

DRA Board Meeting Minutes

20 Sept 2016

Location: Esquimalt Nation Room, Victoria City Hall

Present: Board members: Ian Sutherland, Nicholas Harrington, Wendy Bowkett, Robert Florida, Kaela Schramm, Cathy Brankston, Eric Ney, Don Elliott. Victoria City Councillor Charlayne Thornton-Joe. Victoria Downtown Community Development Co-Ordinator Michael Hill.

Regrets: Doug Boyd, Ruth Annis, Erika Luebbe.

Meeting called to order: at 5:35 pm by Kaela

1. **Approval of Agenda:** Approved by consensus with change to order. Governance will be last item.
2. **Approval of minutes of July 19th board meeting.** Approved by consensus.
3. **Councillor's Report: Charlayne Thornton-Joe**
 - Charlayne attended the Pandora Community monthly meeting on Sept 20th. Issues discussed were regarding Our Place, My Place and the old Central Care Home on 800 block Johnson St. My Place on upper Johnson wishes to stay open until March 2017. This proposal has support from the Fernwood Neighbourhood Assn and My Place are awaiting approval from the City.
 - Central Care Home building (temporary name Johnson St. Community) has been open since early August. Renovations are not completed yet, as the early opening was due to the pressure to close down Tent City. Not having the new place ready for occupancy has caused some problems. Last Monday the outside food truck was removed from the site, as the kitchen is now in working condition. Steps are being taken to improve privacy and security for clients and for nearby resident and business locations, including better lighting and erecting a fence to prevent unlawful access to the adjoining property. The owner of that property was given 2 weeks to erect a fence to prevent people from congregating on that lot and raising neighbourhood concerns. As no action was taken by the owner, the City installed a fence and will bill the property owner for that cost. The police have met with PHS, who are operating the Johnson St. Community Home, and had discussions regarding CEPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) guidelines.

- Charlayne announced many more housing solutions will be available shortly. Funding of \$30 Million each has been made available from the CRD and the Province. The Super 8 on Douglas in November, Rosalie's Village (42 affordable apartments for women and children), Cottage Grove building for seniors (Quadra near Tolmie), Wilsons Walk (108 unit rental building located on Wilson St. in Esquimalt, 84 units of which will be classed as affordable housing). Various groups such as Pacifica Housing, Cool Aid, and St. Vincent De Paul Society will manage these buildings.
- Don Elliott of Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness spoke about the past public meeting with the Johnson St. Community and neighbours. Further bi-monthly meetings are planned (e.g. Wed Sep 21st 6:30 pm at Victoria Conservatory of Music).
- The Our Place AGM is scheduled for Wed Sept 28th at 7pm at 919 Pandora Ave. Invited speaker is Minister of Housing Rich Coleman.
- Much interest is being seen about the Royal visit. The City will have to bear some costs, however the visit is very beneficial for the City's tourism and business sector. Mayor Lisa Helps will most likely be attending an official function.
- Charlayne attended a conference in Quebec City recently, and spoke of the beautiful heritage buildings and the amount of money that goes into their capital city. She had a tour with Quebec City's lighting architect, walked the waterfront boardwalk, and visited sidewalk cafes. She noted a lack of visible presence of homeless. Charlayne did find one shelter close to her hotel. Quebec winters are very harsh, so would not have people sleeping outside. Quebec seems to have more programs and the City's vacancy rate is not an issue. Next year the conference will be held in Victoria.

4. City Liaison Report: Michael Hill

- **Visual Victoria** workshop is happening tonight at City hall starting at 6 pm. 21 panels with pictures of downtown signage, planters, street views, etc. The goal is to collect ideas and strategies for improvement. The City will be working with the community on how to improve public spaces in downtown, as well as seeking feedback on how best to help people find their way around the city (wayfinding). In order to revitalize these spaces, the City of Victoria is launching Visual Victoria, to develop a new Downtown Public Realm Plan and City-wide Wayfinding Strategy (a successor of the Beautification Plan of 1995). Visual Victoria will help maintain Victoria's celebrated character, while identifying improvements and revisiting the vision for downtown.

