

DRAFT



Meeting Record

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

Thursday, May 25, 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm
Lighthouse Community Hall
240 Lions Way, Qualicum Bay

Members Present:

Candace Cowan
George Dussault
Murray Hamilton
Margaret Healey
Ed Hughes

Christo Kuun
Bob Leggett
Don Milburn
Joe Nelson
Keith Reid

Dave Simpson
Laurel Webster
Manfred Winter
Isolde Winter

Other Guests Presents:

Betty Pritchard
Wayne Pritchard
Alan Webb
Tom Plensky
Al Grozel
Monica Kuun
David Georgeson
Edie McPhedran

Others Present: Bill Veenhof, Electoral Area 'H' Director
Paul Thompson, RDN Manager of Long Range Planning
Courtney Simpson, RDN Senior Planner
Jamai Schile, RDN Senior Planner

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS, REVIEW OF AGENDA

Director Veenhof acknowledged the important role of the working group members for volunteering their time over the past year, noted that this is the last meeting, and turned the meeting over to Planner Simpson.

DRAFT

2. CONTINUATION OF WEDNESDAY DISCUSSION

- Support for scenario 4 - Second road access, walking path, picnic area, higher standard sewer treatment plant with options to hook up; affordable housing, limit height 2 storey in return I'm ok with density of 300 units. Concerned about getting the amenities not about how it's achieved.
- Scenario 4 - concern is there enough parking as part of the proposal? Is there adjacent parking for RV's? Confirmed that there would be adequate parking. Would like to see new road installed for construction and future residential use. Ok with 300 units, but not able to support secondary suites as well.
- Comparing scenario 3 & 4: Scenario 3 is phased and wouldn't get road until a certain phase of the project. Developer confirmed they are ok with excluding secondary suites. Went on to discuss Master Planned communities giving the example of Uplands in Victoria. Support for scenario 4 – Master Planned community gives you lots of control. Also, added that he thought the density transfer component of scenario 3 was the down side.
- Planner Simpson noted that secondary suites are a good way of providing affordable housing and excluding them from the Deep Bay Southwest area risks that it would appear as an exclusive enclave.
- Request to used one metric when discussion density in terms of units per hectare or units per acres.
- Support for an affordable housing fund. Aware that Bowser Seniors Housing Society would be interested in being able to access these funds to provide housing in the community.
- Some discussion on what “affordable” housing means; distinct from subsidized housing.
- Comment that it's not necessarily true that developers don't create jobs in the local community. Based on the speaker's experience he has hired local people for both local development and for projects outside of the area. Also, confident that the BSI developer will hire local people based on his experience of working with him previously and what has been stated as part of these discussions.
- Concerned that unless something goes ahead there will be a loss of jobs in the community and new opportunities for young people.
- Explained truck & trailer park & road developer committed to. The road needs to go in first if construction ever takes place as it's essential for construction access. Do not want to be bringing in trucks down Gainsburg Road.
- Developer explained they are open to scenario 4, hearing that scenario 3 can be more challenging with respect to RGS amendment and receiving approval. Preference to spend funds on amenities verses density transfer, but still open to considering it. He thinks they just need time to figure out how to do it.
- Question is it possible to transfer density from the Bowser Village Center? Staff explained that there is no maximum density inside Village Centres, where growth is encouraged, so the transfer can only happen outside Village Centres. Confirmed BSI not intended to be a village center in the draft OCP.

DRAFT

- Confirmed no 3 storey buildings proposed. Only 2 storeys.
- Acknowledged that the discussions being held with the working group is excellent. Very intelligent conversation and some really knowledgeable members.
- Timberwest may be interested in density transfer, but it's too early to tell. Those conversations haven't happened yet.
- Comment in support of a second road to alleviate traffic on Gainsburg Road.
- Comment can't be putting sewer system discharges into the Bay.
- Question would a phased development agreement/ Master Plan include "sunset" clauses?
- Planner Thompson explained that that a phased development agreement is set up so that construction can't happen unless the agreed on amenities are provided. Not necessary to have set date for when they have to occur.
- Comment it seems that density transfer is playing games. Can come to a surprise if your neighbor buys density and you end up with something very different from what you expected.
- Planner Simpson commented that she heard the Working Group concerns from last night and are going to take another look at that to provide more certainty with regards to the limits of density transfer and assurance that it results in neighborhood-appropriate development.
- Discussion on how many units are going to be built at Deep Bay Southwest per year. It was agreed that this is a risk for the developer to worry about not the Working Group or the community.
- Some concern that Deep Bay Southwest is going to effectively be a new village center. So if it's not a village centre then what shall we call it? Further discussion on concern of not using local people for the work and the cost of development.
- The developer explained absorption rates and stated that it's generally more expensive to bring in skilled workers than use locals. So, preference to use local labour as much as possible.
- Planner Simpson explained that in planning terms we can't create competition with Bowser. She also explained that Deep Bay Southwest is a rural residential area and is not intended to be a complete service area like a village centre.
- Comment that they believe Deep Bay Southwest will not be competition but would provide the additional amenities that the community wants and is able to support the Deep Bay Southwest development in principal.
- Question – what density numbers would invoke a Regional Growth Strategy amendment? Do we need to have to concentrate on a specific number or not.
- Staff explained that a Regional Growth Strategy amendment is required for any increase in the number of potential dwelling units outside village centres.
- Question – how are we going to get across the railway?
- The developer explained that it is a very challenging situation. Rail wants developer to buy another rail crossing further down before they close this one down.

