

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

Tuesday 25 November 2014 @ 5:30 pm

Location: Rifflandia HQ (1501 Douglas St)

Present: Wendy Bowkett, Ian Sutherland, Doug Boyd, Erika Luebbe, Nicholas Harrington, Robert Florida, Cathy Brankston, Kaela Schramm (Board members). Don Elliott (DRA member).

Regrets: Eric Ney, Lisa Helps

Meeting called to order at 5:30pm

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Approved with 1 deletion- category # 8 Communications.

2. **Approval of minutes of October 28th meeting.** Approved.

3. **Business arising from minutes:**

Ian: Ian attended the UDI luncheon Nov 17th. Dan Gunn CEO of VIATec was the guest speaker. A recent poll of the tech industry indicates Victoria, over Toronto, Vancouver, and San Francisco, is the top choice of places to live and work for people in this industry. Compared to the other cities; Victoria is not as expensive for either office space or housing. Currently more than 200 tech companies are located downtown, others are in Saanich at Vancouver Island Tech Park, and at Keating Cross Rd. This \$4 billion industry is not obvious, as these companies sell outside of Victoria. Therefore no local advertising or large office presence is needed.

Wendy: Lisa Helps (newly elected Mayor) will be our guest speaker at the AGM Jan 8th 2015. Kaela was tasked to complete the 2 posters for posting and distribution.

Doug: Doug, Cathy, and Nicholas attended the VCAN meeting Nov 4th at City Hall. Topics were Safe and Active Streets, Best practices workshop – Political Advocacy and Lobbying, and Best practices workshop – Community Assn Outreach and Engagement. VCAN has asked each neighborhood to send in their number of members. Wendy will arrange. VCAN started with the Safe Streets initiative and their mandate is to provide a platform for all neighborhood associations.

Wendy: VCAN has asked each neighbourhood association to send facilitators at least 5 priorities related to Safe Streets and Active Transportation and for the total number of members for each NA. Wendy will send relevant items identified at the October 1st Livability forum. She will send to board members for their input. The CFAX radio interview went well, and a follow-up broadcast in six months would be ideal.

4. Councillors Report: Not applicable as Lisa is now our new Mayor elect. City will appoint a new councillor liaison in the new year. Thanks to Lisa for all her hard work as our representative.

5. Community Development Committee: Kaela

Kaela has just sent out the invites for our last RR event of 2014. Monday Dec 1st at the Drake Eatery 517 Pandora Ave from 6-8pm. All DRA members are welcome, friends also. A great way to showcase our downtown eateries and amenities. Please bring a donation for Our Place. Socks, hats, mittens, or a cash donation will be appreciated. The social event at Peacock Billiards is being finalized. Date being discussed is Dec 11th.

Next meeting of the Community Development Committee will be announced at a later date.

6. Healthy Living Committee: Eric (away)

Survey: Nicholas: Nicholas and Robert will review the board's comments and make changes as deemed necessary.

Van Taxi: Wendy: Gary Pemberton, Downtown Programs Liaison (Late Night Great Night) has contacted Wendy regarding the proposed Van Taxi asking for more info. Wendy forwarded request to Eric and he followed up with Gary.

Next meeting date for Healthy Living Committee: to be announced.

7. Land Use Committee: Ian

840 Fort St – Sawyer building. Three Point Properties.

The developer recently requested another meeting with LUC, with regards to changes to their design. They also asked Ian to send a new letter to the Advisory Design Panel. Ian mentioned that some improvements in materials have been addressed, though livability is still an issue. This building will be affordable rental micro-units, with commercial ground floor fronting Fort St.

595 Pandora Ave – Cielo Properties – Stan Sipos

The Land Use Committee recently met with Stan Sipos to review the plans. No CALUC was required. This is the old Service Canada building. Two stories will be added, also some balconies. Ground floor will have 5,000 sq ft of commercial space broken into small spaces. The additional commercial space along with 51 new rental units will contribute to the liveability and vibrancy of this section of Pandora. Ian felt the units were a generous size, which helps keep a mix of families for downtown. The Janion building just down the street on Pandora and Wharf is a condo-micro-unit development. Ian will draft a letter including the LUC members input, and send to City planning and Council.

8. Communications: Tabled

9. New Business:

Wendy: Our next meeting will be the AGM on Jan 8th. Wendy reminded committee chairs and officers that reports will be due by Jan 5th. Doug Boyd as treasurer will submit a 2015 budget. 30 days notice to members is required to hold AGM and amend any bylaws. Kaela will have the posters ready before the deadline. Robert suggested posters be mailed to "chairman of strata boards". Board members will receive by email, to post on their own bulletin boards. Wendy will provide other street addresses from her supply of downtown maps. Cathy will organize food and beverages. Money spent last AGM was \$130.00.

DRA is allowed 13 board members, presently 9 are on the board. We welcome current members to attend AGM and nominate and/or stand for a position. Wendy and Robert will approach some candidates that they feel are a good fit. Downtown residents are welcome to attend, join the DRA and have a say in downtown's future. Wendy will draft a change to our bylaws regarding terms of office and send to board members for review. Proposed changes are to amend the terms imposing a max of 2 (3yr) terms of office but include a limitation that no board member will hold the same executive office for longer than 2 (3 yr) terms.

A discussion was held regarding the newly elected city council. DRA plans to be proactive regarding our new council liaison. We need an advocate and to be more informed of all matters that affect our area and members. Feedback and clarity are needed. There is much value in formalizing new procedures to enhance our voice at council and in our community. Wendy will attend the meeting with mayor and council and other NA chairs on 18th Dec to provide input on the process and role. Meeting goals are to reshape the role of our council rep and to identify the kind of skills and experience required from our liaison. Provide input on neighbourhood challenges and opportunities for the next four years.

NA LUC chairs will address Mayor elect and council at an upcoming PLUC meeting. Future budgeting is planned to fast track neighborhood plans. The Downtown Core Area Plan has recently been updated but is the only one completed. There is an opportunity to raise other issues such as ensuring that development projects are being built as proposed and if they are not, ensure that there is some accountability. Ian will attend and report back to board.

Lorne Daniels, managing director of Grandview Consulting, and founder of the Greater Victoria Placemaking Network has asked to liaise with DRA. Wendy will contact Lorne.

Wendy has been invited to be the guest speaker at The Belvedere AGM, located in Humboldt Valley and part of the DRA jurisdiction.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:55pm

NEXT meeting is our AGM

Thursday Jan 8th 2015 5:30 to 7:30pm at the Downtown Community Centre 755 Pandora Ave. All members and guests are welcome to attend. Our new mayor elect Lisa Helps is the guest speaker. Come to meet and hear Lisa's vision for the next 4 years. Refreshments will be provided.

Next regular board meeting will be in 2015. Date to be announced.