

DRA Board Meeting Draft Minutes

16 March 2015

Location: Rifflandia HQ (1501 Douglas St)

Present: Co-chairs, Kaela Schramm and Nicholas; Board Members, Robert Florida, Cathy Brankston, Ian Sutherland, Kelly Chirhart, Eric Ney, Doug Boyd, Karen Gallagher, Don Elliot; City Council Liaison Charlayne Thornton-Joe

Regrets: Erika Luebbe, Ruth Annis

1. **Call to order** 5:36 – Robert volunteered to serve as Secretary for this meeting.
2. **Approval of Agenda by consensus**
3. **Minutes of 17 February 2015 meeting** Kaela to amend to include members present and regrets. By consensus.
4. 5:40 - **Councillor's Report:** Charlayne Thornton-Joe

Update:

- City is requesting feedback from individuals on budget. Respond at Victoria.ca/budget
- Would like members to attend meeting at city hall next Monday for budget feedback. Check the city website for details.
- There are eleven cannabis dispensaries in the city currently. Two of them are well established and have caused no concern from the police or other agencies. However, the City is very concerned about the recent proliferation and is looking at how to deal with the problem. Business licenses and by laws may be useful if there are negative impacts.
- Fort Street kindness meters are being installed, and 26 May is Fort Street clean-up day in the morning. DRA members are welcome to participate.
- Working on a dedicated bike lane for Pandora St.
- Tourism Centre at the inner harbour opposite the Empress has been bought by the City. It seems to be a sweet deal for all those concerned.
- New provincial liquor rules will not have much impact on Victoria.
- Homeless issues with carts, at the Conservatory of Music, and Cridge Park for example continue.

Questions/Concerns from the Board. Nicholas asked about the response of the City to DRA concerns about the green space and approaches to the new bridge

on the Downtown side. Charlayne replied that our pleas will be taken into account. See also LUC report.

5. 6:05 - Community Development Committee: Kaela and Don

Committee Meeting Summary:

- Discussed VicMatters topics and honed in on: Green Space in the Downtown or Economics of Downtown. The Board would like Economics to be the next topic. The DVBA may provide funding to the DRA to create a pop up park or similar. It would be nice for us to build something, we agreed.
- Discussed drafting an endorsement policy for the DRA
- Rebranding: Don is writing out a purpose statement – what is it we are doing? What is it getting us?
- Roving Refinery at Cenote in March ('twas fun), for April: The Churchill (yay!)
- Next Committee Meeting: April 9 at Lido

6. 6:10 - Healthy Living Committee: Eric

Committee Meeting Summary:

- “Dog Watch” discussed – block watch through individuals walking their dogs; Block Watch does not want to go to the dogs, so we will try to start something on our own. The DRA Canine Corps, perhaps.
- **Urban Livability – Board approved official renaming of the committee**
- “Pipe Down” Education campaign moving forward; Eric to contact West Vancouver Representative
- Next Meeting: April 21 at Veneto

7. 6:20 - Land Use Committee: Ian

- 838 Fort St, Sawyer Residences: Public Hearing for Rezoning on 12 Mar 2015; it was approved
- 840 Fort St: Hearing for Development Permit on 12 Mar 2015; it was approved
- 941-971 Johnson, 989 Johnson Properties/CEI Architecture (McCall parking lot site): CALUC meeting set for 18 March 2015 at Shatterbox Coffee (950 Yates) at 6pm; this a very important meeting and we are all urged to attend.

- JSB approaches: Letter sent to Mayor & Council to follow up re stakeholders' meeting on public realm design as per GPC 24 July 2014; Charlayne again assured us that we will be heard.
- 819 Yates St, Chard Devt: Letter to be circulated re text amendment for existing CA-62 Zone; we originally backed this, but are concerned that it eliminates two subsidized apartments. Don says he believes they had been earmarked for women fleeing abusive relations.
- 613 Herald, Kunju, Conrad Nyren: Requested soft copy of plans for circulation. Will write new letter. Ian conflicted out. Robert agreed to write the letter. On the whole we think it is good to have more residences in the area, but think that the fit and finish of the project has been direly cheapened.

8. 6:30 - Communications: Nicholas asked for feedback on the last Newsletter.

9. 6:35 – Downtown Service Providers Meeting—Don is our representative.

1. Stand-in Representative needed for next meeting (March 24) at the Greater Victoria Public Library Community Room from 8:30 – 10:00. Nicholas volunteered.

10. 6:36 – VCAN Update Nicholas and Doug attended for us

- Katie Hamilton, recently appointed City of Victoria Director of Strategic Planning and Citizen Engagement, talked about her role, the strategic plan and budget process currently underway, and the new process of citizen engagement, including engagement with neighbourhood associations. Doug will draft a DRA report and circulate it to the Board in time for submission to the city by 29 March.
- Provided input to the strategic planning and budgeting process: Active Transportation, Local Area Planning, Funding Model for Community Associations
- It is important that the neighbourhood associations attend the 'Town Hall' on March 23 and provide input at the event
- Next Meeting: May 12

11. 6:40 - Business arising from Minutes:

1. Membership renewal 2015 Results. Doug reported that we have received \$230 in renewals, which puts us a little ahead of last year. Doug will request that Erika change the text on the Membership page of the DRA website to remove the donation option of \$5, and then changing the default amount in the drop down to \$10. If possible an additional item could be added to the drop-down

with text of "Other" and then having the member enter an amount. Text which states that "funding comes from our members" needs to be revised since majority of our funding is from the city base grant. Suggested revision is "our members are an important source of our funding".

2. Meeting with John Vickers (Nicholas). Vickers requested the meeting, which was cordial and lasted for about 30 minutes. Mr. Vickers has been campaigning to close Government St to vehicular traffic, to create a paradise pedestrian mall. DRA has not discussed this issue.

12. 6:50 - New Business

1. Possible Meeting Locations were discussed.
 - i. Room in the Downtown Branch of Library
 - ii. Green Party Community Space
 - iii. Salvation Army Meeting Room
 - iv. City Hall Antechamber (unconfirmed option)

In a straw poll the Green Party Space got 5 votes and the Library 4. The chairs will try to obtain one of these (in that order of preference) for our continuing venue.

2. Doug and Karen will attend the 7 April Police Strategic Planning session as our representatives.
3. The city wants input on repurposing the Fire Hall on Yates by 17 April. Don will draft a proposal which would see the site used for a fire hall and subsidized housing and maybe other things. To be considered by the Board.

13. Meeting adjourned at 7:04. Thanks to Kaela for the new agenda format with reports and timing, and thanks to everyone for sticking to the topic.

14. Date for next Meeting: Tuesday, Apr 21, 5:30 Venue TBA