



Special Council

**Monday, June 16, 2025
6:00 p.m.**

**Council Chamber, Second Floor & Zoom
New Westminster City Hall, 511 Royal Avenue**

Present: Mayor Patrick Johnstone
Councillor Ruby Campbell
Councillor Tasha Henderson*
Councillor Jaimie McEvoy*
Councillor Paul Minhas

Corporate Officer – Hanieh Berg

Absent: Councillor Daniel Fontaine
Councillor Nadine Nakagawa

**Attendance by electronic means*

1. CALL TO ORDER & LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Mayor Johnstone called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and recognized with respect that New Westminster is on the unceded and unsurrendered land of the Halkomelem speaking peoples. He acknowledged that colonialism has made invisible their histories and connections to the land. He recognized that, as a City, we are learning and building relationships with the people whose lands we are on.

2. AGENDA ADDITIONS & DELETIONS

MOVED and SECONDED

THAT the Agenda for the Special Council meeting held on June 16, 2025 be approved as circulated.

CARRIED

3. CITY COUNCIL & RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATIONS

3.1 Residents' Associations Updates

a. **Brow of the Hill**

Kelli Wuerth, President, Brow of the Hill Residents' Association, highlighted the activities of the Association and advised that staff met with the Association on the potential activation of Cornwall Park.

K. Wuerth commented on the Brow of the Hill area, noting that it is in need of additional greenspace given the density of the neighbourhood. Also, K. Wuerth cited concern with vehicle traffic in the area and its impact on the neighbourhood's walkability; in particular, it was noted that traffic calming measures are needed around Fraser River Middle School and an increase in police presence and enforcement would be welcome.

K. Wuerth then spoke to administrative challenges with operating the Association as it relates to a common website for all Associations and communication with its members.

d. **Glenbrooke North**

Charlie Hunter, President, Glenbrooke North Residents' Association, commented on the Association's membership, noting that attendance at meetings has been in decline since the pandemic and the Association is uncertain as to how to increase its membership and overall neighbourhood participation in the Association.

C. Hunter then spoke to traffic matters in the neighbourhood, citing concern with vehicle speed, excessive noise, and pedestrian and cyclist safety.

l. **West End**

Elmer Rudolph, President, West End Residents' Association, echoed previous Association's comments with regard to challenges in membership and overall participation within the neighbourhood. E. Rudolph advised that the Association discussed property tax rates and the distribution of funds collected and queried what services are captured under "Corporate Services."

E. Rudolph spoke to rain gardens in the West End and queried the responsibility and frequency of their maintenance. E. Rudolph also commented on recent upgrades to the BC Parkway along Stewardson Way, citing concern with pedestrian and cyclist safety as there is no protection from vehicles along the path. E. Rudolph then spoke to changes proposed along London Street, noting that the removal of on-street parking is problematic and the neighbourhood was not aware of the proposed changes.

e. **Massey Victory Heights**

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation, Sid Johnson, President, Massey Victory Heights Residents Association, commented on the Association's membership and fundraising initiatives to maintain a healthy budget and membership base.

S. Johnson spoke to the Massey Victory Heights Street Lighting Replacement project, noting that engagement with residents early in the process would have been valuable. Also, S. Johnson remarked that attendance of a staff liaison at Association meetings would be appreciated. He then cited concern with traffic in the neighbourhood, noting that pedestrian and cyclist safety and on-street parking need to be addressed.

S. Johnson highlighted the Association's annual garage sale and advised that in addition to facilitating connection amongst residents, the event promotes the Association by boosting membership and fundraising efforts.

In response to questions of Council, S. Johnson was of the opinion that in-person public engagement would lend itself well in improving trust and transparency with residents.

i. Queen's Park

Gail North, President, Queen's Park Residents Association, remarked that the distribution of pamphlets throughout the neighbourhood has resulted in an increase in awareness of the Association and its role, as well as interest in the annual Heritage Homes Tour. She noted that the Association continues to receive questions regarding the Fifth Street boulevard re-wilding project and queried the rationale for types of plants utilized. G. North then advised that there remains concern with the safety of the Sixth Avenue and Second Street intersection and the application of the Queen's Park Heritage Conservation Area in relation to new development in the neighbourhood.