- The City will host an open house at 742 Johnson St (CityStudio) from 3:00pm to 5:00pm every Thursday until November. The public is invited to drop-in and provide input. Check [here](#) for more details. An online survey is available as well.
- A report is going to council on Thursday on the Johnson Street Bridge. Michael will send copies of report to DRA after our board meeting. Charlayne mentioned that herself and councillor Lucas are going to China shortly. They will visit the steel manufacturing site.
- **My Great Neighbourhood Grant:** applications are going before council this Thursday There are 4 projects for downtown that have been recommended by staff for approval. 1. A mural titled “Shopping Bags” to be painted on the back of 940 Fort Street (mural to face View St.); 2. The Yates Street Community Garden; 3. “Edible Streetscape” proposes to install 12 food growing planters in downtown to promote sustainably grown food; 4. “Innovation Tree”, a DVBA initiative, proposes the installation of interactive lighting in the tree in the median at Humboldt and Wharf Streets.
- **Future of Crystal Pool.** This summer the City sought input from the public regarding recreational needs. Approximately one thousand people responded. Based on community input, renovations are being planned. The proposed washroom upgrades will be deferred, as the costs were much higher than anticipated. Mike mentioned the city has received bids for other projects that are also much higher than expected. The consensus around the table was that contractors are already busy and don’t really want the smaller jobs.
- **Pandora Bike Lane project.** On Aug 18th, council directed staff to increase the allocated budget and review all cycling project implementation costs. Construction is about to start on the Pandora Bikeway. Underground improvements needed to be done first.
- **Emergency Preparedness Workshop.** Coming up on Oct 20th from 7pm - 9pm at Cook St. Village Activity Centre.
- **Medical marijuana.** After public hearing on Sept 8th, council adopted a zoning amendment bylaw. The City date that staff will be accepting applications is tentatively scheduled December or January. On Sept 22nd council will consider approval of the new Medical Cannabis Business Licence Bylaw for storefront businesses that have begun operations. More information is available on city’s website. A question period followed, regarding site locations. Whether businesses are non-profit or for profit. DRA will be asked to review and comment on rezoning applications, so this is an important issue for the board.

- Friday Sept 23rd will be a celebration in the square for the 50 year anniversary of CRD.
- Mike explained the City's different park structures. The City has places that are designated as parks, places that leased, parks that are undeveloped right-of-ways, and others. The OCP designation is broad.
- **Stormwater:** Eric asked for a progress report. Mike said it is going ahead for this fall. Orientation meetings were to be held. Mike will follow-up with appropriate department. Intent is that this will be revenue neutral. Will be shown separately on property tax statement.
- **Noise bylaw, specifically garbage pickup.** A discussion was held regarding early morning pick-up before 7am and also the annoying noise produced by the trucks backing up. New technology is available that is quieter. Charlayne will look into this issue.

5. Community Development Committee: Wendy and Kaela

Victoria Matters: Kaela

- Funding has been approved. Kaela will follow-up with councillor Alto to move forward on the project.

Fiesta on Fort: Wendy

- Involved businesses were very pleased with the outcome, even though some shops did not receive many customers. Retailers said any event that drives the brand and awareness is good for Fort St. The restaurant La Taqueria experienced a doubling of patrons that evening. Wendy will be meeting with the other principals that were involved in planning this past event with a view to improving our next community event. Possibly a liquor licence, umbrellas, and more seating. Terry and her staff did a good job of monitoring the space through the day. Our association (DRA) experienced great success. 38 new members, \$110.00 paid in membership dues. Facebook had 1000 direct points of contact. Thanks to Graham Briggs for making the Facebook page, reaching over 1000 people. 300 - 400 people attended the event.
- Don mentioned that he will be continuing to work on rebranding Roving Refinery. Update coming around end of October. Wendy mentioned that herself and Nicholas were brainstorming ideas. Possibly a more casual event, less planning. Welcome input from all.

Next meeting: Tues Oct 4th 5:30pm at The Drake.

6. Urban Liveability Committee: Nicholas

- Yates Street Community Garden Update: Wendy and Nicholas signed the city's License of Occupation Agreement on September 2nd. The pallets were delivered to the site on September 7th, the garden boxes were picked up from Camosun College on the 8th. Assembly of 48 boxes took place over the following week; with soil being delivered last Friday. The rain has delayed filling boxes with soil. 27 boxes are spoken for, and DRA will hold some for other community groups. Please apply if you would like to have a box. Cost per year to be determined. Nicholas and the steering committee have been doing the work at site. Volunteers are welcome.

