second-hand dwellings, not new expensive houses first time up.
- Was there an opportunity for the Council to re-zone more land available for investment housing.
- Who were the owners of houses today, were they overseas investors.
- If you reduce the requirements of building construction, the leaky house syndrome could be the result.
- It was seen the whole dynamics of housing is changing, in respect of the young not wishing to be tied to a housing mortgage.
- The UDS provided tools to make land available.
- Housing NZ had a huge part to play, particularly in respect of State tenants who believed because they had lived in the one house for a long period, to be theirs.
- Where families reduced in size rental accommodation, they should move on to smaller units leaving the larger ones for extended families.

(ii) **ROLE AS A LANDLORD**

Role as Landlord: It was noted that there is a significant amount of Council's housing stock due for replacement and information on this would be built into a submission.

Further comments made included:

- The Council could work in with Housing NZ to ensure that family size houses are occupied by families needing that amount of space while other tenants are moved onto smaller houses.
- Housing stock such as that at Redcliffs sitting on valuable land should be sold off to provide funding for larger number of dwellings in other parts of the city, provided siting for such was carefully chosen.
- Christchurch's housing was a model to be used as a template for the rest of New Zealand.
- Social housing is seen as very important, Singapore being cited as an example appoint better utilisation of some sites needed to be made in order to get a maximum use from them.
- Good design was another important factor to be considered.

(iii) **BROADER PERSPECTIVES ACROSS THE COUNCIL**

It was noted that rentals charged by Housing NZ were based on different criteria to that of the Council and the government should recognise this fact and provide the Council with a top-up from the accommodation supplement.

Other comments made included:

- The Commission Committee needed to be made aware of just how good a service Christchurch was providing.
- A wider perspective needed to take into housing issue long term along with matters of energy sustainability etc being taken into account.
- Multiple land ownership, as was the case in Banks Peninsula, needed to be examined as to the implications for obtaining housing funding.
- The basis of providing good housing for city was to help in achieving a more healthy lifestyle.

The seminar concluded at 11.28am.

CHRISTCHURCH CITY COUNCIL

**NOTES OF A SEMINAR
OF THE COUNCIL**

**Held in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices
on Tuesday 8 May 2007 at 1.30pm**

- PRESENT:** Councillor Sue Wells (Chair),
Councillors Helen Broughton, Sally Buck,
Graham Condon, Barry Corbett, David Cox,
Anna Crighton, Pat Harrow and Bob Shearing.
- APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were received and accepted from
Mayor Garry Moore, Councillors Carole Evans,
Gail Sheriff and Norm Withers, and Community Board
Chair, Bob Todd.
- IN ATTENDANCE:** Community Board member, Yani Johanson.

	ACTION
<p>3. B4 ZONE HEIGHT LIMITS</p> <p>Council Senior Planner of the City Plan Team, Scott Blair, in conjunction with Nicola Rykers of Boffa Miskell, provided an update on the B4 Building Bulk and Forms Study, and in particular the outcomes following consultation on the necessity and appropriateness of a possible new height standard and an increase setback standard from the Living zone boundary. The presentation provided a short review of work to date, followed by a summary of the consultation process, the outcomes of consultation, further investigations on the impact of an increased setback at the Business 4/Living zone boundary, and recommendations. (A hard copy of the presentation is on file.) The next step in the process will be the preparation of a Section 32 report and a draft Plan Change, based on the recommendations, to be completed by the end of June 2007.</p> <p>Following the conclusion of the presentation, the following points were noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Three metres is the existing setback between the B4 and Living zone as of today.• The question was asked, did the consultation tie in with the UDS intensification of residential proposal (going up in certain areas rather than spreading out). The seminar was advised this issue had been raised during consultation but was not pursued. It was noted that Ferrymead is no longer an intensification area in the UDS discussion document: it is not seen as a significant growth area.• Currently in the B4 zone, residential can be mixed with commercial if the residential aspect is associated with the business on site.• A review of commercial space in general is currently being undertaken. It was suggested this matter be raised at the City Plan Work Plan Review next week.	<p>Scott Blair</p>

