

3RD REPORT OF THE
CHILD CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Meeting held on October 29, 2015, commencing at 1:35 PM, in Committee Room #5, Second Floor, London City Hall.

PRESENT: D. Gordon (Chair), T. Blaney, S. Carter, B. Jackson, J. Keens, S. McKee, J. Rinker, A. Ryan, and J. Martin (Committee Secretary).

ABSENT: N. Elhayek, C. Wagg and K. Wated.

ALSO PRESENT: E. De Freitas, H. Gerrits, J. Haveman and A. Rae.

I. CALL TO ORDER

1. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest

That it BE NOTED that no pecuniary interests were disclosed.

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

2. Amendments to the Terms of Reference for the City of London Advisory Committees

That the Municipal Council resolution from its meeting held on June 10, 2015, with respect to an annual work plan for advisory committee's BE RECEIVED; it being noted that the Child Care Advisory Committee formed a sub-committee to review the terms of reference and develop a list of initiatives for the work plan.

III. SCHEDULED ITEMS

None.

IV. CONSENT ITEMS

3. 2nd Report of the Child Care Advisory Committee

That it BE NOTED that the 2nd Report of the Child Care Advisory Committee, from its meeting held on April 29, 2015, was received.

4. Impacts of Day Nurseries Act in Comparison to the Child Care Early Years Act on Regulated and Unregulated Child Care Providers

That it BE NOTED that a communication and a verbal update from J. Keen, with respect to the impact of the Day Nurseries Act in comparison to the Child Care Early Years Act on regulated and unlicensed child care providers, was received.

5. Child Care Fee Subsidy Application and Placement Statistics

That it BE NOTED that a verbal update from A. Rae, Manager, Children Services, with respect to the Child Care Fee Subsidy application and placement statistics for the period ending August 31, 2015, was received.

6. Childcare Occupancy Report

That it BE NOTED that the report was not available with respect to the child care occupancy data.

V. SUB-COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS

7. Adopt-a-Councillor Sub-Committee

That it BE NOTED that a verbal update from S. McKee with respect to the Adopt-a-Councillor Initiative was received; it being noted that the Child Care Advisory Committee will extend an invitation to partner with the Thames Valley District School Board to include School Board Trustees in the initiative.

VI. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

8. Verbal - Childcare Wage Enhancement Update

That it BE NOTED that a verbal update from A. Rae, Manager, Children Services, with respect to the provincial childcare wage enhancement program, was received.

9. Other Child Care Updates

That it BE NOTED that no additional updates were received.

VII. DEFERRED MATTERS/ADDITIONAL BUSINESS

10. Urban Design Manual and the Downtown Design Manual Comments

That the Civic Administration BE REQUESTED to consider the attached comments from the Child Care Advisory Committee with respect to the development of the Urban Design Manual and the Downtown Design Manual.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: February 25, 2016



June 16th, 2015

City of London
C/o S Galloway, Urban Designer and B O'Hagan, Urban Designer
300 Dufferin Avenue,
London, Ontario
N6B 1Z2

Attention: Planning and Environment Committee,

Thank you for seeking the Child Care Advisory Committee's feedback regarding the Urban Design Manual and the Downtown Design Manual. It is obvious that much hard work and countless hours have gone into these guidelines. The following feedback is intended to provoke thought and assist you as you move towards finalizing these manuals. In taking a "people first" design philosophy, planning needs to consider the perspective of all Londoners, including children and their families.

The importance of "Child Friendly Cities" is often lost when planning the foundations of great cities. UNICEF highlights this importance to municipalities world-wide with their document, *Building Child Friendly Cities: A Framework for Action*." This document reminds us that there are huge costs to society if city leaders do not address the needs of children (UNICEF, p. 5). Surrey, British Columbia is an example of a city that has embraced this framework and has created their own unique strategy. Surrey's vision of a child and youth friendly city includes, amongst other visions, "a community that promotes social connectedness, where children and youth feel safe, have freedom of movement, green space and opportunities for play and imagination" (City of Surrey, p. 3).

It is not necessary to have a separate manual of guidelines for creating a child friendly city if other manuals make special considerations. Although children are only specifically mentioned three times within the Urban Design Manual (pages 31, 32, and 51), many of the guidelines mentioned benefit this age group. The following points highlight key recommendations to making the Urban Design Manual more child, youth and family friendly:

- Site organization should include priority parking for young families (often with strollers and multiple children) to increase accessibility and promote safety
- Initiatives are currently underway to promote active transportation in childhood. All of these initiatives, including "walking school buses," rely on enhancing the connectivity within our city. Emphasis should be given to ensure direct and safe routes to schools. This includes strategically placed crosswalks, speed barriers and buffers between sidewalks and all roads

- As newer subdivisions are planned and created, parks and parkettes will help to create family friendly environments. Consideration into recreational equipment needs to go beyond the traditional metal jungle-gyms to include natural elements created out of tree trunks, rocks and ropes (this concept has proven to be popular at some London schools and child care centres). Current research supports the value of natural play spaces. Some of this research has been highlighted by the Toronto District School Boards document, *Landscape and Child Development: A Design Guide for Early Years-Kindergarten Play-Learning Environments*. Again, child safety is a key factor to consider with all parks, including barriers to block children from traffic

The Downtown Design manual has no specific mention of children or families. Much effort is being taken to attract young, working professionals to our city's core. As these young adults move on to the next stage in their lives and marry and have children, they may look elsewhere in the city to raise their families. There are many benefits to increasing the number of families living downtown. Some of these benefits, as highlighted by International Making Cities Livable (2015), include supporting local businesses and providing a unique market to attract new businesses downtown and reducing the ecological footprint of families. In order to keep families downtown, it needs to be an attractive place for children. There are currently few licenced child care centres and recreation facilities catering to families in this area. At a recent literacy conference held in London, Dr. Kathy Hirsch-Pasek, a psychologist from Temple University in Philadelphia, introduced the notion of making cities more interactive for children. Things as simple as interesting architecture and building design can fuel a child's imagination and create opportunities for conversation. Her other ideas include interactive puzzles on bus shelters, street lighting that illuminates pictures onto the sidewalks and permanent sidewalk games like hopscotch. This is similar to the notions of "clever cities" or "responsive cities" to increase accessibility.

The Child Care Advisory Committee recognizes that we are but one of the many groups that you are consulting on these manuals. We ask that you consider the feedback we've made as you move forward and hope that you recognize the necessity for these manuals to support children and families. Below are links for the documents we have referenced along with others that support our thoughts:

<http://childfriendlycities.org/>

<http://www.surrey.ca/community/3191.aspx>

<http://www.livablecities.org/articles/why-it-important-have-children-living-downtown>

<http://www.evergreen.ca/downloads/pdfs/Landscape-Child-Development.pdf>

<http://www.earthscapeplay.ca/>

<http://rethinkingchildhood.com/>

Sincerely,

Child Care Advisory Committee