



Making a difference...together

**Notes of a Meeting of the East Sooke Citizens' Committee
Official Community Plan Review**

Held May 12, 2014 at East Sooke Fire Hall, 1397 Coppermine Road, East Sooke, BC

PRESENT: Zac Doeding, Neil Smith, Brian White, Stacey Scharf
Yale Shap, Rhonda Underwood, Roger Beck, Linda Nehra
Staff: Tracy Olsen, OCP Review Facilitator; Iain Lawrence, Planner

ABSENT: Adele Tomlinson; Jane Hutchins, Blair Cusack

PUBLIC: Approximately 14

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. Welcome

2. Acceptance of Agenda

Tracy Olsen informed the Committee that after the break tonight Marlene Berry will be giving a presentation on Healthy Communities.

3. Acceptance of Meeting Notes from April 14, 2014

The notes were accepted as written.

4. Status of Action Items

Background data for the settlement theme has been ordered. Getting detailed information on building permits is proving more challenging as until recently the statistics were not broken down by community. In order to obtain the number of new housing units constructed each year, all of the building permits issued for the whole Electoral Area must reviewed to determine which ones are for properties are in East Sooke.

5. Review and Discussion of Development Permit Area (DPA) No. 2: Foreshore and Marine Shoreline Areas and DPA No. 3 Watercourses, Wetlands and Riparian Areas

Over the summer, all of the DPAs will be rewritten based on a technical review by staff looking at details such as consistency of language and legislative compliance. At this stage in preparing the OCP, staff are asking the Citizens' Committee (CC) for any general comments or concern about DPAs. From a technical perspective, Tracy advised that an additional designation for hazardous conditions will likely be added to DPA No. 2.

One CC member inquired about the applicability of DPA guidelines to parkland and dedicated highway right of ways. This member is interested in what type of approvals might be necessary for constructing multi-use trails on public lands. Tracy advised that park related activities on parkland can be exempt from development permits. Work done by the Province on public right of ways is exempt but work by non-government groups may not be.

Enforcement related concerns were raised by a CC member regarding a wetland that has been filled in. Tracy said to contact the Juan de Fuca Local Area Services office to find out if the area is designated as DPA. If not, then a DP would not have been required. The *Riparian Area Regulation* do apply to all riparian areas regardless of whether on not they are designated as a DPA. This particular wetland may or may not be a riparian area.

Further to the discussion of road right of ways used for foreshore access, a CC member asked for clarification on how to develop these rights-of-way and was advised that a licence

of occupation was first required. The Province would still own the right of way. An agency or group who develops a right of way assumes a certain element of liability. A CC member noted that the CRD already has blanket insurance policy to which a new right of way could be added. Staff advised that the JdF Parks and Recreation Commission is not the only agency which can ask to develop a right of way. While the Commission has developed a few right of ways for public access, they have all been adjacent to existing parkland.

6. Roundtable Discussion of Transportation Theme

Staff explained that there is a legal obligation in OCP to describe certain conditions in the community which is the purpose behind the context sections in the discussion papers. At this stage in preparing the OCP, staff is looking for input from the CC on issues and community values before focusing on the detailed wording of the objectives and policies. There will be no CC meetings over summer during which time, staff will prepare a rough draft of the OCP. Using this approach, staff is hoping that much of the rough draft will be acceptable to the CC. To gather more public input before writing a rough draft, staff are considering a questionnaire.

CC members expressed support for smaller transit vehicles to service East Sooke. One CC member noted that the bus should travel along Seagirt Road. A BC Transit study indicates that Route #64 is below performance standards due to low ridership. A CC member asked that the term para-transit not be used because of possible negative connotations.

There was general consensus amongst CC members that road safety is being jeopardized by poor road maintenance. One CC member wanted to know what the annual budget for road maintenance in East Sooke is and how it is spent. Road crews from Mainroad Contracting have not been responsive to requests from East Sooke Fire Department for road repairs and maintenance. Road shoulders are eroding due to lack of gravel. One CC member felt that speeding cars are responsible for the damage to corners as they cut corners and wear back the asphalt edge. Damage is not necessarily being caused by large truck traffic as these trucks go slower staying on the pavement.

