

Regional District of Nanaimo
Summary of the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review
Citizen’s Committee Meeting Held on Monday, July 19th, 2010 at 6:30pm
At the North Cedar Improvement District Hall
2100 Yellow Point Road

Joe Burnett	Committee Chair
Mike Hooper	Committee Member
Geoffrey Macaulay	Committee Member
Anne Fiddick	Committee Member
Chris Pagan	Committee Member
Garry Laird	Committee Member
Jack Anderson	Committee Member
Donna Sweeney	Committee Member
Joanne McLeod	Committee Member
Jill Maibach	Committee Member
Ray Digby	Committee Member
Ting Pan	Sustainability Coordinator
Greg Keller	Senior Planner
Stephen Boogaards	Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by the Chair. There were approximately 4 people in attendance.

MINUTES

The Chair asked the Committee for a motion to adopt the summary of the May 10, 2010 meeting.

MOVED Donna Sweeney, SECONDED Geoffrey Macaulay, that the summary of the Area ‘A’ Citizen’s Committee meeting held on June 14, 2010 be adopted.

CARRIED

SUSTAINABILITY CHECKLIST

The Chair introduced Ting Pan, the RDN’s new sustainability coordinator. Ms. Pan explained that the RDN was open to comments from the community and the Mid Island Sustainable Stewardship Initiative on the revised sustainability checklist. Her preliminary thoughts are that there is a strong desire to have a land use component in the checklist. This may mean that there will be two components that make up the checklist: land use and building. Each component may have different weighting. She also explained that another consideration in a revised checklist is the incentives to make green building effective.

The committee discussed the focus group and organisations that should be consulted for the sustainability checklist. The members thought farmers would be an important stakeholder to be part of the focus group. Ms. Pan explained that the suggestions have been for the RDN to consult with people in different

electoral areas since the checklist will be region wide. The process will be open to everyone in the community and will parallel the Official Community Plan (OCP) review process.

NANAIMO AIRPORT UPDATE

Greg Keller provided an update on the airport section of the OCP. At the last Citizen's Committee meeting the Board recommendations on the airport were not well received. New recommendations went to the Committee of the Whole in July which suggested removing the airport section and the Urban Containment Boundary around the airport lands. It still must be approved by the Board, but if approved it will allow for a separate process to deal with the airport lands. The process reflects the comments received from the Citizen's Committee meetings. In particular the RDN will first seek a new legal opinion. Based on the outcome of the legal opinion there will be the same process but different actions depending on if the RDN has jurisdiction on airport lands. The process for the airport lands would be budgeted for 2011, as the resources are not available in the current budget. Mr. Keller could not commit to releasing the new legal opinion to the committee.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Greg Keller reviewed the discussions on implementation over the past couple of meetings. He explained that the policies of the current OCP are not consistent with the zoning for land outside of the Urban Containment Boundary. The community has also made many statements about protecting rural integrity and the environment which could not be accomplished if growth continues outside of the Urban Containment Boundaries.

The group discussed some of the other options to achieve the community objectives without changing the zoning. The group discussed making the development rules more ridged through the sustainability checklist so only green developers are attracted to the area. Mr. Keller reminded the committee that not all the policies have to be implemented; there may be an intermediate amount of zoning changes that might not remove all the subdivision potential.

The group discussed how much of the land was in the Agricultural Land Reserve, and if that could be a sufficient deterrent to new subdivisions. Mr. Keller suggested that it may not be a sufficient deterrent since the commission does allow development if it can be proven that there is a benefit to agriculture or there is no agricultural potential on the land. The group also discussed if the zoning was not changed if people would farm the 5 acre parcels.

One of the committee members suggested that the high growth in the rural areas may be because there is not sufficient land within the Urban Containment Boundaries. Some in attendance felt there were development constraints, such as floodplain, that were not considered in the development build-out of the Cedar Village Centre. Because it was not considered the number of units within the boundaries was overstated. Mr. Keller explained that they have considered these constraints, though the GIS analysis may be affected by the quality of the data available. Mr. Keller also explained that the figures provided were an estimate and are based on the best available information.

The group discussed the possible reaction from the community if the zoning was changed. Mr. Keller explained that it would be legal to change the zoning, though it would be an ethical question. He suggested that implementation is essential to realising the goals of the OCP, but any change to zoning would still have a full consultation process separate from the OCP review. The group discussed compensation for people who may be affected by the changes in zoning. Mr. Keller suggested that RDN staff have looked into the transfer of development rights, but believe that it may be too complex to apply it within the RDN in the near future. The group also discussed phasing in the zoning changes or only applying the zoning changes to new property owners.

The committee reviewed what goals the implementation of the OCP would accomplish. Implementation can protect rural integrity, protect groundwater, create compact forms of development, reduce infrastructure costs or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The committee emphasized the broader benefits of implementation and not focussing solely on protecting rural integrity. Mr. Keller agreed to look into the feasibility of other options to achieve OCP goals and report back to the committee.

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN DRAFT

Greg Keller explained that an internal review of the draft was done through the RDN office and some changes have been made. One was to the Kirkstone way designation. The proposed Agricultural Lands designation was no longer appropriate as the property has been removed from the Agricultural Land Reserve. The other change was to the land use designation in Cassidy. The centre has been renamed to the Cassidy Rural Village Expansion Area and the airport section was removed.

The draft will be on the RDN website shortly and will go out for public consultation in September. Mr. Keller also explained that prior to the adoption of the OCP, he would also like to initiate the Cedar village planning process in November and the OCP implementation around January. The OCP should be adopted around March 2011. The group discussed a possible consultation strategy, including using mailouts or displays that have a synopsis of the differences between the old OCP and the new one.

ROUNDTABLE

One of the committee members identified a piece of property that was proposed to be included in the Urban Containment Boundary but was not specifically discussed by the Citizen's Committee. Greg Keller explained that the property currently has significant development potential under the current zoning so it made sense to consider it for inclusion into the Urban Containment Boundary.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Certified correct by:

Director Joe Burnett, Committee Chairperson