DRAFT

- Comment on the advancement and technical solutions on current onsite sewage systems and view that we do not need a sewer to protect Baynes Sound.
- Comment that the speaker has serious reservations about scenarios 3 and 4. Reflecting on previous comment that you need to look at the quality and number of dwelling units, not just the quality. Considers that 300 units is not sustainable, it is too many.
- Comment also have a hard time accepting 300 units. Is there a more moderate number that can be considered? Concerned that there will be backlash when the wider community has their say.
- Question – Scenario 3 – What would happen if Scenario 3 was in the OCP and the Regional Growth Strategy amendment doesn't get approved?
- Planner Thompson explained that because its being done through the OCP, would have to go back and amend the policy to something that else that meets the Regional Growth Strategy.
- Planner Simpson explained scenario 3 Tourist Commercial doesn't speak to scale, but if supported the policy would be included to be consistent with the existing designation. About 20 units.
- Comment that we haven't really put any number to the cost of density transfer. If it's significant eg. \$10,000 that adds to the costs of a house and further distances it from being considered affordable.
- Planner Thompson explained the approval process for a Regional Growth Strategy amendment. He also confirmed that the Regional Growth Strategy has specific policies for no net growth outside of the Growth Containment Boundary.
- Concern that if houses located to close together increased fire risk and only have volunteer fire department.
- Planner Simpson explained that the OCP sets the high-level support for development, and the details related to fire protection would be determined at rezoning and permitting stage.
- Comment that there is no problem selling new houses in the area.
- Referring to the concept plan – concerned that this becomes a pattern of development. It establishes a pattern that Area H is open to market for developers.

Refreshment Break

- Planner Simpson explained that leading up to the open house the scenarios will be presented to the full community. Based on the Working Group input they may be further refined and presented to the community.
- Comment what is the threshold for Regional Growth Strategy amendment?
- Planner Thompson explained that there is no set number. Confirmed that we would like the broader community to look at the proposals before any recommendations can be determined and based on which scenario then we be able to determine if a Regional Growth Strategy amendment is needed.

DRAFT

- Comment estimates that about 11 people in favour of option 4 and others have not spoken at all. Appears to be a pretty good representation.
- Comments that it's not the role of the Working Group to discuss the fine details, as that can be dealt with at rezoning. Need to be supportive of property owners developing their land.
- Question about proposed sewer system, where can we find information about it.
- Confirmed can review the previous study submitted with the first application in 2011, which can be found on the RDN website along with the documents associated with the original application.
- Question on the location of the proposed sewer.
- Planner Simpson confirmed the proposed sewage treatment and disposal would be on lot B which is owned by BSI. Also, explained that this level of detail is addressed at the rezoning stage not as part of the OCP.
- Comment on sewage treatment facilities and the provincial requirements with respect to phosphate levels and temperature.
- Comment that sewer not that big and could be located within lot A or B.
- After this process is there a willingness to put forward something that may take away from Village Centre? Concern about the transparency on the process and what will eventually will go forward.
- Planner Simpson reminded the Working Group that staff do not make a final decision, and that is the role of the elected officials. She acknowledged that staff recommendations do carry weight, but staff is always listening to the community and will communicate to the Board the variety of opinions voiced in the community throughout this process.
- Planner Thompson said that all information and views get carried through to the end and all factor into the decision. The Working Group are not the only form of further consultation. Beyond the Working Group there will be the public open house, direct contact via Bowser office hours on Tuesday, email and telephone. The process is not over it is on-going.
- How do you put forward a single recommendation?
- When recommendation/ decision expected? Later this year in December likely.
- Would like some certainty that their opinion will be included when this goes forward.
- Comment that the OCP is about change based on public input. This is what we are doing.

3. PRESENTATION FROM PLANNING STAFF

Planner Simpson provided an overview of the changes and updates proposed in the entire draft OCP, and highlighted some of the significant and positive changes. She encouraged the Working Group members to review it and send comments to her. She underlined that it is a draft and she is expecting to still be making changes.

There was one comment that there should be a policy supporting no motors on Spider Lake.

DRAFT

4. NEXT STEPS, SUMMARY AND CLOSING

Director Veenhof made closing remarks.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 pm.