

Area 'H' Village Planning Advisory Group Meeting #10
May 27, 2009 6:30-9:30 pm Lighthouse Community Centre
FINAL MEETING SUMMARY

In attendance:

George Dussault	Keith Brown
Marilyn Dussault	Bob Hunt
Theresa Crawford	Jim Crawford
Dianne Eddy	Gerry Quinn
David Heenan	Bill King
Els King	John Lyotier
Angelika Quint	Josianne Séguin
Mac Snobelen	Sharon Waugh
Wayne Osborne	Rod Gentry
Gordon Webb	Lynette Twigge
Catherine Watson	

Lisa Bhopalsingh (RDN Senior Planner), Elaine Leung (RDN Planner), Paul Thorkelsson (RDN GM Development Services) and Dave Bartram, Area 'H' Director

1. Review of Agenda

Dave reviewed the Agenda.

2. Summary Notes from May 13th

Prior to the meeting, David Heenan noted that he did not attend the May 13th meeting as documented in the notes. There were no other changes to the May 13th Summary Notes.

3. Review of Information for Evaluating Top 3 Boundary Options

Lisa presented a slide show (see attached slides). Some key points included:

- Considerations when evaluating scenarios include thinking about information that helps us answer how well each scenario helps meet various goals for example with groundwater and drinking water protection goals, does the scenario discourage development over aquifers and recharge areas? For our goals addressing food security, does the scenario discourage development of ALR lands? Does it include ALR lands? For our goals relating to protection of environmentally sensitive areas, does the scenario avoid environmentally sensitive areas?
- Aquifers: relates back to our systems: groundwater
- Received verbal information from the Ministry of Environment regarding the importance of the Coastal Douglas Fir ecosystems in the Bowser area and on the east coast of Vancouver Island. She noted that this is a Red listed, vulnerable ecosystem with limited area left to be protected. Crown lands with this ecosystem type would be a priority for protection. She also noted that this ecosystem type plays an important role in groundwater recharge.
- The pink dot on the map represents an archaeological site. Typically these sites are not advertised.

- Dave Bartram noted that it is quite a process to develop an archaeological site, as it is very complicated.
- He then asked the group “How much land do we actually need?”
- Lisa presented figures based on a land inventory and capacity analysis, (which was placed in the Bowser library a few weeks ago), noting that Area H can accommodate 6388 people without any changes to zoning. (This includes the 3 village centres)
- Lisa asked the group if they preferred using hectares or acres in reference, and the response was mixed.
- There is ample zoned land to accommodate future growth in Area H. The question is how to encourage development that helps meet our sustainability goals by encouraging more development in Village Centres that provides alternative and affordable housing types for seniors and families along with alternate transportation options.
- A slide was shown that showed the ages of buildings from BC Assessment data. She noted that the data is limited and incomplete. However it is important to note that there are many older properties in Bowser that have the potential to be redeveloped. Lisa asked Dave Bartram if housing in Area ‘H’ is the oldest stock in the RDN, and Dave responded it was.
- Lisa also noted that there were many large undeveloped and underdeveloped lots in Bowser and showed slides and air photos to illustrate this.
- Mac asked what the white areas represented.
- Lisa responded that BC Assessment has no data for the white areas.
- When looking at a slide showing aerial photos showing vacant parcels in the Bowser area. Dave Bartram pointed to a lot which has been recently cleared and subdivided into 10 lots. When asked where this property was, Dave responded “Sundry Road/Henry Morgan and Esary Road.”
- Lisa noted that one major question that the charette will help address is “how many people can Bowser Village accommodate”. She noted that this is a question related to density of development and gave examples of rough estimates based on different densities. For example, if Bowser is build out with 0.5 acre lots could get 234 dwelling units with 491 people (based on 2.1 people per household) these numbers get higher as the lot sizes get smaller. With 0.25 acre lots could get 440 dwelling units accommodating 924 people and with a smaller parcel size of 0.18 acre could get 611 dwelling units accommodating 1,283 people. She noted that there might be areas of Bowser where the community wishes to see different densities apply (so pockets of .5 acre lots and then denser pockets of multi-family combined with commercial is a possibility. It will just depend on how the community wants to see Bowser develop where three versus two stories and more compact forms of housing are acceptable.
- Lisa noted that all commercial business owners within the Bowser Village Centre had been contacted and asked questions about how much space they required in the future. She noted that while there were several who indicated they needed more building space, many had land available for expansion while one or two indicated that they needed more land. She noted that the Magnolia Court complex had commercial space that had not been filled and was felt to be ahead of the demand for the area.
- A question was asked about what the land the figures were based on, Lisa responded that it was based on 110 acres in Bowser, and not the full 124 acres. This was the amount of ‘developable’ land used for the land inventory calculations by deducting roads, riparian areas and other constraints.
- With the slide showing density to support transit (25 units/ha (10 units/acre), Mac asked Lisa “What type of transit are you talking about? Do you mean 15 minute interval buses?”