CC members asked that it be made very clear what type of trails are being referred to in the OCP by standardizing the terminology and adding definitions. Along the two main roads, multi-use trails separated by a ditch or swale from the road are preferred. Pedestrians, cyclists and scooters should be able to use this type of trail. Off-road trails would be trails constructed between existing secondary roads to provide greater connectivity in the community for walking and biking. One CC member stressed the importance of deciding on road servicing levels in advance of construction as once it is under construction, it is too late to change it. Another member wanted to know if Gas Tax money could be used to build trails. It was noted that a chip path will be built along the front of the new fire hall.

Safety on Gillespie Road was discussed by the CC. It is a wider road which should make it safer but it actually encourages people to drive faster making it less safe. Speed bumps on East Sooke and Gillespie Roads might slow down drivers improving safety.

Tracy explained that the OCP cannot compel the Province to improve its roads but the hope is to develop a sense of what the local priorities are and if an opportunity for road improvements arise, then there is some documentation for decision makers to refer to.

Alternative transportation options like the Jack Bell car pool program and the Bowen Island Car Lift program were explained. One CC member suggested that putting four people in a

car pool is cheaper than buying buses. In the past, the community investigated the feasibility of smaller transit vehicles like mini-vans but the Transit union was opposed to this concept and there were insurance issues. Another CC member said that the #64 bus route should go to the end of East Sooke Road. Another member said that Gas Tax monies should be directed towards transit.

Members agreed that the park and ride at the 17 Mile House is too small and noted parts of it encroach on private lands. It is a dangerous place to cross the highway. If this park and ride were relocated, it should still be sited along Highway #14 as people from East Sooke do not commute via Metchosin. The park and ride at the Juan de Fuca Recreation Centre is very busy. Committee members felt changes to the timing and routing of BC Transit buses in this area will increase ridership.

A CC member had concerns about having a policy (Item 323A) that requires transit planning be considered at the time of development. Another CC member suggested that a policy of this nature should be area specific. Tracy explained that a policy like this is intended for larger developments. Even though no large developments are anticipated, if you do not have a policy like this, you will not be prepared should this type of proposal arise. Tracy will rewrite the wording of this policy so it is clear that it applies to larger developments. Smaller developments might have do something but it should relative to the scale of development. Committee members did not think an objective (Item 322A) was applicable to East Sooke as there are no community nodes to integrate with transit planning.

One Committee member is concerned about the lack of servicing requirements for Rural A subdivisions and the potential conversion of these properties to fee simple ownership without requirements to improve servicing or dedicate parkland.

There was a request made to add a third objective around needs based transit. Youth can't go to Sooke in evenings as there is no bus service to get home. Transit should be made more accessible to the physically challenged. Committee members do not envision the need for electric charging stations in East Sooke (Item 323F).

Valerie Braunschweig, East Sooke, said BC Transit should look at the two corners at the intersection of Connie and Sooke Roads location for a park and ride. Shen noted the lack of HandiDART service to East Sooke other than for specific medical conditions.

Dick Mallett, East Sooke, reiterated the need for better maintenance of Gillespie Road. The gravel needs to be cleaned off shoulders for walkers and cyclists. He noted that the wrong type of gravel is being used to fix shoulders.

Bob Pelzer, East Sooke, also noted that gravel is left on the road making the shoulders unsafe for biking.

Heather Phillips, Otter Point, pointed out that the RAR only apply to certain fish bearing streams. DPAs can apply to all streams if shown on a map.

Gloria Snively, East Sooke, added that a relative uses the bus to visit her house on Seagirt Road but the connections between the Sooke #61 and East Sooke #64 buses are poor. She supports the bus coming along Seagirt Road and noted how dangerous East Sooke Road is for skate boarders. She asked about wetland location on private lands.

7. Presentation on Healthy Communities by Marlene Berry

Marlene Berry with the Sooke Volunteer Bureau and the former Chair of the Sooke Community Health Initiative was introduced. She has lived in Otter Point for over 20 years.

