

NORTHWEST NANOOSE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

February 20, 2007

7:00 pm – 1889 Ballenas Road – (Bob De Buysscher's Home)

IN ATTENDANCE

President Kirke MacMillan
Vice-President Dave Jamieson
Secretary Greg Field

Directors at Large Mike Gray
 Bob De Buysscher
 Lewis Vermeulen
 Don Stewart

Regrets: Frank Herman

1. CALL TO ORDER

- The meeting was called to order by Kirke MacMillan at 7:07 pm.

2. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES – January 16, 2007

- The minutes were reviewed and accepted as written (draft #4)
- Items arising from the minutes:
 - o Kirke MacMillan sent Glen Gibson a letter thanking him for submitting a letter of support for the Madrona sewer project.
 - o The RDN did engage an outside consultant to assist with producing the sewer grant application.
 - o The grant application and project are being supported by George Holme and Joe Stanhope.
 - o Kirke MacMillan decided not to send the City of Parksville a letter requesting clarification on whether sewer use fees would be charged to Madrona residents. Also, Schedule "A", the missing attachment from the Craig Bay Sewer Main Extension Agreement was obtained from the City of Parksville.
 - o Greg Field presented a draft set of Policy Guidelines for Newsletter Articles. After discussion the following were accepted:
 - Articles should not be longer than 1000 words
 - Preference will be given to articles discussing issues local to the Madrona area
 - Articles should be of general interest and not editorial in nature
 - Articles from paid lobbyists or with strong political views will not be accepted
 - All articles shall be submitted to the NNRA Board of Directors prior to acceptance
 - The NNRA Board of Directors retains the right to refuse, edit or excerpt articles

3. TREASURER'S REPORT (Presented by Mike Gray)

- Chequing Account balance at January 31 is \$1215.65
- For 2006:
 - o Total Revenues \$2902.87
 - o Total Expenses \$1964.91
 - o Net Income \$ 937.96
- At December 31, 2006:
 - o Total Assets \$5690.82
 - o Total Liabilities (Prepaid membership fees) \$ 710.00
 - o Total Equity \$4980.82

4. MADRONA SEWER UPDATE (Kirke MacMillan)

- There was discussion regarding what to do between now and the decision on grant funding. Possibilities include testing to determine if leachate is reaching the foreshore. If leachate is found, then test for the presence of fecal coliforms
- Potential issues arise with individual testing if the sewer project does not proceed.
- Anonymous testing on the public foreshore is a possibility
- Farms may be a source of fecal coliforms
- Previous testing in Craig Bay did not reveal any problems
- Testing in Craig Bay is still ongoing. This could be followed up with the DFO.
- Kirke MacMillan contacted Dr. W. Dwernychuk of Hatfield Consultants, who is willing to walk the beach and review the situation with the NNRA.
- **Action:** Kirke MacMillan to set up a meeting with Dr. Dwernychuk
- The NNRA has not seen a copy of the RDN grant application.
- **Action:** Kirke MacMillan to contact George Holme to obtain a copy of the application.
- The NNRA Board of Directors acknowledges the enormous effort that Kirke MacMillan has put into this project, and thanks him for it.

5. RDN WATER RATES (Kirke MacMillan)

- The various different proposals for revised water rates were reviewed and discussed.
- Currently, the average water system operating costs are \$1.15 / cubic meter. The RDN recovers \$0.52 / cubic meter (45%) of their operating costs through user fees. The RDN have a stated objective of recovering 75% of their operating costs (\$0.8625 / cubic metre).
- Concern was expressed that the revised rate design proposals vary widely and every proposal seemed to have a new set of difficulties, and that the technical rate redesign process may be flawed. The different proposals penalized different groups, and often to a large degree.
- Some of the rate increases were as much as 140% for a particular block (varying slightly as the block boundaries were revised)
- The latest RDN rate proposal increased the rate for the highest consumption block by 70%
- It was noted that the memorandum dated December 18 and sent to the RDN Board included a proposal to decrease the Water Parcel Tax (currently \$245.32). The recommendations in this memorandum passed first reading by the RDN Board. The same document calculated RDN revenue increases of only 2%.
- Since the rate design has changed radically and the proposed decrease in the Water Parcel Tax has been removed, the NNRA Directors felt that the entire rate design proposal should be withdrawn and re-submitted to the RDN Board.

- If the RDN wishes to continue the parcel tax at its current rate (apparently to build a Capital Reserve) then there should be a plan and a budget to justify the tax. The NNRA BoD is aware that a portion of the parcel tax is required to cover the shortfall in operating costs not recovered by user fees.
- There does not seem to be a linkage between the proposed rate structures and conservation objectives.
- The revised rates will be retroactive to some degree if they are applied to the next meter reading, which covers the winter 2006-2007 period.
- The RDN is planning a mail out of the proposed rate structure along with scheduling public meetings on the proposal. Concern was expressed that the current rate structure would meet with large opposition.
- Kirke MacMillan suggested that the 3 Nanoose residents groups should join together to develop a common consensus on this issue. These 3 user groups represent approximately 75% of the RDN water users.
- The following action options were discussed:
 - o Meet with the 2 other Nanoose peninsula groups and then sit down with the RDN. The schedule for the RDN mail out is problematic.
 - o Contact George Holmes to again make him aware of the issue and ask him to help delay the RDN mailing.
 - o Contact Ministry of Environment officials in Victoria and bring this issue to their attention and determine if the MOE has any legislative authority to review or influence this situation.
- **Action:** Kirke MacMillan will contact George Holme as soon as possible as described in the second item above.

6. MEETING WITH ANDREW PEARSON (Bob De Buyscher)

- Andrew Pearson cancelled the last meeting and suggested rescheduling it for the end of February. It has been tentatively scheduled for February 27.
- Bob De Buyscher will ask Mr. Pearson to add any support he is able to provide for the Madrona sewer project.
- Also, make Mr. Pearson aware of the issues the residents are facing regarding the water rate issues.
- **Action:** Due to problems with availability Bob De Buyscher will ask that the meeting be postponed until the end of March.

7. RIPARIAN AREAS REGULATION (Kirke MacMillan)

- The RDN Board has adopted the Riparian Areas Regulation previously implemented by the Provincial Ministry of the Environment.
- The RDN has adopted a new bylaw and revised its OCPs (DPA 3) to be consistent with the new regulations.
- The new regulations apply to developments adjacent a freshwater stream. They do not apply to oceanfront properties.

8. OTHER ISSUES

- The RDN has sent out a Notice of Parcel Tax Levy as a result of the adoption of the “Regional District of Nanaimo Crime Prevention and Community Justice Support Service Bylaw No. 1479.” In 2007 the levy will be \$4.60 per parcel and will be approximately \$2.30 in the following years.
- There was discussion about introducing NNRA membership cards instead of issuing dues receipts. It is felt these would save time processing memberships. Also, Pacific Shores has indicated it may offer a 10% reduction in food prices at the Landing Restaurant.

9. ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at 9:15pm.
- Next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, March 22nd at Greg Field’s house.