- Lisa responded that this is only one example of development density required to support regular transit service (from Smart Growth BC) and she will find out what level of service this supports. There are going to be greater numbers in other pockets.
- Gerry noted that there are 2 important factors to consider: area as well as density.
- Lisa also noted that it also depends on the population that an area has.
- Dave Bartram noted that even the City of Nanaimo doesn't have these types of numbers, and that their transit services are subsidized.
- Lisa showed a slide that had a 5 minute walking radius from the Bowser centre. Different times of walking were shown, from a 5 minute radius to a 20 minute radius.
- Lisa noted that areas based on Average 5 min walk (400m or 1/4 mile radius) would range in size from **16-35 ha** (40-75 acres) and Bowser currently **50 ha** (124 acres). She also noted that in discussion with Randall Arendt a similar calculation was done that resulted in 125.6 acres being calculated as a 0.25 acre walking radius from a central point.
- Rod commented that Bowser doesn't seem suited to a circle, as half of Bowser would be in the ocean.
- Lisa stated that this map was only trying to show an area example and the distance calculations would be based on local geography.
- Mac asked whether this map is from a certain spot, or from a general area?
- Lisa replied that the map reflected the village centre based on Magnolia Court. The intent is to give people an opportunity to consider other modes of transportation than the car.
- Mac asked "Do you mean the 'Service Centre'"
- Gerry asked "Is a 5 minute walk generally acceptable?"
- Lisa responded that working with a 5 minute walking time increases the likelihood of a person choosing an alternative to the car and increases the likelihood for the density required for transit. Provides opportunities for more sustainable methods of transportation.
- Gerry asked if the dark brown circle represented residential areas.
- Lisa replied that some are tourist commercial areas.
- Dianne Eddy asked "Shouldn't we be looking at: what is the requirement of stores to be successful?" She stated she envisioned Bowser as being the commercial centre of the community (where high density, parks etc. are). She noted that "if we're just looking at density and the number of people, we're no longer looking at commercial needs. It is more profitable to put things in high density than anything else."
- Lisa responded that she is not showing density, or just saying that this is what you have to have. The charette will help visualize things. The designs will show how much density will support the size. She hopes that business owners will come to charette.
- Dianne Eddy asked "What is the threshold to get a pharmacy? It is important to this community. Right now we go to Courtenay or Qualicum."
- Dave Bartram noted that "There has been work done in the past looking into the possibility of bringing a practitioner to the area. It was found that a practitioner needs 800-900 cases. This exercise was done a few years ago, but other doctors in other municipalities didn't want to lose patients to a new doctor to the area. It became very politically and business sensitive. However, do we have enough people to support a doctor? Yes. But the hard part is to get someone here."

