

# DRA Board Meeting Minutes

16 June 2015

Location: Greater Victoria Public Library  
735 Broughton Street

**Present:** Kaela, Nicholas, Don, Ian, Eric, Kelly, Robert, Doug, Erika, Cathy, Janet Strauss

**Regrets:** Karen, Ruth, Charlayne

Meeting commenced at 5:37.

**Appoint Secretary for this meeting** (Doug's name was drawn)

1. **Approval of Agenda**
2. **Approval of Minutes of 19 May 2015 meeting**
3. **Councillor's Report:** Charlayne Thornton-Joe  
no report as Charlayne was unable to attend.
4. **Community Development Committee:** Kaela and Don

Committee Meeting Summary:

- Kaela gave overview of plans for Car Free Sunday event:
  - Table, chairs and tent rented. Ian will pick up.
  - Banner designed (see attached)
  - Activities planned: Trivia – hourly draws for gift certificates, whiteboard for I Love Downtown because...
  - Volunteers scheduled – all positions filled
  - Set up: Nicholas and Ian
  - Breakdown: Doug and Nicholas
  - Kaela to return rental items Tuesday am
- Endorsement Application developed by Don and approved by the CDC, was reviewed. Decided to add question about what form of endorsement. Moved by Nicholas, seconded by Kelly, that we approve application as amended. Approved unanimously.
- Roving Refinery at The Reef on June 24, from 6 - 8

- Next Meeting: Taking a break for July, will meet again late August (date to be confirmed) to start planning the next VicMatters event. Looking for suggestions re speakers for event – topic is economy of downtown Victoria

## 5. Urban Livability: Eric

The ULC met June 10 with 5 attending. The focus of discussion was community gardening with guest DRA member Janet Strauss briefing the committee on community gardening initiatives in Victoria and other Pacific Northwest cities. Janet has now joined the ULC and sits on a City committee set up to foster community gardening/ food security. Janet presented an overview to the Board. She has travelled to Seattle and Vancouver to observe community gardens there.

The committee recommended that:

- The ULC take on promoting the development of community gardening in the Downtown in line with City of Victoria Strategic Objective 8.
- The DRA Board of Directors endorse the attached letter to the City of Victoria. We encourage the city to develop policies to provide incentive to private land owners to develop community gardens. Robert moved and Don seconded that the DRA endorse the letter of support for this initiative (subject to minor editorial corrections). Unanimous approval.

Other business:

- The launch of the Dog Watch program was considered a successful event; there was interest expressed after the session by other NAs.
- Pipe Down initiative – Eric had discussions with MLA for Vancouver West. Intel that Tod Stone said the province will be considering standards for measuring the DB levels from loud pipes. Nothing concrete yet – Eric will follow-up.

CoChair Position – Ruth wants to step away from CoChair position due to other commitments. We are thus looking for a new CoChair.

Eric advised the Board of a new pyramid container approach to gardening. More info here – <http://www.pyramidgarden.com/>. The inventor, Allan Murr, would be happy to talk to us.

Next Meeting: July 8, Veneto

## 6. Land Use Committee: Ian

1. 819 Yates: Chard Development Ltd – Council resolution. Will go to Public Hearing. Date TBA
2. 595 Pandora: Cielo Properties – Development Permit issued.

3. 755 Caledonia: Townline – Revised plans w/ variance to allow residential use on the first storey. LUC feedback due by 18 June.

4. 951 Johnson: 989 Johnson Properties Ltd (Dan Cox et al) – Development Permit application w/ variances: building height/# of storeys and front yard setback. LUC feedback due by 18 June.

5. Government St Charette – The three groups of facilitators have submitted their reports to the City and the DVBA summarizing the input provided during the Charette. Ian and Nicholas attended on behalf of the DRA. Next steps:

☑ Mayor Helps will provide a ‘synthesis’ of the findings to the Economic Development Task Force.

☑ The City and the DVBA will collaborate to create a draft copy of the Government Street Action Plan complete with timelines by the end of July.

☑ There will be a no-host bar at the Bard & Banker to present the plan at the end of July.

6. Local Area Planning Process – Ian will coordinate with the City to find an alternate date to meet with the LUC as the Board Meeting is not the appropriate time. Once the meeting is set, LUC (and Board) members will be invited to attend. There was some discussion about the request from the city to meet with the DRA. It may be about more than the LUC. Ian to follow up.

## **7. Downtown Service Providers Meeting – Don**

Downtown Service Providers meeting of May 26, 2015

Update on Storage Facility for Carts/Belongings

- Initial consideration was a site across from Our Place. This is no longer an option due to neighbourhood concerns. A new site has not yet been identified. Annual cost of operating is estimated at \$120,000.
- Planner from the City of Victoria toured a facility in Vancouver.
- Don Evans is away on holiday and planning will resume when he returns in early June.

Micro Housing

- Exploration taking place on how to best proceed - site location and a non-profit organization to lead the way - not appropriate for the City to lead but will support. Don noted that the Coalition to End Homelessness does not support micro-housing as a solution. The primary reason is that political capital going into this would divert resources from other long-term solutions.
- Limited number of opportunities for suitable sites in Victoria. Need to bring in other communities.

- People still perceive homelessness as a City of Victoria issue and not a regional one.

#### **8. VCAN – Doug**

Nothing to report, next meeting is June 23

#### **9. New Business:**

- John Vickers – at the Govt. Street charrette, John implied he spoke for the DRA and was a DRA member. Ian advised him he did not in fact represent the DRA and told him to 'cease and desist'. Nicholas advised him he had not jointed the DRA. There was some back and forth communication with John and his last communication indicated he would be starting a new residents association. The DRA Board decided not to respond to this.
- Presentation from GVPL (Erika). The GVPL wants to collaborate with us in some fashion – Erika will follow up with them for a possible presentation at our August meeting.
- Presentation/discussion with Speaker's Bureau (Don)  
Don suggested that at our next meeting we arrange for a member of the Speaker's Bureau to address the Board. Bureau members are those who have experienced homelessness and have training so that they can effectively tell their stories. The goal of tis initiative would be for the DRA to support and endorse permanent solutions for homelessness. It was agreed that we should proceed with this. Don to arrange.
- Wendy met with Teri Hustins at Oscar and Libby to discuss an evening get together for downtown residents in the new Fort Street parklet. Tentatively in August. More to come from Wendy on this.
- Cathy attended a meeting of the Our Place community group. They are looking at a community garden in the 900 block of Pandora. Our Place reports a case load 20% higher than the same time last year.

**Meeting adjourned at: 7 PM**

**Date for next Meeting:** July 21, 2015 at 5:30