

# DRA Board Meeting Draft Minutes

22<sup>nd</sup> April 2014

**Present:** Wendy Bowkett (Chair), Ian Sutherland, Kaela Schramm, Nicholas Harrington, Cathy Brankston, Robert Florida, Eric Ney (Board Members), Lisa Helps (City Councillor), Don Elliott DRA member. Guests: Murray Rankin, MP for Victoria and Ismo Husu, Manager Parking Services at City of Victoria.

**Regrets:** Doug Boyd, Erika Luebbe

Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm.

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Approved; with one addition under New Business.
2. **Guest: Murray Rankin MP;** Murray is the MP for Victoria/Oak Bay area first elected in Nov 2012. His home is in Oak Bay and constituency office is located at 1057 Fort St. Murray has resided in Victoria for 35 years. A graduate of Harvard Law School, Murray taught at UVIC as a Professor of Law and an adjunct professor, also has been in private practice since that time. Murray spoke on the concerns facing the City, business owners, and residents. Concerns are the move of government offices from downtown and also downsizing of staff and office space. Technology firms are a good fit in the core. Employees are likely to be younger and would embrace the vibrant lifestyle of restaurants, night life, easy access to transport, etc. VIATeC has purchased 777 Fort St and will house their start-up accelerator program for new tech companies. Portland and Seattle have similar “Incubator” projects, providing workspace and mentorship to new companies. DVBA, Shop Local Group and many business owners are very supportive of initiative to attract more tech companies. Another concern facing residents is the ongoing issue of affordability of housing. The Federal Government should have more flexible options for helping to solve the issue in our most expensive cities, i.e. Victoria and Vancouver. Recent proposed changes to Canada Post service cuts and delivery methods are a concern for all CRD residents. Safety, security and lack of easy accessibility are major items to address. Murray answered questions from DRA. Nicholas will add more detailed information in our next newsletter. Wendy thanked Murray for speaking to the board.
3. **Guest: Ismo Husu,** Manager Parking Services City of Victoria.  
Parking Policy has been under review by the city for the past year and a half. Reviewing rate structure was one of the first steps; a focus on improved customer service is ongoing. Primary goals are:
  - To provide efficient parking for business, residents, shoppers and visitors;
  - Managing traffic and higher turnover of on-street parking;
  - More utilization of the city’s five parkades, possibly through better way-finding signage. Parkades are open 24/7, free after 6pm and all day on Sundays.

- Increasing parking rates in certain high demand areas to encourage more use of parkades, bicycles and pedestrian traffic. Rates would increase in 835 spots and decrease in 2350. Paying for parking is a way of having others from outside the core, pay for upkeep and use of the services.

An on-line survey regarding proposed changes is posted on the City website. On “Home” page, under “Latest News “. May 2nd is the last day to state your views and concerns. A question and answer period followed. Wendy thanked Ismo for keeping the DRA up-to-date on this relevant concern.

4. **Approval of minutes of Feb 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.** Approved by consensus.
5. **Approval of minutes of Mar 25<sup>th</sup> meeting.** Approved by consensus
6. **Business arising from Minutes.**
  - a) LUC notices to be sent by e-mail. Lisa said the city legal department is checking on this matter. Presently notices are mailed through Canada Post. E-mail to the LUC chair would make distribution to LUC members more efficient.
  - b) Letter of endorsement for the Cool Aid Housing Development Plan. Wendy (Chair) said all board members are in agreement .The letter captures the board’s comments from our Mar 25<sup>th</sup> meeting with Kathy and Alan from Cool Aid. DRA will post on our website for members to read and to send to city, federal/provincial governments and other interested parties.
7. **Councillor’s Report: Lisa**

On-line survey regarding budget on city website “ Have your Say” regarding new draft Financial Plan 2014-2018. An open house will be held April 23rd at 5pm and 7pm. Webcast is available on-line on city website, under “ Latest News “ click “ Feedback Invited on Draft Financial Plan” and then “viewable online “. A biking survey is also on-line under “Community “ click “ Cycling “. Harbour consultations are being planned. Ideas forum and information sessions are to come soon. Dates to be announced asap. Up- coming engagement events such as workshops and information sessions are also listed. Public meetings this week do not have any Downtown/Harris Green sites listed.
8. **Community Development Committee: Kaela**
  - a) Victoria Matters Forum: Sewage Treatment - April 2nd at Victoria Event Centre on Broad St. View points from four panellists were presented. The evening was well-attended and written questions from the audience kept everyone on topic. CTV filmed the event for newscast, videos regarding viewpoints from sessions in other CRD sites are posted on YouTube – see The Rite Plan.
  - b) Roving Refinery Mar 20th Peacock Billiards. Owner David Peacock gave interesting tour of the building and his career in billiards. Everyone had a good time. For future RR events, Kaela will send out a notice a few days before, of the up-coming date and time through

