



## Meeting Record

### Electoral Area 'H' Official Community Plan Review Community Working Group Meeting

Tuesday, March 22, 2017 at 6:30 pm  
Lighthouse Community Hall

#### Members Present:

Candace Cowan	Ed Hughes	Joe Nelson
Jim Crawford	Bob Hunt	Shirley Petrie
Dianne Eddy	Margie Healey	Keith Reid
Nelson Eddy	Christo Kuun	John Stathers
Murray Hamilton	Bob Leggett	Laurel Webster

**Guests Present:** Monica Kuun

**Others Present:** Bill Veenhof, Electoral Area 'H' Director  
Courtney Simpson, RDN Senior Planner  
Jamai Schile, RDN Senior Planner

#### a) WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Director Veenhof welcomed everyone. He mentioned the recent federal funding announcement regarding the proposed Bowser Sewer System and asked that any comments regarding this topic are held to the end of the meeting after the scheduled agenda items. The Director turning the meeting over to Planner Simpson.

Planner Simpson provided a brief update on the Official Community Plan (OCP) Review project. She also acknowledged questions regarding the Regional District of Nanaimo (RDN) staff role in making recommendations for changes to the OCP. She confirmed that RDN staff do not make decisions and explained that the role of planning staff is to provide professional recommendations to both the community and to elected officials.

#### B) APPROVAL OF DRAFT MEETING RECORD OF DECEMBER 13, 2016

The draft meeting record of December 13, 2016 was considered final by general consent.

#### c) INTRODUCTION FROM PLANNER

Planner Simpson provided a brief overview of the purpose of the meeting and general format for the evening.

#### **d) DISCUSSION REGARDING ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND RELATED OCP SECTIONS**

Planner Simpson provided a brief explanation of the Active Transportation Plan (ATP) and explained why the Plan was created as part of the OCP review process. She provided an overview of the project's purpose, including timelines of ATP, methodology applied such as the Wiki-map and the ranking exercise used to identify the top ten projects.

Discussion followed on the top 10 priorities on the ATP:

##### **Widen and Pave Shoulders (On Highway 19A between Crosley and Fisheries Roads and On Gainsburg Rd and Burne Rd):**

- Director Veenhof addressed the question on likelihood of receiving support from Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) to construct some of these projects. He explained that the ATP is an advocacy tool that can be used to advance the conversation with MoTI regarding traffic safety issues along many of the roads in Area 'H' and to present feasible options to address them.

##### **Reduce Speed Limits (To 50 km/hr – 60 km/hr on Highway 19A between Gainsburg and Driftwood Rd):**

- Some discussion on speed limits. In general, there is support for reducing speeds to contribute to creating safer and more comfort considerations for roadway users.
- It was suggested that the recommendation to reduce speed from Gainsburg to Bowser (Project No. 2) would have limited effect as only three properties are located in this area and there is no potential for future development. As well, few people are seen walking or cycling this stretch of road. A member suggested that it would be better to invest in a walking trail along-side the road for this section as it has a wide shoulder so does not require or reduced speed limit.
- Director Veenhof asked if installing a second speed reader would be another option to help reduce speed through the Bowers Village Centre (BVC). Some discussion on the merits of speed readers with mixed support for an additional unit.
- A round-about at Crosley Road was suggested as an option to more effectively reduce the speed as vehicles enter into BVC. The Qualicum Beach round-about was cited as an example of this type of road design. Director Veenhof mentioned that this option was cost prohibitive, at an estimated \$1M. He went on to explain that funds may be better utilized by adding trails along side of the roadway. He also noted "sidewalks" with curb and gutter are not currently supported by MoTI who has jurisdiction for roads in unincorporated areas, but that roadside paths and trails are.

##### **Pedestrian Crossings (near Magnolia Court, near Coburn Road, and near Lions Way):**

- Planner Simpson discussed pedestrian crossings. Three are in the top 10 with others as lower priorities in the ATP. The style recommended includes pedestrian-activated lights and crosswalk paint. Estimated cost \$40,000 – 50,000 each. She noted that the pages in the Appendix that contained this detail were missing from her print-out so she would have to confirm costs later. (In a follow up email to the Working Group she corrected the costs to be \$25K for signage, beacons (lights) and road paint, and an additional \$20K if a refuge island was included.)
- It was suggested that a raised cross-walk may be more cost effective.

- Director Veenhof explained that MoTI is resistant to any form of speed bump as they believe that they contribute to traffic accidents.
- Planner Simpson confirmed that road crossings with a center (refuge) island are not necessarily being recommended, but are included as an option that is costed out in the ATP. Planner Simpson noted that MoTI are more open to considering cross-walks than reducing speed limits or installing speed bumps. Also, noted the importance of selecting the locations of cross-walks, the key is to locate them in high pedestrian use areas. There is a risk that drivers ignore/become complacent about cross-walks that are not frequently used and tend to speed through them.
- Planner Simpson noted that while we know some of the projects in the ATP are not currently supported by MoTI, on the advice of the consultant the most appropriate options have been included in the ATP. Planner Simpson conveyed that the consultant explained that there is a general shift in transportation planning to be more progressive and forward thinking about active transportation, which is reflected in this ATP and in their recommendations for the community.
- Further discussion on the Gainsberg/Bowser section, some support to further consider alternative options to reducing the speed limit on Highway 19A for this area.
- Suggestion to improve the original Island Highway right-of-way (extension of Crosley Road) and across 19A from Gainsberg as road surface is in poor condition. Planner Simpson confirmed that this area is included as a project in the ATP as project No. 4, as well as RDN Parks plans.
- Some discussion on history of this road right-of-way. Since the details of this item appear to be unclear, it was concluded that it may not have any implications for the ATP recommendations.
- Some discussion on the importance of maintaining public access to the existing road/trail network.
- There was a discussion about widened shoulders instead of reducing speed if speed reduction is something MoTI will not agree to.