Next meeting: TBA

7. Land Use Committee: Ian

- **Downtown Casino** - Meeting will be held shortly.
- **Empress Hotel - Porte Cochere proposal.** Ian will send plans to the land use committee. The architect has proposed a meeting next week with LUC.
- **Empress Hotel-** Redevelopment of bus depot. No new information to report.
- **Reeson Park/David Foster Walkway:** Charrette was held recently. Letter has been sent to council.
- Ian has been attending a series of meetings with City staff to review of the CALUC process. Council still has concerns regarding the governance structure of some CALUC's (i.e. Fairfield has non-profit status which doesn't mesh with liability insurance, etc). City has terms of reference in place for CALUC's. Some talk of CALUC's being more answerable to council. While agreeing to the terms of reference, all neighbourhood associations wish to remain independent. Some issues are a conflict of interest between the community associations and the neighbourhood associations (i.e. Fairfield has 2 community centres and a neighbourhood assn. Some neighbourhood associations have been dominated by long-term chairs and special interest groups. Charlayne mentioned consistency is a goal. Mike mentioned the sole purpose is to be sure all people are represented. Council has adopted a preliminary report. Don questioned need to maintain independence from the groups. Ian replied some suggestions came from planning department, having planning staff attend CALUC meetings and lend assistance. Council seemed to want to manipulate the governance of the CALUC.

8. Business Arising from past minutes:

- **Late Night Committee:** Committee is continuing work. Mike mentioned some staff changes have held up the process. Erik has volunteered to be on the committee.
- **Vacation rental report update:** Mike announced that a staff report will be coming back to council in September. This report will focus on the implications for regulation of these various units. Will be neighbourhood specific. Downtown core is not as big an issue as losing rental stock in the outlying districts. The City's goal is to create more affordable housing units, by creating granny suites, and giving grants of \$5000.00 to build a rental space in their home. Robert mentioned that in his condo building, vacation rentals are allowed. Eric said having Airbnb in a building has a significant operational impact on running a strata. Eric stated there has not been any public consultation on the report as yet. The preliminary report was out a month ago. Council has replied to staff on some issues. Charlayne will follow-up with staff regarding a public consultation.
- **DRA board insurance:** Nicholas has initiated an application for Directors and Officers Liability Insurance for the DRA board. Nicholas will follow up with Grant Fisher, city risk assessment manager. Approximate cost \$600.00 - \$800.00, the city would cover most of the cost. Nicholas received a quote today and has sent the quote to all board members. Will be discussed at next board meeting.

9. New Business:

- **The Yates Street Community Garden's** steering committee is looking for volunteers to assist on several working groups, namely, Grant applications; Sponsorships & Neighbour Relations; Communications & Community Inclusion; Volunteer Management; Site Management & Logistics; Special Events & Celebrations; Governance. We would like to hear from any DRA board member who is interested and willing to help out. Garden plots are still available—email yatescommunitygarden@gmail.com. DRA is planning to hold a number of plots for other community associations that wish to apply.
- **Neighbourhood Equity discussions:** On July 30th, Nicholas sent out an email to the DRA board inviting comment on an invitation from the City's department of Citizen Engagement and Strategic Planning for us to submit operational plans for consideration within the 2017 financial planning process. Only one director replied back. Although we've missed the deadline for this year, it would be

advisable to consider requesting additional funding for 2018, as we may be served by requesting a grant to hire an assistant.

- **Johnson St Community Advisory Committee:** Don and Cathy attended the first meeting. CBC has reached out for neighbourhood reaction. Bi-monthly meetings are planned. Second meeting is Wed Sept 21st 6:30 pm at the Conservatory of Music. Entrance on 900 block of Johnson St.
- **DRA and Humboldt Valley Committee:** Charlayne was questioning the relationship between the two groups. Are members of HVC also DRA members? DRA is kept in the loop with the big issues. HVC is an advocacy group for their specific neighbourhood. Ruth is quite open with what is happening in their area. She does suggest to HVC members to join the DRA. This is similar to the revitalization of the DRA which was a neighbourhood concern. The DRA came together over the Bamboo project proposal.
- Mike mentioned the **Bastion Square Revitalization Association** has scheduled their AGM for Wed Sept 21st at 5:30 at the Irish Times. \$300,000 dollars are in the trust fund to improve the Square. Monthly meetings are held. Recruitments are needed.

Mike and Charlayne left the meeting at 7:05pm.

10. Governance Notes: Wendy

- **Policy Binder.** Participation of board members on an ongoing basis.
- **President vs Chair.** After going over the July meeting minutes, Wendy felt the change to President and Vice-President clarified the roles of board members. As opposed to “Chair” of DRA and also “Chair” of different committees.
- **Review and consider Roles, Responsibilities & Functions of board members.** Discussions were held, and decisions made were to table approval until the board was able to receive and compare the rest of the self-governing policies.
- **Self-Governance Policy.** Sept and Oct policy items were selected by draw and volunteer. Next two topics will be selected in Sept for Nov either by volunteer or draw of numbers.