4. Discussion, Debate and Agreement on Boundary to be used for Charette (see maps at end of the document)

- Dave then asked the group to discuss the three most popular scenarios. Scenario 1 had 19 dots, 2a had 13 dots, and 2b also had 13 dots (from May 13th meeting).
- Someone asked “With regards to 2b, is the charette going to review all the scenarios? Or just Bowser?”
- Lisa replied that the group had decided in previous meetings to just focus on Bowser.
- Keith Brown then reminded everyone that John Lyotier’s idea was to just focus on Bowser.
- John asked if the focus of the charette will only be Bowser and nothing else.
- Lisa replied that it would.
- Dianne Eddy noted that she was concerned with the 3 scenarios, and the stats. 75%-85% of those who voted on the 11 scenarios show a tight boundary on Bowser. She stated that “the developers were here and selected that option (showing Deep Bay as a future Village Centre), when the group decided their favourite scenario (focussed on Bowser). The focus should only be Bowser.”
- Lisa noted that in hindsight, she didn’t specify whether the selection of that scenario (#2b) was based only on the shape of Bowser, and not including Deep Bay.
- Dave Bartram responded that the group has chosen Bowser, and that he wanted to move on, so that a boundary is chosen for the charette.
- Catherine Watson noted to Dianne that “In the charette, even if we don’t want to include Deep Bay, we can still provide input. The information that comes out of the charette can be used for other communities.”
- Wayne Osborne asked to make a motion to not include Deep Bay with the boundaries (on scenario #2b). He noted he’d like to “look at the middle scenario (#2b) but not Deep Bay.”
- With a show of hands, 11 people wished to exclude Deep Bay (from scenario #2b).
- Dave Bartram said “Let’s focus on the boundary; we need to give them a place to start.” He said that it was better to narrow it down to 1 scenario to give to the designers.
- Rod Gentry asked “Since we’re only focusing on 1 map, we’re only focusing on 1 quarter of the area. It is easier to use 3 maps, review 3 scenarios.
- Jim stated that he spoke to Randall, and in our one day charette he can only focus on 600 acres, in the time we have.
- Each member of the group was asked to put a dot on their preferred scenario out of the top three from May 13th.

Dave called for a break.

4. Discussion, Debate and Agreement on Boundary to be used for Charette continued...

Scenario #1 (expansion of Bowser Village Centre to the south west) had 12 votes versus Scenario #2b (expansion of Bowser Village Centre to the west) which had 6. Scenario #2a (expansion of Bowser to the south, southwest and northwest) received 1 vote.

Once the group came back after the break, it was decided to work with Scenario #1 as the starting point for the evaluation exercise. Dave Bartram asked everyone to divide themselves at the 3 tables and review scenario #1 with the goals. At the completion of the goals versus scenario review Dave asked the Advisory Group to meet back in plenary to discuss and

narrow it down to one Bowser Village Centre boundary to give to the designers as a starting reference point.

Lisa notes that not all the goals are there (for the evaluation exercise), as some were not directly related to this exercise.

The group then split into 3 tables, with 7 people at each table. The group worked at their exercise for 50 minutes and then they took another break.

After the break, Dave called the group together to meet in plenary to discuss their responses to the goals in relation to scenario #1.

Question # 1: Topic A: Planning Process: How well does this boundary reflect the history and current use of Bowser as a Commercial Core of the Area?

- John Lyotier responded he gave the first question 3 out of 5.
- Gerry noted he gave 5, as his group was happy with the boundary as proposed.
- John commented:
 - In terms of history, and looking at the new area, we said its third growth forest; the history in this community is forest. This boundary is consistent. The forest can be built in.
- Gerry:
 - He gave a 5 because it preserved the commercial core, including existing business as it is, but facilitating future growth.
- Catherine:
 - gave a 5
- Mac:
 - It is maintaining the commercial area, but also allowing for future development.
- John:
 - Is the future development to be on Crown land?
- Catherine:
 - Does it include historical uses on land? A larger portion would incorporate similar uses such as first nations lands, parks etc.
- Mac:
 - Additional area doesn't take away form the original town centre.
- Keith Brown:
 - Crown land should be for non Market uses. You don't have to take away from it.
- Dianne Eddy:
 - We need transit, a train station, bus station, senior's low cost housing, land for sewage treatment etc. The Crown land would go for these types of uses, not commercial uses.
- Dave Heenan:
 - This is a proposal for the village centre. We should answer the questions according that. Is the Crown land for community benefit? What does 'preserved' mean? Could be used for a football field? Does the village centre need to grow?
- Wayne Osborne:
 - Gave a 5; Crown land is being preserved for community benefit.

Question # 3: How well does this Boundary help accommodate future growth for next 50 years? How well does this boundary encourage sustainable development of Area 'H'?

and the RDN through development of 'compact' communities and retaining rural character?