**Advisory Lane (On Faye Rd between Jamieson Rd and Bowser Elementary):**

- Planner Simpson discussed the recommendation regarding an advisory lane (Project No.11). She acknowledged that the concept is fairly new in Canada, but is becoming accepted and has been recently approved for inclusion in the Transport Canada's Geometric Design Guide. The recommendation is to implement this single bi-directional lane on Faye Road. It would generally mean creating one lane for vehicles with a road-side trail/lane on both sides for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Some discussion on the concept being unfamiliar. It was agreed that some education and further consultation would be required before anything would be implemented along Faye Road. While a few Working Group members expressed their concern, Planner Simpson reminded the group that the concept did receive support from some of the current road users who drive their children to/from the elementary school located on Faye Road.
- It was noted by a Working Group member that for Faye Road there is two options; establish an advisory lane or widen the road.
- A third option was also mentioned for Faye Road involving adding a crossing at railway tracks at the end of Faye Road could be consider instead of an Advisory Lane. Planner Simpson confirmed that this is another project in the ATP (#22) however, some parents expressed concern regarding

safety of their young children travelling through the woods and would not consider this to be a primary route to school.

- Planner Simpson confirmed that advisory lanes are only being recommended for Faye Road and not in any other locations.

#### **Road Diet (On 19A from Gainsburg to Crosley):**

- Planner Simpson introduced the recommended option of a 'Road Diet' (Project No.2A). She explained that this involves reducing the number of vehicle travel lanes to better accommodate bike/walking lanes.
- Some concern that this approach is not needed for Jamieson to Crosley As few people use that route to travel by foot or bicycle.
- There was general agreement that the existing vehicle passing opportunities should be maintained due to the amount of slow-moving holiday traffic along Highway 19A. (Planner Simpson confirmed later in an email that the project is to reduce the lanes from 4 to 3, and preserve passing opportunities while increasing the shoulder available for active transportation improvements.)

#### **Traffic Calming (on Jamieson Road and Thompson Clark Drive East from Faye Road to Henry Morgan Park):**

- Planner Simpson introduced traffic calming examples. A member asked if rumble strips were considered as one of the options to slow down drivers? Planner Simpson confirmed that they are not.
- There were observations that to changes are needed to those roads as traffic is already calm. Planner Simpson explained that they are included in the ATP as an important link in the overall transportation network.
- A general observation was made that while reducing lanes and widening the shoulder to accommodate cyclists/pedestrians has benefits, it can also be challenging in terms of balancing it with current vehicle road usage.

#### ***Refreshment Break***

#### **A) DRAFT SECTION 2.5 – CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY**

Planner Simpson noted the four key elements for implementation – OCP, development, funding and MoTI. She then provided an overview of the draft OCP sections and touched on areas that have been changed since the previous version. Explain that four sections (s.2.5, 4.1, 4.4 and 4.5) are part of the agenda tonight as they all have linkages to the ATP.

The following comments were made by Working Group members.

- Some discussion on requiring that new residential developments be required to have provisions for electric vehicle charging stations. Very expensive to retro fit houses.
- Director Veenhof agreed that more should be done to promote green building. He also explained that local governments no longer have ability to vary the building code to require such changes, but does provide incentives through the green building incentive program to undertake these

modifications on their own. He expressed that he would like to do more by supporting advocacy policies within the updated OCP that support of Greenhouse Gas reduction technologies.

**B) DRAFT SECTION 4.1 PARKS AND OPEN SPACES**

**C) DRAFT SECTION 4.4 TRANSPORTATION NETWORK**

**D) DRAFT SECTION 4.5 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Planner Simpson provided a few highlights of the changes made across the sections based on the suggestions already received.

The following comments were made and questions asked by Working Group members.

- Some discussion on the benefits as well as the challenges associated with trying to link transportation services across regional districts. It was generally agreed that stronger, seamless transportation linkages between Courtenay all the way to the ferry are needed.
- With reference to Section 4.1 Policy 13 – a concern was expressed that this might be seen to sanction off road vehicle use in areas where they are prohibited, especially in Horne Lake and Spider Lake areas. It was generally agreed that abuses regarding off-road access is a problem in some areas, the proposed policy doesn't condone these activities.
- Planner Simpson also confirmed that this Policy 13 was a carry-over from the current version of the OCP.
- With respect to Section 4.4, Policy 9 – a member acknowledged that this was a particularly good addition and glad that it has been included.
- A question was asked if Illusion Lake should be included in the description of parks and protected areas. Planner Simpson said she would confirm as she believed there were sensitivities around widely advertising the location of this park.

**6. SUMMARY AND CLOSING**

- Prior to concluding, Jim Crawford updated the group regarding a recent meeting that was held between Baynes Sound Investments representatives and RDN staff regarding the proposed development of the their land. It was confirmed that the developer is still seeking 300 units on Lot A and something for the future on the remaining Lot B. At the meeting, an amenity package with an estimated value of \$10M was discussed. It was also noted that the developer would like assurance that they will receive the density they are seeking and that this OCP process should continue to be community driven.
- Also, Director Veenhof invited members to stay a few extra minutes if they would like to discuss or provide comment regarding the recent federal funding announcement for the Bowser Sewer System.

**Adjourned meeting at 8:50 pm**