Meeting adjourned at: 7:28 pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday, October 18, 2016

What is Happening in Your Neighbourhood?

Johnson Street Bridge

At their September 22 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council will receive a [report](#) on the progress of the Johnson Street bridge project. Components under construction in China are nearing the painting stage. The public realm elements continue to progress with the pedestrian bridge the most recent visual development. The bridge remains scheduled to be open to traffic in December, 2017.

Great Neighbourhoods Grants

The 2016 My Great Neighbourhood Grant applications will be also be considered by Council at their [September 22 Committee of the Whole meeting](#). There are four grant project proposals for projects in the downtown, which staff has recommended that Council approve for full requested funding. These include:

- [Shopping Bag Mural](#) – installation of a mural on the back of the building at 940 Fort Street
- [Yates Street Community Garden](#) – installation of planter boxes and a new gate and fence
- [Edible Streetscape](#) – installation of 12 food planters in the central downtown area
- [Innovation Tree](#) - installation of interactive lighting in the tree in the median at Humboldt and Wharf Streets

Capital Projects

- Water Main upgrading on Pandora Avenue from Douglas Street to Government Street complete. Now waiting for concrete to complete repair at Broad and Pandora intersection.
- Douglas Street bus stops from Humboldt Street to Superior Street relocated with benches in place.
- Water Main replacement on Herald Street from Douglas Street to Government Street deferred until 2017.
- Water Main replacement on Chatham Street from Blanshard Street to Government Street going to tender and scheduled for construction this fall.
- Storm drain replacement on Douglas Street from Cormorant Street to Pandora Avenue has now been rescheduled for 2017.
- Repairs to Broad Street Mall paving and bricks surfaces have been made and will continue in 2016 and 2017.
- Spirit Square Totem Poles refurbishment (as specified in the public art maintenance plan) is currently in progress

Future of Crystal Pool

This summer the City sought input on the community's aquatic and recreational programming needs and how best to meet them in order to help inform whether to renovate or replace the facility. Thank you for sharing your ideas with us. We heard from more than 1,000 people about their ideas for the future of the Crystal Pool and Fitness Centre.

Some of the most popular themes were a desire to keep the 50 metre pool length, an appreciation for the friendly ambiance and staff, as well as the need for family change rooms and expanded the fitness facilities.

Based on the community's input, concepts are being developed for the renovation or replacement of this facility. We will keep you updated on opportunities to review the options and provide comments starting in late September.

Crystal Pool Annual Maintenance

Crystal Pool will be closed to the public for annual maintenance from September 3 to 25. Other pools also have closures over this period (Commonwealth Pool (Sept 5-18) and Esquimalt Pool (Sept 1-12), however Oak Bay Pool will remain open. Passes will be honoured at other pools during this time.

Duke and Duchess of Cambridge Visit Victoria

Details surrounding the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's visit to Canada were announced earlier this week. A public "Welcome to Canada" event has been announced to take place on the lawn of the Legislature Buildings on the evening of Saturday, September 24. A visit to the Cridge Centre and a sail on a Sail and Life Training Society (SALTS) tall ship has also been confirmed for Saturday, October 1. A public farewell from downtown Victoria will take place on the afternoon of October 1.

More details about the visit are available from the Provincial and Federal governments' websites:

<http://canada.pch.gc.ca/eng/1466181306703>

<https://www.royal.uk/further-details-duke-and-duchess-cambridges-tour-canada-announced>

<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2016PREM0100-001667>

Visual Victoria: Downtown Public Realm and Wayfinding Strategy

From September 2016 to March 2017, the City will be working with the community on how to improve public spaces in downtown, as well as seeking feedback on how best to help people find their way around the city (wayfinding).

In order to revitalize these spaces, the City of Victoria is launching *Visual Victoria*, to develop a new Downtown Public Realm Plan and City-wide Wayfinding Strategy. *Visual Victoria* will help maintain Victoria's celebrated character, while identifying improvements and revisiting the vision for downtown. The first public workshop will be held Tuesday September 20 from 6 – 8:30 p.m. at the McPherson Playhouse.

Pandora Bike Lanes

Despite an extended tendering period, the City only received one offer and it significantly exceeded the target budget for the project. At their [August 18 meeting](#), Council directed staff to increase the allocated budget for the project, to review all approved cycling infrastructure project implementation costs and to develop a Biketoria construction implementation strategy that reduces the risk of cost and time overruns.

