

CACs head to Township committee

The Township will debate CACs more before acting.

MATTHEW CLAXTON / Feb. 3, 2016 2:00 a.m. / NEWS

The idea of community amenity contributions (CACs) in Langley Township took a detour at a January council meeting.

A proposal to raise money from developers for parks, libraries, firefighting, and other equipment was sent to the Township's council priorities committee.

Councillor Michelle Sparrow brought forward the idea after seeing it in use in Surrey and other Lower Mainland communities.

"Our growth is not currently paying for our growth," Sparrow said.

Her motion called for a staff report on options to implement a CAC system in the Township.

Several councillors expressed interest in the idea at the Jan. 25 meeting.

“There are some opportunities, for sure, for us to take advantage of this,” said Councillor Angie Quaale.

But like the majority of council, Quaale wanted more information first.

“I think there needs to be a balance struck... between amenity charges and affordable housing,” Quaale said.

The council split on whether to talk over the idea in general, or whether to get a report and then debate the options at a priorities committee meeting.

“I would hate to see this thing disappear again,” said Coun. Kim Richter. She and Coun. Charlie Fox noted that in 2009, a similar CAC model had been discussed but not implemented.

Sparrow noted that development cost charges are limited, by law, in what they can be used to pay for. DCCs are charged to every developer to pay for roads, sewers, and other basic infrastructure.

The CACs would make up some of the other costs, Sparrow said.

“It is small contributions that add up to a larger lump sum,” she said of the per-home cost.

Eventually a six to three vote saw the entire issue sent to the council priorities committee for further discussion.