

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

Sept 25 2013

Location: Victoria Silver Threads

Present: Wendy Bowkett (DRA Chair), Ian Sutherland (LUC Chair), Cathy Brankston (Secretary), Robert Florida and Eric Ney (Board Members), Lisa Helps (City Liaison)

Meeting called to order at 5:35 pm

1. **Approval of agenda:** Approved with one new item City Parking Review update.
2. **Approval of minutes of Aug 28th:** Approved by consensus.
3. **Business arising from minutes: Wendy**

Meeting with newly appointed City Economic Development Director Sage Baker has been scheduled for Wed October 23rd at our monthly board meeting. This discussion will be the first item on the agenda at the new meeting time of 5:30 pm. Members have expressed an interest in having an opportunity to hear Sage's role in the city and discuss DRA and residents ideas. The meeting notice will also be posted on the Facebook page. All members are welcome to attend any board meeting.

Robert Florida has been designated as the second signatory for DRA's banking transactions at Coast Capital. Robert has taken over the responsibility from Hugh Kruzel.

Appeal for ideas for city priority setting has not generated more traffic on DRA's site, however with the directive to email Lisa at lhelps@victoria.ca, Lisa has received many emails and welcomes more. Lisa will have a staff report soon and plans to hold 2 meetings with residents. Tentative dates will be in the 3rd week of October. See Lisa's Facebook page for exact dates and times. DRA sites will also add notification.

City benches on Cormorant near Douglas St have been moved. Neighborhood concerns were mentioned at last month's DRA meeting and city officials took prompt action.

4. **Councillor's Report: Lisa**

Hiring procedures are still ongoing for a new city manager. A profile was established and all of city council had been involved in that process. A short list of 10 applicants will be narrowed to 4 interviews and then a choice from the top two. November is the target date for an announcement and ideally the new manager would be able to start as soon as possible. The budget review for 2013-2015 has been completed. Taxes will be kept to an increase of 3.25% per year. The savings realized from removing some management positions should mean that no services will have to be cut. New construction revenues are down for this year but expected to

be higher for the coming year. Collective agreements have annual wage increases negotiated, so some increase in city operating expense is unavoidable. A seminar Union of BC Municipalities was held recently. The subject was "Will Cities Survive". Thoughts are that more help is needed from Provincial and Federal governments to allow cities to continue to maintain and enhance liveability. A police board meeting is scheduled for this Friday; a quorum needs to be established so that our new Police Chief can be hired.

Ian mentioned the food scraps program that has been in the news lately. Lisa stated public participation has been good so far and capacity problems are being addressed.

5. Community Development Committee: Wendy

Two meetings of the committee have been held since August. Public Forum "Victoria Matters" is on schedule for Wed Oct 2nd 7pm at Victoria Event Centre on Broad St. Graham Briggs will emcee event and tables will be provided for speakers and DRA board. Seating capacity is 170 people and cash bar will be available. This event is also an opportunity for a one on one discussion of ideas and concerns. At last count, 1293 viewings for this event were tabulated on Facebook. Media is invited and this will provide an opportunity to connect with more citizens in the greater Victoria area. Discussions held regarding JSB had many participants from outlying areas from Sidney to Sooke. Posters have been printed in DRA colours. Guests will be asked to sign in on arrival. Contact information and membership registration for the DRA will be available at the DRA table. Non-residents are welcome to join DRA as a non-voting member.

Roving Refinery event held Sept 17th at Foo Restaurant was a great success. The weather could have meant a non-starter. However with our instant communication through Event Brite, twitter, emails etc. Wendy was able to keep all informed with immediate updates. The weather did co-operate after all, which is so common in Victoria. Two new non-resident members joined and attend the Foo event. These events are a great way to learn about our neighborhood and meet new people. They two recent joiners have just moved to Victoria from Austin, Texas and settled in James Bay area and signed up as members shortly after the event.

The next scheduled RR event will be held at The Taphouse on Yates St on 16th October. Announcement will be posted in the October newsletter. Sign up early as the last events have reached maximum capacity.