G. North then recounted two incidents in the neighbourhood that were concerning: (i) inadequate support and action from the City with regard to sewage backup in a resident's home as a result of a faulty line, and (ii) mischief and vandalism by a group of youth throughout the neighbourhood.

j. Sapperton

Wilf Brodrick, Director-at-Large, Sapperton Residents' Association, advised that the Association's Executive is currently small due to a number of vacancies. W. Brodrick highlighted several of the Association's events, including the Trash Mob, Pumpkin Carving, and Elizabeth Fry Holiday Gift Bag Drive. He then spoke to traffic issues and concerning behaviour of those impacted by interrelated crises of homelessness, mental health, and substance use in the area, noting that proximity to East Columbia Street, SkyTrain stations, Brunette Avenue Interchange, and Royal Columbian Hospital all affect residents' quality of life. W. Brodrick thanked the contractor for the Royal Columbian Hospital project, noting that a representative has attended every Association meeting, addressed concerns, and kept the neighbourhood well informed of the project.

W. Brodrick then remarked that attendance of a staff liaison at Association meetings would be appreciated and in-person public engagement would lend itself well in residents feeling heard.

k. Victoria Hill Ginger Drive

With the aid of a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file, Legislative Services), Karl Moser, President, Victoria Hill Ginger Drive Residents' Association, highlighted the Association's annual Community Winter Holiday Party and Summer Picnic, noting that both events are popular in the community. K. Moser extended gratitude to the Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project Team for their participation in Association meetings and responsiveness to concerns; also, K. Moser thanked staff for their efforts in addressing odour from a drainage pond in Victoria Hill Park.

K. Moser requested that (i) the execution of legal matters for the high-rise development in the neighbourhood be expedited to further address concerns with the drainage pond, (ii) connection to Metro Vancouver's sewer line be completed as the current sewer has failed repeatedly, (iii) sidewalk lighting be installed along the route linking Victoria Hill to the plaza at the corner of Columbia Street and McBride Boulevard, (iv) vehicular congestions in the area be remedied to support improved first-responder response times, and (v) the City support the Association's efforts to recruit members from Ginger Drive. K. Moser read from his submission (attached to and forming part of these Minutes as Schedule 1).

b. Connaught Heights

Bob Petrusa, Vice President, Connaught Heights Residents' Association, acknowledged the passing of Dave Seaweed, noting the significant loss to the community. B. Petrusa commented on traffic concerns in the neighbourhood, and in particular how densification in the area is negatively affecting vehicular flow as the area only has two outlets for egress and ingress. B. Petrusa then cited concern with the lack of enforcement of motor vehicle infractions as well as use of electronic scooters. He concluded by urging the City to conduct in-person public engagement sessions as they are generally better received by residents and allow people to connect directly with staff to have questions and concerns addressed.

g. Quayside

Naomi Scott, Member, Quayside Community Board, expressed gratitude for Parks and Recreation Department's installation and maintenance of gardens along the boardwalk as well as the replacement of wooden boards on the esplanade.

N. Scott commented on densification in Quayside and the need for road improvements for motorists as well as other infrastructure improvements to increase convenient access to SkyTrain stations and amenities throughout the city. She noted that Quayside residents remain concerned with regard to potential disasters such as flooding and rail accidents and in particular as it relates to the community's ability to safely evacuate the area as well as first responders' ability to access and respond on scene.

N. Scott then spoke to trees along Quayside and remarked that, although they improve the public realm, the costs to maintain them are borne by strata corporations; also, she spoke to a Quayside strata's experience with respect to obtaining permits for remedial work, noting that delays in the building approvals process may negatively affect the project's budget.

h. Queensborough

Kane Tse, Member-at-Large, Queensborough Residents' Association, stated that the Association maintains an active online presence, which appears to lend itself well to strong attendance at quarterly meetings. K. Tse advised that residents are expressing concern regarding unsafe use of electric scooters throughout the neighbourhood, which further exacerbate road and pedestrian safety in the area. Further, he advised Ewen Avenue has several large concrete planters that are negatively affecting drivers' sight lines. K. Tse then spoke to the need for traffic calming measures throughout Queensborough to lower vehicular speed and remarked that the application process and fee for a Speed Hump Request could be improved. K. Tse also queried the status of the contract for the Q to Q Ferry Service.

c. Downtown

Quentin Vandermerwe, President, Downtown Residents' Association, advised that attendance by Crises Response staff at an Association meeting and the implementation of the One Number to Call initiative were well received. Q. Vandermerwe remarked that members have indicated a desire to have developers present their projects in the Downtown before the Association for information. He also spoke to pedestrian and road safety at the intersection of Fourth Street and Carnarvon Street, requesting that staff review its safety.

W. Vandermerwe then commented on the New Westminster Police Department, commending the Department for all its work, but querying the ratio of its budget in the City's overall operating budget.

f. Moody Park

A representative of the Moody Park Residents' Association was not present.

