

Ramsay Community Association Civic Affairs Committee

Terms of Reference

May 2005

(Approved By Ramsay Board of Directors Sept 20, 2005)

1. Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline the responsibilities, rules, authority, operating procedures, structure, and accountability of the Civic Affairs committee within the Ramsay Community Association. The Civic Affairs committee will be held responsible by itself, the Ramsay Community Association and its board of Directors; to adhere to these Terms of Reference, both in practice and in process.

2. Purpose and Responsibilities of the Committee

Community planning and development matters include residential, commercial, institutional, agricultural, and industrial development and land use, parks, pathways, transportation, and environmental considerations as they affect the community of Ramsay, and any other matter as delegated by the Board of Directors of the Ramsay Community Association. Specific functions are:

- a) to monitor the planning and development of the Ramsay Community
- b) to respond to those planning and development issues which may arise in the community
- c) to review and respond to planning applications circulated by The City of Calgary (The City) consistent with planning documents relevant to the community (see Section 12)
- d) to assist residents of the community with responding to planning matters that affect them
- e) to meet with potential developers prior to the submission of an application
- f) to represent the community on committees and/or in open houses, public meetings, etc. established to deal with planning and development issues that affect the community
- g) to promote the best interests of the community as a whole in the planning and development of Ramsay
- h) to be a proactive and positive source of knowledge and information on planning issues for community residents
- i) to work together with the Ramsay Community Association on protecting and enhancing the community's quality of life with respect to planning and development issues

Commentary to City of Calgary Planning Department

The Civic Affairs initiated a communication format with the City of Calgary in 2005. Included with all comments on application the Civic Affairs committee includes the following statement:

“For future development permits, the committee would like to ask the Planning Department to encourage the property owners to conduct a survey of neighbours, and include the results of the survey along with the DP.

The committee also asks for consideration of revitalization when reviewing this and future Development Permits for Ramsay. While we appreciate and value Ramsay's heritage and character buildings, due to their age and condition, many homes and lots are poorly maintained. In recent years, the main concern brought forward by residents is crime. As many of our inner-city neighbours are changing and progressing with revitalization projects, the members of the committee realize that change is also inevitable for Ramsay. A well-balanced neighbourhood requires a variety of densification – a mix of rental properties, condos, affordable housing, family housing and services

3. Committee Structure

a) The Chair:

- Is elected by the Ramsay Community Association membership at the General Election in October of each year (2 year term).
- Is an elected member of the Ramsay Community Association Board of Directors.
- Appoints an alternate on as-needed basis.
- Follows the Ramsay Community Association Bylaws, Civic Affairs Committee Terms of Reference, and Robert's Rules of Order (latest edition) in this order of hierarchy: Ramsay Community Association Bylaws, Civic Affairs Committee Terms of Reference, and Robert's Rules of Order.
- Oversees the activities of the Civic Affairs Committee and guides committee meetings in accordance with the above documents.
- A Quorum is reached with a minimum of three (3) members: the chair (or designate) and one of the additional members serving in the function of secretary
- A Quorum is necessary for Civic Affairs to submit comments on Applications

b) Members of Civic Affairs:

- Hold a Ramsay Community Association (RCA) membership and are classified as members in good standing of the RCA . (Note – RCA members must be residents, property owners, tenants, or business owners within the boundaries of the Ramsay Community.)
- Are familiar with the Civic Affairs Committee Terms of Reference and Robert's Rules of Order.
- Are familiar with planning documents that relate to Ramsay (see Section 12).
- Are encouraged to participate in the *Planning Education Program* and *Partners in Planning* offered jointly by The City of Calgary and the Federation of Calgary Communities.
- Interested Ramsay Community Association members are invited to attend the Civic Affairs meetings.
- RCA members wishing to join the Civic Affairs committee are required to notify the Civic Affairs Chair of their intent to join the Civic Affairs committee, and are required to attend 3 committee meetings with a 12 months period.
- Any RCA member attending 3 meetings within the last 12 months will be considered a Member in Good Standing) for the Civic Affairs Committee, ,
- The Civic Affairs Committee will strive to have a maximum of 15 members.

c) Secretary:

- Civic Affairs Committee will elect a Secretary.

- Secretary is to record the minutes of the Civic Affairs meetings and distribute them to committee members.
- If the position of Secretary is left vacant, the committee members take minutes on a rotating basis.
- The minutes are property of the Ramsay Community Association and are made available to the Ramsay Community Association members upon request.
- The Secretary shall, at the discretion of the Civic Affairs Committee, make portions of the minutes available to other parties who attended a committee meeting.

