



**Meeting Record**  
**Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Review**  
**Community Working Group Meeting**

Tuesday, June 7, 2016 at 6:30 pm  
VIU Deep Bay Marine Field Station

**Members present:**

Dave Bartram	Steve Biro	Tony Botica
Candace Cowan	Jim Crawford	Theresa Crawford
Dianne Eddy	Nelson Eddy	Jerry Flynn
Murray Hamilton	Margaret Healey	Ed Hughes
Christo Kuun	Bob Leggett	Lee Melnychuk
Don Milburn	Keith Reid	Ted Seaman
Dave Simpson	John Stathers	Dick Stubbs
Greta Taylor	Mac Snobelen	Len Walker
Isolde Winter	Manfred Winter	

**Guests present:** There were approximately 70 members of the public present.

**RDN representatives present:**

Bill Veenhof, Electoral Area 'H' Director  
Geoff Garbutt, General Manager, Strategic and Community Development  
Paul Thompson, Manager, Long Range Planning  
Courtney Simpson, Senior Planner, Long Range Planning  
Jamai Schile, Planner, Current Planning  
Stephen Boogaards, Planner, Current Planning

**1. Welcome and introduction – Review of Agenda**

B Veenhoff called meeting to order at 6.39 pm and introduced the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) staff present. P Thompson welcomed all to the group and acknowledged the general public in attendance. He also outlined the guidelines for group conduct.

**2. Approval of Draft Meeting Record of May 26**

One member felt there needed to be some clarification about cluster housing in the minutes, so this will be discussed at next meeting. Minutes will be amended at that time.

**3. Presentation by Staff**

For those that were there for first time, C. Simpson presented an overview and review of the Electoral Area H Official Community Plan (OCP) review project, summarizing its history and process so far. This included questions and discussions that have been covered so far by the working group.

C. Simpson explained that the project is currently in the "Exploring the issues" stage with working group sessions occurring. In the fall the project will work on draft revisions for discussion. The next event is an

open house at Bowser Legion on June 22, where the community can learn more about the Active Transportation Plan as well as the overall OCP Review.

#### **4. Opening comments from Working Group members**

Dick Stubbs encouraged discussion not dissention in the group. Felt that there were some concerns around cluster housing, but that perhaps the concerns are based on misunderstanding this type of housing. Offered a handout for further information on cluster housing. Noted that many of the working group members share the same vision on many issues. Without development it is difficult to afford the amenities that we would like – such as second road access and parking for a marina. Feels that there are many answers to the questions presented.

Keith Reid introduced himself as an aquaculture farmer. Discussed why the water quality is important to aquaculture and the OCP. If development not done properly, it could close down the industry.

Is in favour of cluster housing as it will free up green space, address sewer and storm water run off. Sees an opportunity for responsible planning can ensure both development and aquaculture can co-exist.

Doug Harrison had suggestions around the group, that because there are two schools of thought (each valid) that if can't come up with any resolutions in this one group, then to work instead in two groups to come up with suggestions. This can then be presented at a joint gathering. This would ensure that each team is pulling in the same direction. Encouraged compromise, discussion and understanding – striving for the best for everyone.

Margie Healey referred to a three day workshop that occurred in 2014, for residents, community members and businesses to discuss the Baynes Sound Investment (BSI) proposal. The result was that all agreed they wanted to keep the area in a natural setting, keeping walking trails, bike trails, and wildlife corridors open, and include buildings that were complementary to the area.

Saw many positives to the OCP and development in the area including business opportunities, housing (for different demographics), trails and pathways, work opportunities, second access from highway, and money for upgrades to water lines, and a new fire hall.

In summary, believes in controlled environmentally sound development. Would like to see the walking and biking trails registered to the RDN so that they can't be closed off.

Dave Bartram felt that the OCP needs something that triggers an environmental assessment in any development on land designated as Industrial.

On the topic of sewers, in the Bowser Village Plan Process a Vancouver Island University biologist from the Centre for Shellfish Research advised that the biggest damage to the waters around Deep Bay were septic systems along the shore line. Felt that sewers are needed to protect the environment. In general septic systems work well, but next to the shoreline where the majority of the Area 'H' population is located, the runoff into the ocean is the biggest marine environmental issue facing the Area 'H' coastline.

