

Regional District of Nanaimo
Summary of the Electoral Area ‘A’ Official Community Plan Review
Citizen’s Committee Meeting Held on Monday, February 8, 2010 at 6:30pm
At the North Cedar Improvement District Hall
2100 Yellow Point Road

Joe Burnett	Chairperson
Devan Wyatt	Committee Member
Jack Anderson	Committee Member
Henrik Kriberg	Committee Member
Chris Pagan	Committee Member
Brian Collen	Committee Member
Joanne McLeod	Committee Member
Lynnia Clark	Committee Member
Garry Laird	Committee Member
Bert Vermaskari	Committee Member
Donna Sweeney	Committee Member
Greg Keller	Senior Planner
Stephen Boogaards	Recording Secretary

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm by the Chair. There were approximately 23 people in attendance.

MINUTES

The Chair asked the Committee for a motion to adopt the summary of the January 24, 2010 meeting.

Henrik Kriberg requested that the last sentence under the Nanaimo River Floodplain section be amended to say ‘development that happens according to the floodplain bylaw is exempt from the development permit area.’

MOVED Henrik Kriberg, SECONDED Bert Vermaskari, that the summary of the Area ‘A’ Citizen’s Committee meeting held on January 24, 2010 be adopted.

CARRIED

OFFICIAL COMMUNITY PLAN DRAFT

Greg Keller explained that the Committee has already reviewed each section of the draft Official Community Plan and have provided their comments. The intent of the meeting is to further refine each specific section and policies to prepare the document for community input.

Section 1 – Definitions

Joe Burnett asked the Committee if there were any comments or changes to the definitions section. The group discussed including a definition for agricultural zone and using the provincial definition for watercourse. Another recommendation was that definitions be included for ‘green building’, ‘greenspace’, and other terms that use ‘green.’

Section 2 - Introduction

Joe Burnett asked the Committee if there were any comments or changes to the introduction. The group discussed expanding the Official Community Plan review process section to acknowledge the work and consultation undertaken to produce the document. The group also discussed the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets and tools to encourage sustainable development, such as the sustainability checklist to fast-track green development.

Section 3 – Vision, Principles and Goals

Joe Burnett asked the Committee if there were any comments or changes to the vision or sustainability principles. The group discussed the implications of the vision and if it was being adequately represented in the policies of the plan.

Section 4 – Protecting the Natural Environment

Greg Keller explained that one of the most important messages received through the consultation was to protect groundwater and the environment. The policies in this section apply at the time of rezoning or are advocacy policies meant to influence other organisations. The group discussed using incentives and disincentives to safeguard the environment. Discussion also addressed the need for more information on available freshwater prior to any new development being approved.

One of the committee members identified problems with the wording for water-based aquaculture and the impacts with land based aquaculture. The Chair discussed the zoning implementation for coastal areas and explained that the committee had decided not to make any changes to zoning. The inconsistency will remain between the official community plan and the zoning bylaw. The group also made other general comments on the coastal areas such as the development permit area or recognition for marine conservation areas.

Greg Keller explained the jurisdiction over drinking water protection. The province regulates well drilling and septic, while the RDN regulates the land use over an aquifer. Regarding the impact of agriculture on drinking water the group suggested providing incentives for farmers to use organic practices or to steward drinking water. Comments also addressed protecting water rights for the existing community.

The group discussed how the sustainability checklist could work. The concept discussed was that developers building according to green standards pay less for a building permit and those not building to the standard pay more. The committee members discussed if the concept would be workable and fair. They also discussed if it could be cost neutral and be able to fund the building inspection function.

Section 5 – Creating a Local Food System

Greg Keller explained that the purpose of the section is to preserve the agricultural land based and promote local food production. The group discussed including provisions in the Official Community Plan to market the local food system and the effectiveness of using buffers around ALR land. The group also discussed the creation of a new zone for agriculture and the incorporation of complementary value added industries within the zone that may support farming operations.

One member identified a need to consider the impact that large monoculture operations have on the environment. The group discussed the number of houses on land within the ALR and the tenure appropriate to support farming operations but also to keep the land available for farming. The group also discussed amenities that may be received through rezoning, suggesting the addition of cold storages and abattoirs.

Section 6 - Creating Complete Communities

Joe Burnett asked the Committee if there were any comments or changes to the complete communities section. The group discussed the Cedar Estates section and the number of stories that should be permitted to the building. One of the committee members explained that the addition of the fourth storey would decrease the massing of the building. The Committee also discussed the status of the Regional Growth Strategy review and if the changes to the Official Community Plan would be incorporated into that document.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 pm.

Certified correct by:

Director Joe Burnett, Committee Chairperson