Next committee meeting will be Tues Oct 10th at 5:30pm. Meeting place TBA

6. Healthy Living Committee: Eric

Recent meeting of the committee was held Tues Sept 24th. Bruce Cuthbert from Esquimalt Chamber of Commerce and Block Watch program spoke on the successes of their ongoing

program. 35% of Esquimalt residents participate in Block Watch. The Esquimalt group is working towards having local businesses start their own Block Watch program. Bev Stewart from Victoria Police Block Watch also spoke.

Graham Briggs and Rachel are planning to run a survey through Survey Monkey. As the free Survey Monkey poll allows only 5 questions, the DRA board voted to pay for a larger questionnaire to be implemented. Further information will be posted on Victoria DRA's website, Facebook etc.

Noisy pipes continue to be an issue. Eric is compiling researched trends across Canada. Many cities are using bylaws as an enforcement issue; where-as Provincial fines can be tied directly to driver licenses and could be more effective.

A discussion was held concerning the recent Rifflandia Festival and letters appearing in the newspapers. Some concerns were the lateness of the closing times and the noise carrying into neighborhoods. City officials had attended daily and found the music level was acceptable, only when the crowd cheered loudly was the meter a little high. This event and the many others throughout the year bring vibrancy, tax dollars, support for local business and generally an increased awareness of all Victoria can offer. Care should be given that one neighborhood area doesn't bear the burden of all noisy events. We have lost the sound of the train whistle, but Christ Church Cathedral still rings clearly every Sunday morning.

Next meeting of committee TBA

7. Land Use Committee: Ian

Johnson St Bridge; Lisa is expecting an update very soon.

1075 Pandora Ave: Ian has received revised plans. Ian will contact developer to request larger copies and then arrange a meeting with just the LUC members to discuss the changes.

Letter of support for Little Jumbo Restaurant's request to allow extended hours has been sent to city.

Letter of non-support for Smoken Bones Cookshack for an extension of hours and patron participation was also delivered to city.

1501 Douglas St – Previous location of the Royal Bank located across from City Hall.

Ian and Wendy recently met with Robert Jawl and Franc D'ambrosio regarding Jawl's development proposal for this site (which includes the parking lot that backs onto the Rotherham building. Two commercial buildings are planned, with 6 storeys fronting Douglas St

and the back of the site to be 12 storeys. Both buildings will have ground-floor retail and common underground parking. Initial plans call for the 6 storeys and parking lot to be phase 1. Jawls are in contact with owners of the Rotherham site to work on a pleasing integration of the two properties. The Douglas St build will take into consideration the site line requirement for the City Hall building. Green roof, lots of green space, swales similar to the Atrium site and a rotunda are envisioned. A CALUC meeting will be held Mon Oct 28th. DRA will post further details when available. The developer would like to begin the build as soon as possible.

Eric has requested a site tour of Hudson Mews from Townline Properties but hasn't received any answer as yet. It's suggested that when Townline is considering a 'topping off' ceremony that they may be agreeable to include the DRA in the event.

Ian and Eric met with Izmo regarding the City Parking Service review. High points include consideration to change the fee schedule, as the parkades are quite full with monthly users. Options could be free evenings in the parkades after a certain time in order to free up street meters for shoppers, restaurant, and club goers. Evening workers tend to plug meters till 6pm and take up a spot for the night. This review will be sent to city council for discussion and implementation.

8. New Business: Wendy

Free cloud server account, "Drop Box" is full. Wendy has upgraded the account from 2.5 GB to 100GB at a cost of \$99.00 per year. All were in agreement.

Newsletter: Mystery photo contest; Lots of fun and a gift certificate to be won. Be a detective. A discussion was held regarding rules of entering. We will limit the number of wins for one person in a year period unless we don't get a unique person who submits a correct answer. DRA has distributed all gift certificates purchased from Bon Macaron and it was decided to purchase additional \$10.00 certificates from previous Roving Refinery vendors. Habitat Café on Pandora Ave was mentioned as one of the very first RR events years ago.

Next board meeting will be held Wed Oct 23rd at Silver Threads.

Reminder: Victoria Matters meeting Wed Oct 2nd at 7pm

Victoria Event Centre 2 -1415 Broad St (upstairs)