- Gerry:
 - Gave 3 and three quarters "Will the boundary promote financial responsibility?"
 - It is totally unserved, so scored low.
 - Because it is undeveloped, unserved.
- John:
 - Median is between 0 and 5 is 2.5, but gave a 2. Feels it didn't meet objectives. Thinks that the status quo is more applicable.
- Jim:
 - Out of the 3 options, this is the smallest area, so probably the cheapest. He gave 4 out of 5.
- John L:
 - 'Zero;' as there is too much Crown land, limited usage. Cost will be too high, since nothing presently exists.
- Dave Bartram:
 - Question to group: What happens if we don't get Crown land?
- Wayne:
 - We still have the first area to fill out first. We don't need to worry at this stage; we can come up with another plan later.
- Jim:
 - Maybe the status quo is more applicable in this situation.
- Gerry:
 - But we've been talking about a long term plan for the next 50 years. If we can't get it (Crown land) released now, this could be different in 10 years or 50 years.
- Dianne Eddy:
 - We should accept the fact that they don't want to give it to us. If we want it, we would have to establish a municipality. That's how every municipality down the coast does it. I can't see why we wouldn't get it.
- Dave Bartram:
 - We need to consider it, and move forward.
 - He then introduced Paul Thorkelsson, General Manager of Development Services
- Paul Thorkelsson:
 - I am hearing discussion about preserving sensitive areas versus developing those areas. The sensitive areas in the community warrant protection. If the goal is to protect, there are different ways to do it than 'declaring a line around it.'
 - If this exercise is about preservation, you don't want to put a line on it and say this is where development will go; you may not want it that way.
- Catherine:
 - Is the area to the right, private? Can we put that in a boundary?
- Dave Bartram:
 - If we include that land to preserve it, there are other options than 'putting it within the line'.
 - What we're talking about is community services.
- Josianne:
 - Earlier on we mentioned the idea of mixed uses.
- John Lyotier:
 - We looked at Crown lands for non commercial public development. Not as 'preserved' as such: but development for community needs. As we develop land we can add more as we need it.
 - The issue is trying to build a community in the core area.

- Gerry:
 - Difficult to answer unless we have an outline for the next 30 years. It is difficult to imagine a Village in the next 25-30 years.
 - John Lyotier:
 - My understanding is we can't look at Crown land for commercial development.
 - Lisa B:
 - When I spoke to the Ministry, the Crown is not keen on giving land for commercial use; lands competing with other lands that could be used for commercial uses. They will not look at any application without there first being full consultation with First Nations. This area (of Crown lands within the existing Village Centre boundary) could possibly be used for senior's housing, it may be supported.
 - Coastal Douglas Fir: Ministry is trying to preserve this Red listed ecosystem type on Crown lands on the east coast of Vancouver Island.
 - First Nations interest must be addressed before the Crown will look at applications.
 - Perception may be they're giving it away (Crown lands), but this is not the case.
 - Paul Thorkelsson commented:
 - Acquiring Crown: It is a lengthy and difficult process, requires consultation. There is currently an application for a fire hall, that has taken a long time.
 - In the future, it will become less and less likely (to get Crown lands).
 - In this area: focus is on environmental sensitivity.
 - Bottom line: development is development.
 - Regardless of government changes, it will remain unlikely.
 - Lisa B:
 - This is not a bad thing: provides protection of the aquifers.
 - Paul T
 - Don't think a line around it will provide additional control.
 - Gerry:
 - If this is the case, we should face the facts and get real.
 - Bob:
 - What about the lands with the baseball fields on Crown land?
 - John:
 - Wants to make a motion to strike the yellow line, in light of the info we're receiving.
 - Dianne Eddy:
 - No, we should still go for it.
 - Wayne Osborne:
 - He has the right to make a motion.
 - Keith Brown:
 - We have to make a decision with management staff.
 - John:
 - Let's modify the boundary to include the other area to the west, instead of Crown land.
 - Dianne E:
 - We the people own the land. They were going to develop it for a golf course etc in the previous plans.
 - If we have to expand in commercial area, we'll never get it.
 - Make sure the staff give it a shot.
 - Dave Bartram:
 - Why not try for the land further to the west.
- Someone asked:
- Was this land not considered? Is it because it is private property?

Response:

- "No"
- Wayne Osborne and Dave Heenan:
 - The aquifer is based on discussions.
- Dave Bartram:
 - How many want to include the Crown land inside the boundary as part of the plan?

