



Meeting Record

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

Tuesday, April 19, 2016 at 6:30 pm
Lighthouse Community Hall

Members Present:

Dave Bartram	Steve Biro	Tony Botica
Candace Cowan	Jim Crawford	Theresa Crawford
Diane Eddy	Nelson Eddy	Bill Friesen
Murray Hamilton	Margaret Healey	Ed Hughes
Bob Hunt	Marci Katz	Lee Melnychuk
Don Milburn	Shirley Petrie	Ted Seaman
Dave Simpson	Mac Snobelen	Dick Stubbs
Greta Taylor	Len Walker	Laurel Webster

Guests Present: Carol Cannon, Bowser Seniors Housing Society
George Dussault
Jerry Flynn
John Burrridge
Amar Bains
Fernando Costa
John Stathers

Others Present: Courtney Simpson, RDN Senior Planner
Stephen Boogaards, RDN Planner
Bill Veenhof, Electoral Area 'H' Director

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Director Veenhof called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm and explained the meeting format. Director Veenhof explained that this meeting will go into more specific issues, compared with previous Working Group meetings where issues were discussed on a more general level.

Planner Simpson provided a brief explanation of the Growth and Development topics selected for the meeting. The working group members had prioritized the most immediate topics for discussion topics

through an online survey. Planner Simpson reminded everyone of the working group role to identify and revise topic areas for the OCP and the community vision.

Planner Simpson reminded the group of other ways in which the RDN is engaging with the community including attending the Second Sunday Market, Horne Lake AGM, and organizing a new engagement on May 3 with the Bowser Elementary Parents Advisory Council.

Planner Simpson provided an update on the three background studies to be funded through Community Works funds. The RDN has recently hired consultants for an Active Transportation Plan, including walking, cycling and active transportation infrastructure. The RDN has issued a request for proposal for coastal elevation mapping to identify hazard lands, which is a RDN wide project. The timing for this study will help with the OCP review. The last study is an Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR) boundary review, which represent a preliminary assessment. Planner Simpson also reminded the group that the Bowser Sewer study is still underway with its release and a community meeting expected in June.

Planner Simpson asked the group about continuing the Growth and Development discussion at the next meeting rather than discuss Streets and Movement. Streets and Movement will be discussed as part of the Active Transportation Plan. Planner Simpson also discussed the timeline for the Bowser sewer study. The study can be incorporated into the draft OCP in September. She also suggested that the OCP Review schedule could take a pause when the study is ready to consider how its results in relation to the new OCP.

2. PRESENTATION ON TOPIC OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Planner Simpson identified the priorities from the pre-working group survey as (1) development outside village centres / industrial development / tourism accommodation, (2) road access to the Lighthouse Villa for Seniors, and (3) Clustered residential development and (4) Development Permit Areas. Energy and Sustainability can perhaps be dealt with at another meeting. A summary of Working Group input so far can also be part of the next meeting.

One resident explained he moved here for the lack of traffic and rural atmosphere, and he is concerned about development outside Growth Containment Boundaries (GCB), industrial development and tourism accommodation. The group members had suggested that these topics were originally brought up for discussion through the working group meetings.

The group asked for confirmation if Dunsmuir and Qualicum Bay will be part of the OCP review. Planner Simpson confirmed that they will be part of the review, but there will not be a specific and separate village plan for the village centres.

One working group member asked to confirm what clustered residential development is, and if it is comparable to Costa Lotta. The member stated why the RDN would permit such land uses if the RDN does not enforce its regulations. Planner Simpson confirmed that is not what is meant by clustered rural development.

Planner Simpson showed a map of the Regional Growth Strategy (RGS) and Area H land use designations for perspective. The purpose of village centres (or Growth Containment Boundary (GCB)) is to concentrate housing and jobs in designated locations and prevent sprawl. She explained that focused growth in the GCB is fundamental to the success of the OCP and RGS. She also reviewed development buildouts. The potential subdivision buildout by zoning is 2,672 lots and by OCP is 4,008 lots. **Is this OCP**

or zoning? - There is potential for 754 new lots outside the village centres (representing a 32% increase), and 313 new lots within village centres (representing a 90% increase).