4. Decision-making

- a) Civic Affairs uses **consensus** to develop a decision when responding to The City of Calgary planning applications and in any other situations when a committee decision is needed.
- b) Consensus is a group unity of all Civic Affairs Members in Good Standing, rather than winning a majority of opinions; therefore, every member is considered important and the group tries to listen and respond to each person's opinions.
- c) Full consensus does not mean that everyone must be completely satisfied with the final outcome. The decision must be acceptable enough; however, that everyone will commit to support the group in choosing it.
- d) On issues where group consensus cannot be reached:
 - All opinions will be provided to the City of Calgary in response to the Planning Department Application or,
 - The concerned member expresses significant reservations about the group's decision and has the concerns recorded in the meeting minutes. Having done so, the member allows the group to go ahead with the decision and does not hinder implementation. Members comment do not appear in the submission to the City of Calgary
- e) Minority reports: If a Civic Affairs member(s) cannot accept the consensus decision made by the committee, the following option may be considered:
 - A member, who cannot accept the process of decision making, has the option to proceed to file a Minority Report to the Board of Directors of the Ramsay Community Association.
- f) Civic Affairs committee members with a conflict of interest (see 7 c) will not be part of the decision making process regarding that Application.
- g) Those individuals submitting or representing an Application will be requested to leave the meeting when the Civic Affairs committee is deliberating to reach consensus
- h) While the goal of the committee is a full group consensus this may not always be achievable. The object is to create a process in which each person feels that his or her concerns are heard and in which every individual's contribution is valuable and important. Differences in opinion are valued and respected.

5. Responding to Planning Application circulated to the Ramsay Community Association by The City of Calgary

- a) The Civic Affairs Committee promptly responds to planning applications circulated by The City of Calgary. The Chair calls a meeting once a development permit or subdivision application has been received.

- b) The Civic Affairs Committee recognizes that they are one of many participants in the planning process. Others include the applicant, adjacent neighbours, The City of Calgary staff, and aldermen, among others.
- c) The role of Civic Affairs is advisory, and offers comments only. These committee comments pertain to how the proposed development meets the intent of the planning documents relevant to the Ramsay Community (see Section 12).
- d) The task of reviewing applications must be carried out by at least three (3) Civic Affairs members, including the Chair (or his or her alternate).
- e) Civic Affairs members use consensus to reach a decision with respect to a proposed development. (See Decision Making above).
- f) The Civic Affairs Committee may consider conducting a community-wide meeting whenever the magnitude of an Application or Development Proposals warrant broader committee mandate.
- g) The Chair shall call meetings of the Civic Affairs Committee on as-required basis. In advance of meetings regarding development permit reviews, the Chair shall provide the members the following information as a minimum:
 - the address of the proposed development
 - background information about the development (e.g., infill addition, subdivision, etc.), and
 - Any other information that is considered relevant for review of the development.Members are encouraged to visit the site and walk around in advance of the meeting.
- h) Because of the often rapid turn around time expected on applications, Civic Affairs committee is not obligated to advise individual residents and neighbourhoods about submitted applications.
- i) Civic Affairs committee encourages the developers to conduct neighbours with respect to the potential development
- j) Appeals: Should the committee decide to proceed with an appeal of a planning decision made by The City of Calgary to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, the committee must do the following:
 - Inform the Ramsay Community Association membership of the decision to file an appeal:
 - at the next general meeting
 - through the next issue of the community newsletter

Obtain a permission to proceed with the appeal from the Ramsay Community Association Board of Directors.

6. Authority and Jurisdiction on Planning Matters

- a) The City of Calgary Development and Building Approvals and Planning and Transportation Policy Departments, the Calgary Planning Commission, and City Council have jurisdiction in planning matters.
- b) The Ramsay Community Association and Civic Affairs have no formal authority; however, they play a valuable role in providing The City and the Ward Alderman with significant information regarding development from the context and perspective of the community.
- c) The Ramsay Community Association delegates work on planning and development issues to the Civic Affairs Committee. Civic Affairs has the authority to respond directly to The City on planning and development issues.
- d) The exceptions to the above are planning and subdivision development appeals to the Subdivision and Development Appeal Board, in which case the Ramsay Community Association Board of Directors must approve the appeal.
- e) The Chair reports all communication to The City by Civic Affairs at the next Ramsay Community Association general meeting and Board of Directors meeting.

Pre-Application submission and process

- f) The committee will generally allow 1 presentation from developers interested in seeking information from the CA Committee prior to an official application to the City
- g) At pre-DP meetings the committee will encourage the owners to consult the neighbours, and to provide the results of that consultation at time of DP presentation to the committee. If there is no pre-DP, the committee encourages consultation as part of our feedback to the city.
- h) Any comments provided to the applicant at the pre-application meeting are not relevant to final comments submitted by the committee in response to a formal application
- i)

7. Conduct of Members

- a) Individuals considering joining Civic Affairs are required to review this committee's Terms of reference
- b) The committee members have the responsibility to act in accordance with the Ramsay Community Association Bylaws, Civic Affairs Committee Terms of Reference, and the Robert's Rules of Order.
- c) The committee has no authority to discipline its members but it can report to the Ramsay Community Association Board of Directors about what has transpired in the committee.
- d) Conflict of interest: when a Civic Affairs committee member has a vested issue in a development, he / she must declare a 'conflict of interest' and be excused when the agenda item is called to consensus deliberation. This declaration must also appear in the minutes of said meeting.
- e) The RCA Board of Directors will be made aware of any alleged conflicts of interest pertaining to any member of the RCA Civic Affairs Committee.
- f) Issues of Confidentiality will be respected
- g) Unless that member declares and abstains in the decision making process, it is considered unethical for a member of the Civic Affairs committee participating in the committee, to submit individual opinion to the city of Calgary concerning a planning application independently of the Civic Affairs report.
- h) Members are encouraged to act objectivity by avoiding personal opinions, taste and biases.