Event Brite as a reminder to attend. Capacity for each event is set by the owner of the host business.

- c) Next RR event is scheduled for Tues April 29th at Catalano Restaurant & Cicchetti Bar 619 Courtenay St from 6pm to 8pm. Tickets are still available through Event Brite. Check DRA website. Free to DRA members. Good opportunity to meet your neighbours, meet the managers and staff of Catalano, explore downtown, and a chance to win a Catalano restaurant gift certificate. Please bring a can of food, or cash donation to be distributed to Our Place. Next RR event will be end of May. Date and place TBA.
- d) Next Community Development Committee meeting will be held Thurs May 1st 5:30pm at QV Bakery.

#### 9. **Healthy Living Committee: Eric**

- a) Block Watch: Nicholas is arranging a meeting with Ken Kelly DVBA. A challenge as Ken has been extremely busy with other scheduled events.
- b) Noisy Motorbike pipes: Eric has met with Spencer Chandra Hebert MLA for Vancouver-West End. Spencer has been working with Vancouver City and various groups gathering research. Vancouver City Police set up test spots periodically. Next steps for the committee could be to involve our local MLA. DRA could approach the Victoria City regarding any bylaws that could be passed. Eric will request copies of other municipalities' bylaws. Eric will write a presentation to deliver to Victoria Police Chief Elsner.
- c) Survey. Will check with Rachel regarding progress.
- d) Next Healthy Living Committee meeting May 21st 7pm at QV Bakery.

#### 10. **Land Use Committee: Ian**

- a) Executive House Hotel/Bartholomew's: This is the second request by the Hotel to expand occupancy for the bar over the years. This establishment is in close proximity to many residential units in the Humboldt Valley. Residents in the area have been very against an increase in the number of patrons allowed. DRA has sent a letter to the City declining support for the request if noise and security issues aren't mitigated.
- b) West Coast Waffles: Changes to hours of service. A letter of support for this request was sent to the City. No residential units are in the area, and another place to provide a food option in the late evening will be good for downtown.
- c) 1823 Douglas St: DRA will send a letter stating our views of non-support for this development application. No meeting was required to be held with the Land Use Committee as there are no variance requests. LUC believes a more substantial building without surface parking would better meet the OCP guidelines. This is the Douglas St corridor, a one-story plus mezzanine building does not fit design guidelines. City councillors have sent the development request to the Advisory Design Panel.
- d) 2-1010 Yates St: Former Cantu site. Request for development variance permit. The variance request is to have fewer parking spaces than mandated by city bylaws. LUC supports the application. A fitness studio would be a good fit to the neighborhood, expect most patrons

would be from downtown residents or workers and would walk to the premise. Street parking is also available.

- e) 816 Government St: A CALUC meeting will be held May 8th 6pm at Executive Conference Centre 3rd floor 915 Fort St. Almost 300 notices have been mailed to near-by residents and business owners. This is the Custom House building fronting on Government, Courtney and Wharf St. A prominent site with many heritage aspects.

11. **Communications: Nicholas:** covered under # 9.

12. **New Business: Wendy**

- a) Business Improvement Areas of British Columbia Conference. (BIABC) is being hosted by the DVBA on April 28, 29 and 30th in Victoria. Participants from across Canada and US are attending. Wendy will be part of the resource group on a walking tour with Andrea Hudson, David Chard, Ken Kelly, Shaun McIntyre and John Adams. See [www.bia.bc.ca](http://www.bia.bc.ca)
- b) New location for DRA monthly board meetings. A new location will be needed by September as our present landlord is moving offices to Saanich. Wendy will pursue options.

**Meeting adjourned at 7:25 pm**

**Date for next meeting** Tues May 27<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm at Silver Threads.