4. ADJOURNMENT

THAT the meeting be adjourned (8:35 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the Special meeting of Council of the City of New Westminster held on June 16, 2025.

Patrick Johnstone
MAYOR

Hanieh Berg
CORPORATE OFFICER

Victoria Hill & Ginger Drive Residents' Association Report to New Westminster City Council

June 16, 2025

Membership: We currently have about 40 paid members and approx. 140 residents on our mailing list. We generally get 20-30 residents attending our meetings. We meet five times a year in The Carpentry Hall.

Activities: We hold an annual *Community Winter Holiday Party* complete with photos with Santa, crafts, treats and music. We also host a *Summer Picnic in the Park* with hot dogs, ice cream, kids games and live music. Both events have drawn 200+ residents to attend.

Thank You:

1. The *Pattullo Bridge Replacement Project Team* has been both responsive and supportive to our concerns. They report to every general meeting and have listened to our concerns. Their public message campaign to truckers and motorists helped to mitigate traffic congestion during the 6-month Front Street closure early this year. We appreciate the liaison and support the CNW provided in that process.
2. The installation of the temporary (5-year lease) off-leash dog park facility on the Fraser Health Authority empty lot on Ross Drive has been a (mostly) welcome addition to the neighbourhood. We appreciate the CNW following through on this suggestion from the RA. We hope there will be ongoing monitoring and maintenance of the park and look forward to reviewing its success in the Fall.
3. Residents have asked me to reiterate the issue of the odours emanating from The Duck Pond, the drainage pond in the centre of our neighbourhood. This is especially bad during hot summer weather. We appreciated the work done over the year to clean up the vegetation and invasive weeds, and we are aware the CNW Engineering Services and Operations are developing a more comprehensive mitigation plan.

Requests:

1. In relation to the Duck Pond mitigation work planned by the CNW, we understand that no significant work can commence until the CNW receives title of the land from Onni Development Corporation. We urge the CNW to pursue this transfer ASAP so that remediation can occur, hopefully in time for this summer and the Fall wet season.
2. Sewer connection - we continue to press for the timely connection of the sewer mains in Victoria Hill to the Metro Vancouver line on Front Street and the de-commissioning of two over-worked pump stations that are prone to failure. At least two strata buildings, *The Lookout* and *The Whitaker*, have sustained significant damage and one is coping with sky-high insurance deductibles resulting from the temporary pump stations failing. We understand that repairs to the Metro line were completed last year and that our connection might occur “by the 3rd quarter of this year”. We also understand that Onni is currently testing the sewer lines installed 16 years ago in anticipation of removing the plugs to allow the sewage to flow to the Metro lines along Front Street. We ask that the CNW press for Metro to proceed with this connection.
3. We have filed a request with the CNW to install sidewalk lighting along an approximately 200 metre stretch of sidewalk linking Victoria Hill to the plaza at the corner of Columbia and McBride. While the lower Central Valley Greenway along Columbia Street is well-lit, the upper sidewalk between The Lookout building and the plaza is unlit and very dark at night. Many residents use this path to reach Columbia Street and to walk to downtown and to access the SkyTrain stations. We hope this relatively small lighting project will be on the capital works schedule soon
4. We continue to experience severe “rat-running” through Victoria Hill any time there is a traffic back-up on the Port Mann, Pattullo, or Alex Fraser bridges. While we know this congestion is widespread throughout the city, the traffic plugging Ross Drive and the Memorial/McBride intersection is dangerous, as it prevents access for first-responder vehicles to reach our residents. We hope the new Columbia Street on-ramp loop to the Pattullo Bridge, which will be open 24/7 and not closed from 3-6 pm, will keep drivers from viewing Vic Hill as a “short-cut”. Once the bridge is complete, we can

review with the CNW whether this does effectively mitigate the problem. If not, we will need to seek some other solutions together.

5. Our RA includes the Ginger Drive neighbourhood, but we have had great difficulty over the years establishing contacts and a presence in their neighbourhood. We've had one Board member who lives on Ginger Drive, but she was unable to build a connection with the several co-ops and stratas in that neighbourhood. We'd appreciate any support CNW staff might provide in advising residents in Ginger Drive of the existence of the RA and its potential to provide advocacy and support for their neighbourhood. Possibly Councillor McEvoy, a resident of Ginger Drive, could help us get connected to other neighbourhood leaders in Ginger Drive?

Finally, thank you to the Mayor and Council for these opportunities to bring our concerns to your table. We know you all work hard for the City and we appreciate all that you do!

Karl Moser,
President,
Victoria Hill & Ginger Drive Residents' Association