8. Reports to the Ramsay Community Association and the Board of Directors

- a) General community: The Chair or an appointee will provide monthly updates on Civic Affairs activities at the General Community meetings, in the *Ramsay News* (Ramsay community newsletter). .
- b) Board of Directors: The Chair (or designate) will provide monthly updates to the community membership at the General meetings.

9. Correspondence

- a) All Civic Affairs correspondence shall be submitted to the Chair and will be retained on file, including all correspondence sent and received via email.
- b) All correspondence received by Civic Affairs Chair and members will be made available to Civic Affairs Committee members at the earliest opportunity.

10. Meetings

- a) Meetings are called as required, if possible once a month.
- b) The Chair or his/her alternate calls the meetings.

11. Resources

- a) The Civic Affairs Committee may have financial needs for office supplies, planning materials, printing and photocopying costs, workshop / conference fees, meetings, signage and/or advertising, application fees, etc.
- b) A budget will be established for each year for inclusion in the annual budget of the Ramsay Community Association. The Chair submits the budget to the Board of Directors.

12. Relevant Planning Documents

- a) Ramsay Area Redevelopment Plan, 1994
(http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/bu/planning/pdf/1710_ramsay_arp.pdf)
- b) Infill Housing Guidelines
(http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/1555_infill_guide_part1of5.pdf)
- c) The Calgary Land Use Bylaw 2P80 (4 parts)
http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/land_use_bylaw2p80/bylaw.pdf
http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/land_use_bylaw2p80/bylaw_2_of_4.pdf
http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/land_use_bylaw2p80/bylaw_3_of_4.pdf
http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/land_use_bylaw2p80/bylaw_4_of_4.pdf
- d) Inner City Transportation System Management Strategy
(<http://www.calgary.ca/cweb/gateway/gateway.asp?GID=395&CID=0&URL=http%3A%2F%2Fcontent%2Ecalgary%2Eca%2FCCA%2FCity%2BTransportation%2FConstruction%2Band%2BDetours%2FCurrent%2BMajor%2BProjects%2FInner%2BCity%2BTransportation%2BSystem%2BManagement%2BStrategy%2FInner%2BCity%2BTransportation%2BSystems%2BManagement%2BStrategy%2Ehtm>)
- e) A Community Guide to the Planning Process
(<http://www.calgary.ca/docgallery/BU/planning/pdf/pepguide.pdf>)
- f) City Transportation Plan (Go Plan)
(http://www.calgary.ca/DocGallery/BU/planning/pdf/tranplan_contents.pdf)

13. Terms of Reference and Membership Review

- a) Terms of reference, and any subsequent changes; must be approved by the RCA BoD
- b) Civic Affairs Terms of Reference should be reviewed annually at the first meeting after the Ramsay Community Association General Election by Civic Affairs members to ensure that the Terms of Reference remain relevant to the work of Civic Affairs.
- c) The Terms of Reference can be amended at any regular meeting of the Civic Affairs Committee, providing consensus has been reached with respect to the amendment. If consensus cannot be reached, the matter will go to at the RCA Board of Directors (see Decision Making above).
- d) Any changes must be circulated to all members of Civic Affairs for approval at the next meeting.
- e) Civic Affairs membership should be reviewed annually to encourage representation from a cross section of the community.
- f) Committee membership shall be limited to no less than three (3) members, including the Chair. Should the membership decline below three (3) members, Ramsay Community

Association Board of Directors shall be notified and options for improving membership should be considered.

Updated: May 30, 2005
Adopted by Civic Affairs: June 10, 2003
Approved by the Ramsay CA
Board of Directors: Sept 20, 2005

The following documents were used to prepare the Civic Affairs Terms of Reference:

- 21st Century Robert's Rules of Order (edited by the Princeton Language Institute, 1995)
- A Community Guide to the Planning Process (FCC and The City of Calgary, 2002)
- Tuscany Community Association: Planning and Development Committee Terms of Reference
- Valley Ridge Community Association: Planning Committee Terms of Reference
- Bridgeland / Riverside Community Association: Role of Planning Committee
- West Hillhurst Community Planning Committee Roles
- Hillhurst Sunnyside Community Environment Committee Mandate Statement