	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It was suggested that the size of the section be considered initially and then work out the appropriate setback from there in order to protect the amenity value of the property ie relate to section size and look at variable setback.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The change of use at Ferrymead from commercial to residential was raised. The seminar was advised the study had looked at Built Form. Section 32 Environment Court decisions have made clear that prohibited activities can only be used where serious/permanent effects are the likely outcome. It was considered the Council’s “non-complying” activity test should be robust enough. However the prohibited activity methodology will be amongst the mix of possible rule regimes which will be investigated.	Nicola/Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The number of submissions on the so called “Tower Building” was sought by Yani Johanson.	Nicola
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It was noted that the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board had considered areas of Ferrymead and the Hagley Park surrounds as potential “special zones” in order to protect the amenity. The question was asked, how could these be protected as a matter of urgency? It was proposed that this matter could be brought to the City Plan Work Plan review to be held next week with Council consensus. The seminar was advised that options for rezoning at Ferrymead are being investigated currently, taking into consideration in the first instance potential traffic effects and retail distribution issues.	Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Reference was made to the “next steps” 3 and 4: Relating to public notification of a plan change. Auckland City example was cited where all housing pre-1940 is subject to a process where due weight is given as if the proposal had gone through a Plan Change process. The Auckland process and options will be the subject of a future report.	Peter Mitchell
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● It was noted the Council requires a significant proposal on paper for a certificate of compliance to be issued as well as the proposal complying with requirements in every aspect.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The former “Nancys” site, opposite Hagley Park was discussed. The setback from Hagley Park and the former footprint of demolished buildings and the effectiveness of existing use rights to be checked and information provided.	Nicola/Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The question was asked why does the Council need height limits when there are recession plane requirements to be met. The “tower” in Ferrymead was cited as an example of what could happen when there were no recession plane compliance requirements. The recession plane only applies at the site boundary.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Other issues for consideration in the B4 zone include urban design principles, urban form, concentrations of development, ie office type use.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Plot ratio requirements mean if you can go up then you can’t go out.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● The purpose of the setback requirements when a B4 zone is abutting residential properties is to ensure a general separation of activities. Any information through the Section 32 requirements in relation to this matter to be investigated further and brought back to elected members.	Scott

	ACTION
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further information was also sought on zones other than B4 which would abut Living zones, eg height in B2 and B1 zones which have the potential to abut Living zones. 	Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Elected members expressed an interest in reading the setback logic and existing use rights information. 	Nicola/Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A request for further consideration to be given to taking the size and configuration of a section into account, and then calculating an appropriate/variable setback. The seminar was advised that the rules would be applied generically and there will be certain circumstances when variations occur. The rules have to be certain and measurable. The Section 32 report will address this issue and Councillors will have an opportunity for input at that time. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further information was sought on Community Board consultation/ involvement/recommendations to Council, examples of process undertaken by other local authorities, associated costs, and timeframes. 	Peter Mitchell
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It was also noted that the template would need to be formalised city-wide as opposed to each Community Board. The delegations register/terms of reference and timing issues would need to be considered. It was agreed by consensus that this matter be discussed further. 	
<p>It was made quite clear to the seminar that the role of the Community Boards would be in terms of proposed Plan Changes from the Council or private Plan Changes, <u>not</u> Community Board involvement in resource consent processes. A separate seminar on the Plan Change issues is to be held, and Community Boards invited to attend.</p>	Peter Mitchell/ Scott
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Section 32 – what could be done for colour, design and appearance controls? The seminar was advised that recommendations have not been developed around these aspects, although design and appearance will be considered within the review of Special Amenity Areas (SAMS), and high density housing. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Why urgent? It was noted the Council’s resolution came about in order to ensure no more high-rise buildings in B4 zones, and to address a “gap” in the City Plan rules. Also opportunities for some flexibility/retail type areas/explored within Section 32 or separate seminar? The response was that this affects the whole city and the Section 32 report would cover the issues still to be addressed, and the matter of urgency. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Could a lower than Ferrymead height requirement apply in other parts of the city, (for example Papanui where B4 sites abut living zones)? The advice was that the city could have a split rule: a height rule in addition to a recession plane rule. This concept is to be investigated further. 	Nicola/Scott

The seminar concluded at 3.15pm.