

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

Wed Aug 28 2013

Location: Victoria Silver Threads

Present: Wendy Bowkett (DRA Chair), Ian Sutherland (LUC Chair), Cathy Brankston (Secretary), Robert Florida, Eric Ney (Board members), Lisa Helps (City Councillor).

Meeting called to order at 7:00 pm

1. Approval of agenda. Approved with 4 items added to new business.

2. Approval of meeting minutes of July 24 2013. Approved by consensus.

3. Business arising from minutes.

Meeting with Sage Baker, newly appointed Director of Economic Development: Action: to be discussed with Lisa's report.

4. Councillor's Report: Lisa

Council took a summer break from July 25th to August 22 with the exception of some meetings to work through the changes to the organization.

The key changes, announced yesterday, include:

- a.) Integrating sustainability into the departments of planning and engineering and letting the Director of Sustainability go. Renaming the planning department the Department of Sustainable Planning and Community Development.
- b.) Doing away with a level of management by eliminating the General Manager of Operations and not creating a General Manager of Strategic Services.

This fall council will:

- a.) Finish the 2013-2015 budget
- b.) Review our priorities and see if there is room to add anything to what we hope to accomplish in the remainder of our term (**any ideas from DRA welcome!**)
- c.) Finish our governance work and in particular decide on the best ways for the public to give council information – advisory committees? More time to speak at Council meetings? Etc.
- d.) Continue with the regular work of the city
- e.) Hire a new city manager

Lisa has sent an email of introduction to Sage Baker and Wendy Bowkett. Wendy and Sage will coordinate to explore whether Sage is willing meet with the DRA board to discuss DRA and area residents concerns. DRA board has requested to have meeting set the evening of one of our regular board meetings.

Discussed:

The City Parking Service review will be available in October. Ian and Eric will attend a committee meeting Aug 29th.

The hiring of a new city manager: Meetings are ongoing with city staff and councillors to develop a profile of requirements needed for the position. Input from DRA members would be helpful.

Lisa has requested that members send a list of important issues that are a concern. Please email lhelps@victoria.ca by Oct 2nd. Amalgamation information meeting is being held Oct 2nd. The DRA will create a posting on our website where residents can post their comments and concerns.

Communications through the newsletter, FB and twitter will drive users to our site. Concerns and ideas can be sent via DRA until Oct 2nd, and will be passed on to Lisa prior to council's first meeting. There will be a second meeting of council on the issue later in the month and we will continue to petition the public for responses through our website et al.

Suggestions arising from the meeting: Removal of the communication department to enable direct interaction with departments.

Set new salary guidelines; benchmark with Provincial salary scales.

5. Community Development Committee; Wendy

Meeting was held Wed Aug 14th at QV Bakery & Café.

Graham Briggs is continuing to develop a forum for community meetings. Our first public meeting, scheduled Oct 2nd 7pm at Victoria Event Centre, will be on the subject of Amalgamation. Further information is available on our web site victoriadra.ca. A media message will be sent out soon. All are welcome to attend.

Roving Refinery event scheduled for Sept 17th at Foo Restaurant has been fully subscribed. Check out this popular restaurant located at 769 Yates (Yates and Blanchard) and see why the available spaces were taken so quickly. Introduce yourselves as a neighbor to the staff/owners.

The next Roving events will be held in late October at Yates Street Taphouse and late November at Zambri's. Members will receive notification by email when dates are confirmed. Continue to check out twitter, Facebook and DRA site for updates. There won't be an event in December as it's typically a busy time of year for people. The Guild has committed to host an event in January.

The Yates /Blanshard area is continuing to expand as vibrant urban center.

Next meeting for the Community Development Committee is scheduled for 5:30 pm Wed Sep 11th at QV Bakery & Café.

6. Healthy Living Committee: Eric Ney

Meeting was held Tues Aug 22nd 7pm at QV Bakery & Café.

The meeting was well attended and many ideas were discussed. The goal is to develop 3 or 4 action items for the committee members to pursue. The intention is to also recruit other interested citizens to join the committees that they feel will give them an option to have their voice heard. More community participation equals a broader say in concerns/events.

Block Watch: Discussions will be held with Vic PD. Nicholas Harrington will meet with Bruce Cuthbert, Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce. Esquimalt has a very viable Block Watch program in place.

Noisy Pipes: Vancouver city and also Calgary have implemented similar new noise bylaws, complete with updated technology to determine if an infraction has taken place. This will be explored further as no reason to reinvent the wheel, just to move this ongoing irritant to a more satisfactory end.

Next meeting is scheduled for Wed Sept 18th 7pm at QV Bakery & Café.

7. Land Use Committee: Ian

603 Pandora Ave: Plaza Hotel: Public hearing was held Thurs July 25th. Thanks were given to the DRA for speaking at the hearing. The project will move ahead, 3 councillors out of 8 voted no.

Johnson St Bridge: The project seems to be moving along well. Ken Jarvela is in charge. The JSB website has up-to-date pertinent information. The decision was made not to have a joint construction meeting with the JSB and Vic West. If Victoria West Community Assn. decides to host such a meeting, the DRA will promote it to our members if they want to attend. Wendy will send an email to the relevant people declining the offer to host. Ian Sutherland will continue to follow up with city reps to discuss our ongoing concerns re treatment of bridge approaches and public spaces. Lisa Helps will also try to make inroads in getting a response from appropriate city staff.

1075 Pandora Ave: former BCAA site: Final plans were submitted to the city today. No variances have been requested. Ian will send the revised plans to LUC members when they have been received.

Smoken Bones Cookshack 1701 Douglas St: A request for an extension to their current liquor license has been submitted to extend hours from midnight to 1 am and to allow a patron participation endorsement in the interior of the premise only. Ian will send a copy to LUC members for comments and then draft a letter to the city to give DRA's input.

Little Jumbo Restaurant Lower Fort St.: A request to extend open hours from midnight to 1 am was submitted to city. Ian will send on to LUC members for comments and send a letter to city staff.

8 New Business: Wendy

A new bank account signatory is required as we need a second signatory to replace Hugh Kruzel. Robert Florida has volunteered. Wendy, Robert and Hugh will make the arrangements with Coast Capital.

Robert Florida mentioned that the city benches on Cormorant and Douglas Sts near the Corazon have been the subjects of many concerns to the area residents. Much drug and alcohol activity has been

noted. Suggestions were to move the benches to Centennial Square and replace the benches with large planter boxes at the site.

Pandora Community meeting: Cathy:

Good neighbor agreement meetings are held at Our Place the 3rd Tues of each month. The immediate neighbors from the 1100 to the 800 block Pandora are invited to attend. Church and Vic PD officials also attend. The objective is to air concerns and work together to improve the neighborhood for all residents. The meetings have been ongoing for 4 years. Cathy has been attending when possible. At the meeting held Tues Aug 20th, changes in the area were discussed, as well as the success of Our Place's baseball games at Beacon Hill and the extended opening hours on Saturday and Sunday. The lack of police patrols and increased activity was mentioned as a concern to many. Homelessness and harm reduction were also discussed.

The DRA monthly meeting time was discussed. 7 pm is not always suitable for everyone and so the board elected to change the regular meeting time to 5:30 pm.

The next monthly meeting will be held Wed Sept 25th at 5:30 pm at Silver Threads.

All members are welcome to attend.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 pm.