Housing Preservation

At their August 25 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council directed staff to address housing supply preservation and improvement with:

1. Continued work advancing the heritage program by considering new Heritage Conservation Areas during local area planning and undertaking regular projects to consider additions to the City's Register of Heritage Properties to address character home retention.
2. Implementation of the Victoria Housing Strategy, acknowledging the actions affecting secondary suite regulations and updating the Property Maintenance Bylaw are slated to commence immediately in the fall of 2016; and
3. That work include staff reporting back on implications of developing a green demolition bylaw.

Copies of the report presented to Council can be found on the [City website](#).

Community Association Land Use Committees

At the August 18 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council approved recommendations to adopt draft CALUC documents prepared through the community consultation process as interim guidance for the CALUCs. Council also approved increased fees for notifications and applications related to development and directed staff to continue to work to resolve other outstanding issues related to the CALUC process.

More information can be found in the [August 18 Committee of the Whole report](#) and recommendations approved by Council ([Committee of the Whole report](#) resolutions in the August 25 Council agenda).

Emergency Preparedness

Learn more about hazards and what you can do to protect your home from an earthquake, by attending a free, two-hour Emergency Preparedness Workshop. Upcoming workshops on Thursday, October 20 from 7 - 9 p.m. at Cook Street Village Activity Centre at 380 Cook Street.

To register for a free workshop, contact Victoria Emergency Management at 250.920.3373 or email vem@victoria.ca.

Strategic Plan Grants Approval Process

At the August 18 Committee of the Whole meeting, Council approved terms for the external review of Strategic Plan Grant applications on a trial basis for 2017. More information can be found in the [Council report](#) and the [August 25 Council agenda](#) under Committee reports.

Medical Marijuana

After the Public Hearing on September 8, Council adopted the Zoning Regulation Bylaw amendment that prohibits all storefront cannabis retailers unless permitted through the rezoning process. The date when the City will begin accepting Rezoning Applications is tentatively scheduled for December or January, and will be finalized in the coming weeks.

On September 22, Council will consider approval of the new Medical Cannabis Business Licence Bylaw.

For storefront retailers and marijuana-related businesses that began operations before the date when the new Medical Cannabis Business Licence Bylaw was given first reading (July 28), enforcement of most operating requirements will begin immediately (such as restricting advertising, minors on the premises, hours, etc.). However operational requirements for a security system and air filtration will be in effect 60 days after the bylaw is adopted.

As the City will need some time to “staff-up” to start processing Rezoning and Business Licence Applications, and as storefront retailers will need some time to come into compliance, enforcement will not begin immediately; instead they will be required to show progress towards a rezoning (and subsequent business licence). Storefront retailers that began operations after July 28 – the date that the new zoning and business licensing requirements received first reading – will be directed to immediately cease operations.

More information on all of the proposed and adopted regulations for cannabis related businesses can be found [here](#).

Growing in the City

After the Public Hearing on September 8, Council:

- Adopted the Zoning Regulation bylaw amendment to allow small-scale food production in all areas of the city, provided it does not negatively impact neighbours with unreasonable levels of odour, noise or artificial lighting. This will expand the range of potential sites for new urban food production businesses to include commercial areas, vacant lots, residential properties, rooftops, institutional properties and other underused sites.
- Adopted the Official Community Plan bylaw amendment to no longer require a development permit for small-scale commercial urban food production (e.g. community gardens, community orchards and edible landscaping). If the installation is being constructed in association with a building, structure or other landscape feature, a development permit will still be required.
- Gave third reading to require a Business License to sell unprocessed food products off-site and on-site. The bylaw will be before Council on September 22 for final adoption. For off-site sales, urban



September 2016 Update

Downtown

food producers will need to obtain a year-long business license for \$100. Two on-site license options will be offered, a three-month on-site business license for \$25 or a year-long license for \$100.

Council Meetings

A Committee of the Whole meeting is scheduled for September 22 at 9 a.m. and of [Council on September 22 at 6:30 p.m.](#)

At their September 22 Council meeting, final reading will be given to bylaws relating to permanent signage for outdoor markets, fees for food production, pesticide use, operation of cannabis businesses and to set a \$7,500 fee for storefront cannabis retailers. Council will also approve resolutions from the September Committee of the Whole meeting including an Afghanistan War Memorial for Rockland Green and the development of a southbound transit lane on Douglas Street.

Events

- UN International Day of Peace – Wednesday September 21 from 11 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. in Centennial Square
- CRD's 50th Anniversary – Friday September 23 from 1-3 p.m. in Centennial Square
- Goodlife Fitness Victoria Marathon - Sunday October 9

For more information, check [CityVibe](#), the City's guide to events in Victoria