On the topic of cluster housing, felt that swapping density with a developer for community amenities such as another access, firefighting capability, firehall, expandable sewer etc. should be considered by the residents of Bowser/Deep Bay in any negotiation with Baynes Sound Investments.

Nelson Eddy encouraged that there is a lot that the working group have in common. Concerned about a developer (not BSI particularly) making promises, and then not keeping them once they have built. Concerned about sewer and the cost to maintain. And acknowledges that have been told that we don't have to connect if don't want to. But if do need to, concerned about the cost, which could be \$1000 a year.

Encouraged discussion to be harmonious so that we can reach an OCP where we all agree. Had some suggestions around limiting the zoning to have smaller lots that are not so small that they need sewer. On the topic of failing septic systems, not sure they are failing or as bad as some say.

Steve Biro recommended the following:

- Expansion of resort tourism commercial property. Many businesses would be supported.
- Inclusion of light industrial commercial zoning in Deep Bay. This would especially support marine repair and a working harbour.
- Expansion of the marina parking lot, and designate zoning for such purposes as marinas and marina parking.
- Secondary route from Deep Bay to highway.

Bob Leggett wanted to confirm that there is currently no cost estimate for a new Deep Bay fire hall at this time. He also discussed the Cook family's property on the Deep Bay waterfront, and that they have tried to have their land released from the agricultural land reserve for the last 10 yrs. If actually farmed, it would have run off to the ocean and would be detrimental to the environment, and needs to be looked at. They would like to develop land and would like to do it in consultation with community, and encourages their input in the OCP.

Jerry Flynn expressed that he enjoys the 'small community' feel of the area. Personally he doesn't want any development but understands he is just one of a community and the majority should speak and be respected. Regarding water supply - there are 600 houses connected to Deep Bay water supply, and approximately 1600 people live in Deep Bay. BSI had suggested in the past to add 400 residential developments and 300 mobile parking lots, and a resort. If development such as this goes through, he feels it will double the population and all problems that go with it.

## 5. Questions and Answer Period

- Question asking what the June 22 open house is about? C. Simpson advised that it will provide information on all the topics that have been raised by the community and report back on all that has been addressed in the OCP review. Input is welcomed. This will also mark the kickoff for an Active Transportation Plan for the area – considering improvements to walking and cycling for the area.
- Comment on water. This person sits on the Improvement District Board – and advised that no applications have been turned down for water hookups.
- Question on Deep Bay water hookup – do BSI make one application or does each residence make application and pay? Director Veenhof answered that at the time of a development application, Deep Bay waterworks would provide an answer on the water needs. P. Thompson offered that staff would come back with an answer.

- Question about OCP process. How do you write an OCP that represents all the community? P. Thompson answered that it is a process and it might take time to come to a mutual understanding. Question: Will the community have a voice in this process as to whether the OCP has gotten it right? Answer: yes.
- Question around the boundaries of the Cook property. P. Thompson answered that it is currently in both Comox Valley Regional District and in RDN.
- Question about the map that shows Deep Bay. Asked questions about zoning for the area – in particular asking if resource lands had been taken out, and cut out substantial areas of Deep Bay from the map? P. Thompson answered that this map shows the land use designations in the current OCP .

Felt that many support 'slow growth' that supports local jobs, whereas 'fast growth' supports only the developer and their interests who bring their own crew and materials and not hire local.

P. Thompson clarified that the current OCP will only allow 5 acre lots on the BSI properties. If you want something different it needs to be included in the OCP.

- Question: If BSI did development, where would the sewer be, and where it would be treated? P. Thompson answered that BSI would have to propose a method of wastewater disposal to the RDN as part of their application.