The working group discussed the potential for development in the ALR. One member explained that there is no development potential in the ALR. Director Veenhof explained that any subdivision must have the approval of the Agricultural Land Commission.

One member expressed concern with the Rural Land designation that has a 4.0 ha minimum parcel size; however, the OCP recognizes existing ½ acre minimum parcel size established by zoning. The community has gone through exercise to develop the Bowser Village Plan, though there has been no development in the village. All development is outside the village, such as Nile Landing. In the Comox Valley Regional District, developers had 12 months to subdivide their land before the zoning was changed to increase minimum parcel size. Developers will not build in Bowser if they can subdivide into ½ acre parcels outside the village centre.

One member expressed concern with the RGS Minor Amendment changes and the agriculture zoning bylaw update happening concurrently with the OCP review. The changes are boxing in the conversation on the conversation on the OCP. Planner Simpson explained that these changes do not directly affect the OCP review so the OCP review can continue while these other projects are ongoing.

Planner Simpson reviewed the purpose of each topic for discussion at the meeting. She explained that development outside village centres is on the agenda because input so far indicated there may be desired land uses or community needs that cannot be accommodated within village centres such as tourism accommodation and industrial development. Planner Simpson explained the proposal for the road to the Seniors Villa. As road construction is very costly, the adjacent property owner has offered to construct the road in exchange for being added to the village centre. Planner Simpson also explained the Alternative Forms of Rural Development study clustering options. The clustering options allow for smaller lots, provided overall density is not increased, and gives developers more flexibility. She asked the working group's opinion on these topics.

3. GROUP DISCUSSION

One member asked for confirmation where the clustered properties will be and the number of lots. Planner Simpson explained that the RDN will not allow any more lots overall, and it only applies to Rural Residential Lands in the RGS (resource or ALR lands are not included). One member suggested the clustering concept may be positive for the community. Planner Simpson clarified that the parcels can likely only be decreased to 1 hectare where water and sewer have to be provided on the lot.

One member suggested that people who move from the city do not want to live in village centres. However, people who move from the city would like to live by the ocean. Bowser has no access to the ocean and it is difficult to get onto the highway from a driveway. Also they need to consider smaller lot sizes for young families who cannot afford large lots.

One member questioned what was envisioned for industrial in Area 'H', as there are only two industrial properties. Specifically, the member questioned if it could be allowed outside village centres or if there was enough land. Planner Simpson commented that Bowser Village Plan allows for light industrial. The members discussed appropriate industrial development for village centres as akin to commercial and would be environmentally friendly. It would provide jobs for youth. Some industrial, like autobody repair not necessarily appropriate due to noise. Light industrial development would not disturb the life of the

village. However, there may be industrial uses that residents need, such as a transfer station, that may not be appropriate within a village centre

The group discussed the merits of light industrial development outside of village centres, such as being noisy but also bringing in jobs. One member questioned why they are considering industrial land unless it is needed (citing that shellfish processing is an industrial use).

One member expressed that the Bowser Village Plan only put in one type of commercial – Commercial Mixed Use. For some commercial and light industrial, like a garden centre, there is no need for residential. Due to residential, it is hard to acquire land for uses like storage, as it does not have as much value. Other members identified the benefit of light industrial for diversifying the economy and attracting business.

One member stated that he is concerned that the OCP expects development to come to the area but the market might not exist. Another member identified that Baynes Sound Investment (BSI) is going to develop in the Area. BSI has also agreed to put in a sewer system with land disposal between Deep Bay and Bowser. Another member identified that a lot of tourism accommodation properties have just changed hands.