8 hands were raised who were in favour.

11 hands were raised who were not in favour.

- Mac:
 - A suggestion, if Crown land is what we're thinking about, what if we change the line, have a smaller piece of Crown land?
Various discussions followed about where a new line would go following different property line boundaries and the line of the aquifer.
- Lisa B:
 - Drew a new boundary line on the map to reflect what members of the group described, and then asked the group if it accurately reflected what they spoke of. (See attachment #2 below).
- Gord:
 - This is close to my scenario. He likes it, some Crown land, also some private land. It is away from the creek.
- John:
 - I agree

Show of hands how many people like this new boundary? (see attachment #2 below)

14 hand for

2 hands opposed.

- Dave Bartram:
 - Let's look at goals, apply them: are there any problems?
- Dianne E:
 - Where is the train station located? Is it on private lands?
- Dave Bartram:
 - Pointed it on the map, responded 'Yes'
- John Lyotier:
 - If I were a developer, and wanted to own land according to the Official Community Plan, when is the 'future?'
- Wayne:
 - We're doing this plan to counteract that.
- Paul Thorkelsson:
 - Exactly, you are trying to plan to 'contain' that.
- Dave Bartram:
 - Can we go to the charette with this?

18 hands for

1 opposed

Lisa reminded the group that:

- These boundaries can change as a result of the charette and feedback afterwards, but at least we'll have something to give to the designers for the charette.

5. Update on Charette (review of format and purpose)

The group discussed the upcoming Charette

Lisa B:

- Recapped the dates of the event, June 8 and 9, 2009. The purpose: An end product, to fill in the blanks, for a sustainable village of Bowser.
- Show how roads, pathways, ecosystems etc. interconnect
- Notes the group voted to have Randall Arendt attend, but he is *one* of several other designers coming.
- Sebastian Moffatt is also coming with the Sheltair Group and Consensus. Victoria Drakefoot, Angela Evans are also confirmed.
- Residents within the boundary (as revised during the meeting) will be invited to participate.
- Peter Mason has been invited to participate in the charette given his knowledge of the area. He is also trying to see if he can provide contour maps and any other information that can help show where the natural drainages are.

Lisa asked the group how many people could confirm they could attend: 12 people responded.

Paul Thorkelsson explained how a charette is the best tool for a community to come together. He suggested the group come in with a 'blurred vision' and to use the existing fabric that is already there, and then build a 'framework around it.'

It won't necessarily reflect what is there, but is a visioning of the community.

He reminded everyone to enjoy themselves, it's a great opportunity.

Lisa reminded everyone that the Monday charette workshop ends at 4:30 pm.

6. Discussion and Agreement on Next Meeting Dates including Open House

Dave and Lisa asked the group if they wanted to have the regular Wednesday Advisory Group meeting on Wednesday June 10th prior to an open house on June 17th. The Group wanted to have a meeting to discuss the results of the charette prior to the information going forward for the June 17th open house. This would give those not able to attend the charette a chance to see what the results are prior to them going to the open house.

Lisa noted that the meeting on June 24th can be tentative and the group can decide on June 10th whether or not it is necessary. June 10th and 17th are confirmed.

The group then discussed the Open House time.

Mac asked what the intent of the Open house is, and whether they will be speaking to the community.

Lisa:

- We can have a presentation, or walk around to respond?

Bill Els suggested a 2 hour meeting, with 1 presentation.

John noted that they will get more feedback with having a presentation rather than having pictures on a wall.

Gerry suggested having half an hour before and after a presentation for some discussion. Or 2 presentation times?

Group agreed to have 1 presentation, with the meeting from 7-9pm.

Theresa asked whether other experts will be at the charette to provide information.

Lisa responded that given that many of them already attended the Information Event it may be difficult to get them all out to the charette (note that a few key resource people have been invited who have a greater role to play in the charette).

7. Follow-up Items

Lisa mentioned that a media release would be sent out on Thursday May 28th. This will give details about the outcome of the meeting tonight, the upcoming charette and open house.

On Friday May 29th a mail out will be going to every land owner within the revised Bowser Village boundary decided upon tonight to invite them to the charette. This will also include business owners.