## 6. Discussion

P. Thompson invited general discussion open to all members present. He asked that the focus remain on the Deep Bay area.

- Question: What does it mean that 'Deep Bay Spit is being redeveloped'? P. Thompson answered that it simply means the replacement of small summer residences with larger full time residences by individual property owners, as is currently happening.
- Question: How can they get a secondary road into the area? P. Thompson answered that it would be part of development, and that it would be difficult to happen outside of a development as roads require land.
- Comment that would like to see archeological protection in the OCP, as well as protection for the ocean and foreshore.
- Comment that would like to see archeological protection in the OCP. Talked about the rich aquaculture and the need to protect it. Asked why there isn't park designation to protect artifacts and wildlife, and what would it take to put these designations in place? P. Thompson answered that you would need to include these policies in the OCP, and then the RDN would work with the Province who owns the land. He also noted that there are already current provincial protections in place to protect archeology.
- Question: What is the current zoning designation of the Deep Bay Marine Station? P. Thompson answered that it is currently in a rural zone, that doesn't support the current use, and this is because it is owned by a university and they have exceptions allowed to them to operate outside of zoning, but if it were to be sold to anyone else they would have to comply with zoning. Do we need do anything in OCP to talk about this piece of property? P. Thompson answered that it might be best to speak to VIU to see what their plans are to see if they need any designation.

- Is VIU leasing the property or do they own it? P. Thompson answered that they own the property.
- Question – doesn't RDN have tight restrictions to what BSI sewer can do? P. Thompson answered that there are VIHA (Vancouver Island Health Authority) regulations in place and BSI would have to meet those requirements.
- Concern about the cost re sewer systems to hook up and yearly costs. Concern about sewer system and treatments that were proposed by BSI. P. Thompson answered that this was a previous plan that BSI had submitted in 2012. If BSI were to do a sewer treatment system they have to submit ecological assessment.
- John Stathers, a Cooke family representative, commented that he doesn't want to see septic or sewer running onto oyster beds, and supports a conservation model, but wants it to be in a spirit of collaboration. Wanted to introduce the Cooke property into the OCP and ask that the community consider the property as an integral part of the vision of Deep Bay. Would be happy to donate some parts to the community. Excited at creating a world class community in Deep Bay. Feels positive about the future. Feel that there are many ways to preserve the environment, with the assistance of RDN and the professionals of the community, feels can make Deep Bay a world class sustainable community, both environmentally, economically and socially.
- Question: Can an access road go through the Cooke property?
- Question to John Stathers: Does your vision include residential homes? He answered that yes, his plans include a residential component.
- Comment made about global warming and the impact on aquaculture. Also made a comment that we need to grow our own food.
- Question: When is the sewer plan for Bowser going to be completed? P. Thompson answered that I am not sure of the completion date, but the first of two public meetings about the sewer study will be in July.
- Question: Wouldn't it be prudent to stop the OCP and wait until the sewer assessment in Bowser to come through? P. Thompson answered that the sewer plan will not impact the plan for Bowser. Question: So there is no association with Deep Bay and Bowser? P. Thompson answered that the sewer study is just for Bowser.
- Question about whether greenhouses can be added to the Agricultural Land Reserve. P. Thompson answered yes.
- Question: Why don't BSI create its own community outside of Deep Bay, where it can have its own land, road, water etc? P. Thompson answered that he cannot speak for BSI.

## 7. Summary and Closing

- C. Simpson thanked everyone for their participation, and welcomed the new faces involved in the conversation. She also mentioned the following:
  - There will be another meeting in Deep Bay in September - with the date to be advised. The next meeting will get into more detail and be formatted as more of a workshop than tonight's meeting.
  - She encouraged people to sign up for email updates (the link is on website and at the bottom of the agenda).
  - She invited all to participate in the June 22 open house.
- Question: What is contained within cluster housing? C. Simpson answered that in the simplest form it is an opportunity to create lots that are smaller than currently allowed. There is no one

rule about the minimum or maximum size. P. Thompson clarified that the answer depends on the context, as it is different for rural and urban areas. It was suggested by the participant that it would be helpful to define what cluster housing is, in the OCP. P. Thompson agreed.

- Question: Is the current amount of homes allowed 25? P. Thompson answered that according to the current zoning that is a good approximation.
- A comment came that the previous BSI plan showed 30 different types of 'clusters'. P. Thompson responded that BSI does not currently have a proposal into the RDN. Question: would the type of cluster home be decided upon by the RDN and the developer? P. Thompson answered that the OCP can include a policy in regards to 'clustering'.
- C. Simpson commented that it seems clear that we need to speak more about clustering. There seems to be misunderstandings of clusters in the current conversation. One thing is that it simply means smaller lots, but no increase in number of lots. However, the discussion is confused by a previous application and concept from BSI about cluster housing (and more housing than is currently allowed). C. Simpson commented that the conversation on cluster housing will continue.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 pm.