

# **DRA Board Meeting Jan 30<sup>th</sup> 2013**

## **Held at Victoria Silver Threads**

**Present:** Wendy Bowkett, Ian Sutherland, Robert Florida, Cathy Brankston, Bryan Alonzo, and Councillor Lisa Helps

**Regrets:** Hugh Kruzel

Meeting called to order at 7:03 pm.

**1: Approval of Agenda:** Approved with one change in sequence. 3: New Business Communications Strategy will be first item on the agenda, as Bryan has to leave the meeting early.

**2: Approval of minutes from Nov 14th meeting.** Approved.

**3: New business: Communication Strategy;** Bryan;

Robert Florida in conjunction with Wendy, have taken over responsibility for DRA website and newsletter. Bryan together with Robert will issue our next newsletter in early Feb. Email communications thru [info@victoriadra.ca](mailto:info@victoriadra.ca) will be now answered by Wendy, and distributed as required. As Wendy and Ian will be away until mid April, there will not be any events scheduled. Lisa will continue to send pertinent city council items to be posted on our website. Bryan's expertise has been invaluable to our communications plans. The new Logo, website design, sign on with Event Brite and numerous other enhancements have raised the DRA profile immensely. Bryan has stated he will remain a member and be as active as possible.

**4: Business Arising from Minutes:** Wendy

Public phone near Wild Fire Bakery: the phone was slated for removal late January but has not been done as of the meeting. Wendy queried whether the entire phone box and signage will be removed, or just the phone itself. It was expressed that the entire system should be removed.

AGM:

Held Sat Jan 7<sup>th</sup> 2013 at Downtown Community Centre. Minutes will be made available on our website [victoriadra.ca](http://victoriadra.ca)

The presentation of the coming Public Market by Philippe Lucas was enjoyed by all. The suggestion was made to hold our next AGM on a weekday evening, rather than a Saturday to ensure a larger turnout.

## **5: Councillor's Report: Lisa**

The city has been undertaking budget consultations at various venues in the month of January. An online survey is still available till Feb 8<sup>th</sup>. Everyone is encouraged to participate. Website [Victoria.ca](http://Victoria.ca) under City Hall and under Budget; see Related links " Online Budget Survey ".

Consultations will also be held regarding property tax exemption status. The last proposed change to permissive tax exemption was made in 2005. Those recommendations have not been enacted as yet. City council is proposing a ten-year phase in for the 18 properties in question and possibly a percentage of budget cap on exemption status.

City hall is pursuing possible tax reductions for homeowners who manage catchment of rainwater in accordance to the sustainability initiatives for better management of storm water utilities. Feb 15<sup>th</sup> is the city's target date for information distribution. No details available for our numerous condo/apartment buildings.

The Johnson St Bridge project will start construction between April and October. City has proposed quarterly shared meetings with the Victoria West and Downtown/Harris Green Community groups. A tentative date has been set for Tues April 30<sup>th</sup>. Location TBA.

City is currently working on a 3-year budget plan. The Harbour pathway is a top priority. Talks are ongoing with Saanich and other levels of government in regards to joint funding for Rock Bay improvements and the Douglas St Corridor.

Harbour Air's proposal for a floating terminal will be brought before city council in the near future. Details will be on the city website and in local paper.

## **6: Community Development Committee: Wendy**

Latest Roving Refinery event was held at Chorizo & Co on Jan 16<sup>th</sup>. Chorizo is a newly opened Spanish deli located at 807 Fort St. 18 DRA members enjoyed a wonderful assortment of sausages, meatballs with romesco sauce, fig bread, an assortment of cheeses and many other delicious nibbles. Wine and beer were available for purchase. Three attendees each won a \$25.00 gift certificate. It was a great event allowing time to talk & mingle with owners Tomas & chef Antonio and also other downtown residents. Two residents signed up to become members following the RR event. Building a community is one of our goals, sign up to become a member and keep informed on current issues and events.

Zambri's and also Yates St Taphouse were mentioned as possible locations for our next event.

## **7: Land Use Committee Report: Ian**

### Janion Hotel:

A LUC meeting was held with the developers and architects on Jan 15<sup>th</sup>. The developer will be seeking a development permit, with a few variances. Rezoning is not required. The panel was in support of the proposal, with suggestions for improvements. Commendable that the heritage building will retain interior fixtures, staircases and skylights. No additional stories will be added to the existing heritage building. Some concerns were use of modern glazing design, close proximity to Store St neighbor, treatment of the addition, and noise level from traffic. This prominent building requires quality materials and much attention to details to enhance this “ Old Town “ property. The LUC chairman will send a letter to city.

Discussion points regarding this site were concerns for the bridge approaches on both sides of Pandora Ave. On the portion of city-owned property; the usage would be greatly enhanced to move the planned downward ramp to the opposite street side. This would allow a much larger plaza area for public gatherings, benches, etc. The ramp area would then be much more convenient for pedestrians. These points have been discussed at previously held city consultations.

### 603 Pandora Ave: Plaza Hotel

LUC met for the second time since Nov /12 with architect Eric Barker and the developer. Substantial changes have been made to the original drawings. Many previous concerns from the LUC have been addressed; such as the removal of balconies from Government St side, more significant setback for additional stories, green roof and atrium/courtyard treatment. Continuing concerns are security issues at courtyard and residential entrance. A letter will be sent to the city supporting the proposal, with considerations as noted. This development has brought together the building’s heritage aspect on Government St and the new build for Pandora Ave in a very cohesive way. Located across from Centennial Square, this building will enhance the open area/green space that is needed in downtown.

### 840 Fort St:

Development permit has lapsed, however a new public meeting is not required.

### 615 Fort St:

Minor adjustments have been made to façade. No public meeting is required. LUC meeting was held Dec 2012 with architect Allan Lowe.

819 Yates:

Introductory meeting with David Chard regarding property opportunities. A formal LUC meeting will be held at a later date.

1075 Pandora Ave:

A letter from the Mondrian developers has been sent to City Hall mayor, council and staff, with a copy to the DRA. Concerns are being raised regarding noise, calculation of SFR, proposed height of buildings, and consideration of the livability guidelines of Harris Green neighborhood. Lisa Helps has had some discussion with architect Peter De Hoog regarding these issues. The board also discussed potential concerns regarding noise carried and loss of energy efficiency with the design of outside open hallways.

**8: Postponed Business:** Wendy

Motorbikes with illegal pipes were discussed again. No action seems to have been taken by Province or City/Policing staff. DRA has planned to generate a web survey this spring and bring concerns/issues raised to the appropriate government groups. Chris Coleman mentioned to Wendy that this could possibly be an election issue to reach a broader group of Victoria / CRD citizens.

Asset mapping for new residents: Tabled.

**Date for next meeting: Wed April 24<sup>th</sup>.**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.