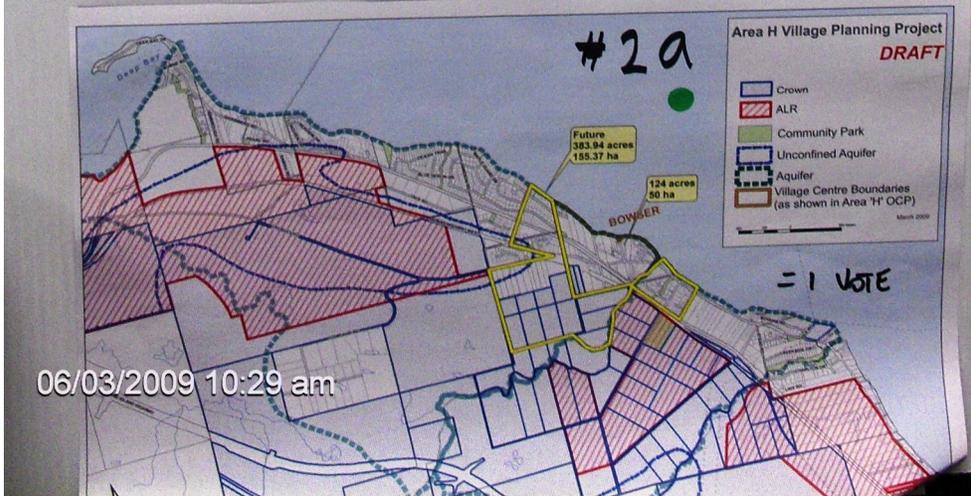
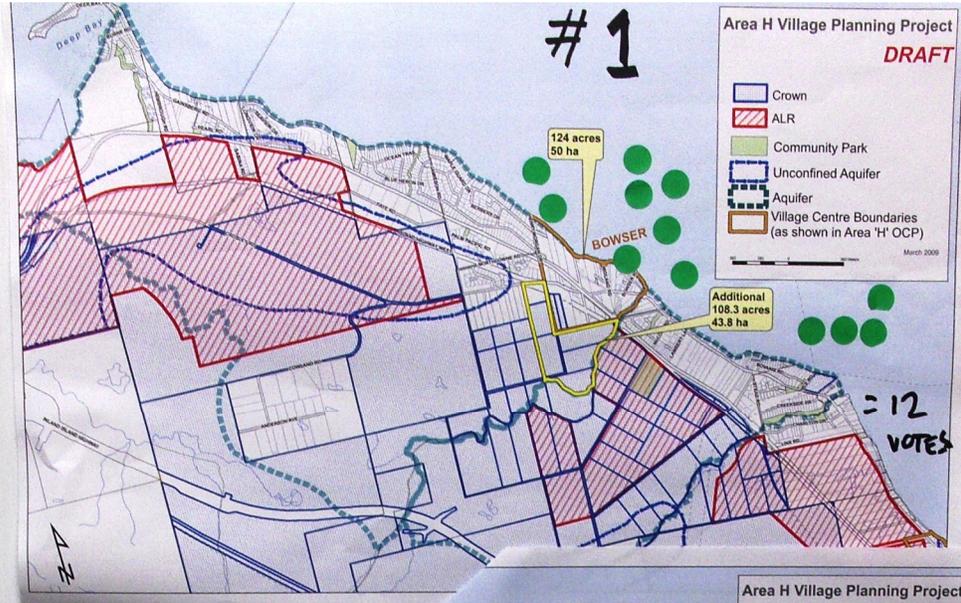
Advisory Group members were asked to assist with promoting upcoming events and informing the community about the process to date.

8. The meeting ended shortly after 9:30 p.m.

9. Next Meetings

- Charette Monday June 8th 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. & Morning of Tuesday June 9th 9:00 am. to 12:00 noon at the Royal Canadian Legion Br 211, 7035 W Island Highway, Bowser
- The next Advisory Group meeting is Wednesday June 10th 6:30-9:30 p.m. at Lighthouse Community Hall, 240 Lions Way, Qualicum Bay
- Open house, Wednesday June 17th, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Lighthouse Community Hall, 240 Lions Way, Qualicum Bay

Attachment 1 below: Scenarios showing results of May 27th selection exercise.



Attachment 2 below: Results of May 27th boundary selection to take forward to the charette.