Marlene explained that Health Canada recommends looking at twelve indicators to determine the health of a community: Income and Social Status, Social Support Networks, Education and Literacy, Employment/Working Conditions, Social Environment, Physical Environment, Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills, Healthy Child Development, Biology and Genetic Endowment, Health Services, Gender and Culture. For tonight's presentation, Marlene selected some of the determinants which are applicable to East Sooke as the OCP is being reviewed.

East Sooke is going to continue to grow slowly but it is still growing. There is a need for the social infrastructure to keep up with residential growth. For example, there are no registered daycares in East Sooke. There are youth in the community whose recreational and social opportunities are contingent upon parents driving them to town. While there will never be a hospital in East Sooke, is there a space in East Sooke where health care providers can come to visit instead of having everyone drive into town?

Marlene related a story from "Toward a Healthy Future" that demonstrates the complexities which can lead to physical disease and injuries but are actually attributable to broader community health issues. In this story, a boy's leg injury could be linked back to a lack of local employment opportunities and daycare.

A healthy childhood is important to prevent obesity, stress and heart disease. Inactivity and lack of social interaction contribute to these diseases. The focus in the OCP on ways to improving connectivity for youth with walking and biking trails, identifying a gathering place and better access to transit is important.

East Sooke, like many rural communities, is characterized by long driveways. These long driveways provide privacy but can be an isolation factor if something goes wrong. What social supports can be brought into the community for seniors? Marlene gave examples of informal supports that can assist seniors with staying in their homes, such as a volunteer delivering groceries or gardening. This type of project is on the radar for Volunteer Bureau.

When new public facilities are built, they should be age friendly and not just for healthy adults, instead for all ages including youth, seniors, and moms with strollers. When building trails, make them as level as possible but maybe include some challenges for active youth. There are benefits to the whole community from active aging. Marlene will provide a link to an age friendly cities guide for any community with a population under 5000.

One option for alternative housing in rural communities is co-housing. Co-housing is an intentional community. One is being developed in Sooke for seniors from the surrounding area. In this development, people will own their house, but there will also be a common building for gathering and shared activities. The houses will have features to allow aging in place like wider doors and sinks that allow wheelchair access. In family based co-housing, you will see playgrounds.

People need to be forward thinking when making land use and servicing decisions and used the example of how, in the past, narrow road right of ways were taken but these right of way can not now accommodate increases and changes in traffic such as biking lanes.

Marlene encouraged people to engage youth and teach them about the land so they do not fear "going out into the wild" and said to keep youth in your community, because if they leave, others will follow.

8. Next Meeting

Tracy canvassed the Committee members regarding the meeting schedule. It was agreed that the next meeting of the CC is scheduled for 7:00, May 26, 2014 at the East Sooke Fire Hall. Settlement will be discussed at the June 9th meeting and can carry onto the June 23rd if need be.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Links to websites referred to by Marlene Berry referred along with her notations about the sites.

www.sookeregionresources.com

In addition to a wide range of community resources, on the Links Page you will find local documents and links to sites related health communities.

<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/ph-sp/determinants/index-eng.php>

More information on Canada's Determinants of Health

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/seniors-aines/alt-formats/pdf/publications/public/healthy-sante/age_friendly_rural/AFRRC_en.pdf Age-Friendly Rural and Remote Communities Guide

<http://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/topic.page?id=89CBC67AB21B4EB995A4A94246BD6D8A>

Provincial Age-Friendly Directorate

<http://www.sookeregionresources.com/transition-sooke>

<http://transitionsooke.org/>

The Sooke Transition Town Initiative is a local group of concerned residents committed to working together with all existing groups in Sooke to raise awareness of sustainable living and to build local resilience in the Sooke Region in anticipation of climate change, peak oil and economic uncertainty and inequity.

<http://www.sookeregionresources.com/canadian-senior-cohousing>

Sooke Region Organization promoting Seniors Based Cohousing

<http://www.sookeregionresources.com/harbourside-cohousing>

<http://www.harbourside.ca/>

Existing Seniors Cohousing development in progress. Well worth a visit to one of their open houses.

<http://www.cohousing.ca/>

Canadian Cohousing Network

<http://creeksidecommons.net/>

Courtney family based cohousing on acreage for farming and sustainable green spaces.