The group discussed the residential buildouts as it relates to Horne Lake. Planner Simpson clarified that Horne Lake is designated and zoned for recreational residences, so it is not considered in the residential buildout that was presented in the Background Report. One member expressed concern that Horne Lake was not considered. The member stated that with the aging population, people would like to live at the strata and not have to maintain and drive to a residence elsewhere. He asked whether seasonal occupancy can be changed to full time residency. Planner Simpson confirmed the reasons for the limit to seasonal occupancy originally, including the protection of fish habitat and the hatchery on the Big Qualicum.

The group discussed if BSI would be part of the discussion. One member explained that BSI held a meeting with the community to present ideas for environmentally friendly residences and student housing. Planner Simpson confirmed that Deep Bay will be discussed at the June 7 Working Group meeting, and currently the RDN has does not have an application from BSI.

One member stated that the clustered development option in the OCP needs very specific rules for the protection of water system, sewage disposal and drainage. General, alternative forms of rural development does provide more options than standard postage stamp lots, and allows for more common land for everyone to use. Another member stated that density bonusing should not be allowed outside of the GCB. Residents must have a say in the form and character of their community.

4. REFRESHMENT BREAK

5. GROUP DISCUSSION CONTINUED

Working Group member Dick Stubbs gave the group a presentation on a proposal for road access to the seniors housing villa. In the Bowser Village Plan and in the application for a Crown land tenure, consideration was not given to access to the site for the Senior's Villa. Access from the Highway to Pitt Road would have been logical, though the Ministry of Transportation did not permit as the access did not have adequate sight distance of oncoming traffic. Other options were more complicated and expensive to construct. Al Grozel owns a property adjacent to the Bowser Village Centre has offered to

build the road and exchange land with the Ministry for the right of way. The Ministry views the proposal favourably, as it would involve realignment of the Crosley Road intersection which would improve safety. Mr. Grozel will put in the road on the condition that the Bowser Village Centre is expanded to include his property in the Commercial Mixed Use designation. The group voted unanimously to support the proposal.

Planner Simpson explained that the RDN has received a referral from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure, and that this decision is the first step in realizing this road. One member stated that the RDN must have some assurance that this road will be built and establish a timeline.

The group discussed when the seniors housing will be developed. A representative of the Bowser Seniors Housing Society explained that the society will require capital money from the province first. The group also discussed an unconstructed trail that will need to come up to Crosley Road from the Senior's Villa.

One member asked about expanding Bowser Village Centre to include properties west of Sundry Road. Another member clarified that the Bowser Village Plan based the boundary on current land uses and intended that lands south of Crosley Road be for the future use area.

Planner Simpson provided a recap of the alternative forms of rural development clustering concept, such as allowing for smaller lots provided the overall number of lots are not increased. The remainder of the parcel is protected or is used as a public amenity. One member was in favour of the clustering concept for coastal lands, so that the bank is left in a natural state (or in a park) and the houses are further back. Other discussions included how to prevent the development of the remainder of the property and the sewage disposal on the properties. Planner Simpson confirmed that a covenant would be placed on the remainder to prevent further development and at this time, sewage disposal would have to be individual septic as shared septic is not consistent with the RGS.

One group member stated that the clustering concept would work provided it is consistent with the RGS and does not increase density. Another group member expressed concern with the lack of security on protecting the remainder, as developers would pressure for developing it in the future. Planner Simpson stated that the covenant could also be held by a conservation organization. One member expressed some concern that 1 ha lots are not clustering, which is generally the minimum size for unserviced lots. Generally, the members were in favour of the clustering concept.

6. APPROVAL OF DRAFT MEETING RECORD OF MARCH 15, 2016

Planner Simpson asked for any changes to the meeting notes. One member identified that on page 2, the minutes should read "there was a comment that the meeting record should include a need for advocacy against herbicide spraying on beaches and within the watersheds which feed our aquifers."

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm