



MINUTES
planNANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD TUESDAY, 2011-JAN-18 AT 5:00 PM
BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL, 455 WALLACE STREET

PRESENT:

Bill Holdom, Chair
Carey Avender
Allan Davidson
John Hofman
Shirley Lance
Meg Savory
Randall Taylor

Brian Anderson
Sarah Boyd
Chris Erb
Ric Kelm
Pete Sabo
Nadine Schwager
Clem Trombley

Joy Bremner, Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee
Lee-Anne Stark, Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee
Marc Stones, Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee

REGRETS:

Michael Harrison
Ralph Meyerhoff

Darwin Mahlum

STAFF:

B. Anderson, Manager of Community Planning
J. Holm, Manager of Current Planning
D. Jensen, Community Development Planner
Cindy Hall, Recording Secretary

OTHER:

Councillor D. Johnstone
Councillor J. Kipp
Councillor F. Pattje
20 Members of the Public

1. Call to Order

Chair Holdom called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm. Introductions were made around the table.

2. Adoption of Minutes from 2010-NOV-16

MOVED by R. Kelm, SECONDED by C. Trombley that the Minutes from 2010-NOV-16 be adopted. CARRIED

Updates on shipping containers and supportive housing will be given at the next meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda and Late Items

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by C. Erb that the Agenda be approved as presented. CARRIED

4. Correspondence

a. Correspondence was received from the following and is attached to the Minutes:

- Members of the Brechin Hill Community Association
- Members of the Newcastle Neighbourhood Association
- Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce
- Vancouver Island Conference Centre
- Stewart Avenue Waterfront Stakeholders Association
- Brechin Hill Community Association

5. Presentations

a. Zoning Bylaw Review Update

J. Holm advised that a draft land use map for the city has been completed and will be posted on the City's website. Principles followed were to balance uses on the ground with the OCP, and to recognize existing uses where possible. Business license data and aerial photography were reviewed for this purpose.

Open houses have been scheduled for:

- February 8, 5:30 pm at the Nanaimo Ice Centre;
- February 10, 5:30 pm at Beban Park Lounge; and
- February 16, 5:30 pm at Dover Bay School.

PNAC members are highly encouraged to attend. It is anticipated that a summary of public comments from the Feb. 8 and 10 open houses will be given to PNAC at their next meeting, along with a progress update, report on revisions, and review of the zoning bylaw rewrite. The proposed date for PNAC to make their recommendation on the draft bylaw is 2011-APR-19.

M. Savory arrived at the meeting.

The Committee inquired whether the zoning map was available electronically, what have been the main initiatives taken in the zoning bylaw rewrite process, and whether there will be any consideration given to transition requirements between tall buildings and the rest of the neighbourhood (in Corridor areas).

J. Holm advised that the map will be available electronically on January 20. Some of the main initiatives in the process have been: a reduction in standard single family lot size from 600m² to 450m²; corridor zoning; encouraging infill; allowing duplexes on corner lots of a certain size; and reducing setbacks from the street. As property will not be pre-zoned in general, there should not be any change to what is there now regarding transition between tall buildings and the rest of the neighbourhood. There is policy in the OCP that guides staff, developers, and PNAC to ensure there is a transition.

The Committee inquired about the possibilities for subdividing existing city lots, and if the new zoning bylaw will provide for a range of lot sizes. J. Holm replied that subdivision of existing lots may be possible. However, there are other conditions that are factored into subdivision that often limit subdivision potential such as access and servicing, and lot frontage and depth, which are not proposed to change. Some

variability will be built into the new zoning bylaw regarding lot sizes, but there is a desire for certainty as well, so consideration will have to be given to balance the two.

J. Holm was thanked for the update, and he left the meeting.

6. Information Items

a. Previous Applications

- i. RA235 / RA236 / RA237 / OCP055
3312, 3360, 3370 Hammond Bay Road and 3355, 3443 Meadow Lane Road - Comprehensive development in the Stephenson Point area.
D. Jensen advised that this application was considered by PNAC on 2010-FEB-16 where they recommended approval to Council, and was subsequently adopted by Council on 2010-NOV-22.
- ii. OCP064 – General Amendments
Parks Mapping, Steep Slope Exemptions
D. Jensen advised that this application was considered by PNAC on 2010-NOV-16 where they recommended approval to Council. A public hearing was held on 2011-JAN-06, and the bylaw will return to Council on 2011-JAN-24 for consideration of third reading and adoption.
- iii. OCP052 – South End Neighbourhood Plan
D. Jensen advised that this application was considered by PNAC on 2010-SEP-21 where they recommended approval to Council, and was subsequently adopted by Council on 2010-NOV-22.

7. Old Business

8. New Business

a. OCP Amendments

- i. OCP053 – Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan

D. Jensen gave a presentation on the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan process. The Chair then opened the meeting to questions and presentations.

L. Stark, a member of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee, advised that on behalf of the Newcastle Neighbourhood Association, they are very excited about this Neighbourhood Plan, and like many things in it such as the upper Newcastle area and the seawalk below, the greening of Stewart Avenue, changes to Newcastle and Vancouver Avenues, honouring heritage houses, and connecting the neighbourhood to Bowen Park so that the waterfront will connect up to Bowen and the surrounding community. There are some very good things in this Neighbourhood Plan, and she hopes that others look at the document in its entirety, and not just the “hot” issue.

M. Stones, a member of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee and representing the Stewart Avenue Waterfront Stakeholders Association (SAWSA) noted the 18 “grueling” months the Neighbourhood Plan steering committee spent on the Neighbourhood Plan. He commended the City staff, noting they really helped the steering committee along. The committee listened and learned from consultants and land use planners, attended numerous meetings, public

open houses, design charettes and workshops, and have come to a plan that SAWSA believes is progressive for the area. The waterfront area has not been reviewed for years dating back to the 1996 OCP. With the new OCP, adopted in 2008, the waterfront area again was not reviewed with the understanding that it would undergo further review as part of a detailed area plan process. The OCP currently states that the waterfront should be marine oriented only. Creation of a sustainable waterfront requires more redevelopment, including residential uses, which would contribute to providing for a continuous waterfront walkway.

J. Bremner, a member of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Committee and representing the Brechin Hill Community Association, stated that the experience has not been as positive for their residents. They started with optimism, but there has been more than one issue of concern. They are concerned about loss of views, increased traffic, change in their neighbourhood, and four storey development without ground access being provided. They will no longer be a single family residential neighbourhood, as very drastic height increases are being requested. Residents don't feel they've been heard as their comments are not reflected in this Neighbourhood Plan. They do support some things about the Neighbourhood Plan however. Residents are excited about increasing density at the top of the hill as daily life plays a more important role than occasional walks on the waterfront. She noted the neighbourhood turned out to events in large numbers.

A committee member asked how increased density relates to walking on the waterfront, and what is happening to marine industrial.

M. Stones replied that development along the waterfront will add public amenities, adding there is limited opportunity for development along the waterfront due to the minimal amount of fee simple land. Most of the area is leased land. The areas where you can put density will carry through the walkway as they develop.

J. Bremner stated any redevelopment along the waterfront requires construction of the waterfront walkway.

D. Jensen advised that the neighbourhood was quite vocal about their desire for some marine industrial sites along the waterfront to discontinue their operations.

The Chair noted that PNAC is a working committee, appointed to give advice to City Council. It does not hold public hearings. There will be two opportunities for the public to address Council, when the bylaw goes to Council for introduction, and at the public hearing of the bylaw.

The following members of the public made presentations to PNAC. Their submissions are attached to the Minutes:

- Bill Forbes
- Kate Webber
- Jay Stewart
- Jane Saxton
- Fred MacDonald

- Daniel Appell
- Nancy Mitchell
- Ted Aussem
- Ingvar Vikan

R. Van Wachem stated that he was told this meeting was not going to be public, otherwise SAWSA would have had speakers as well.

B. Holdom advised that PNAC meetings are open to the public, and noted that SAWSA is represented by their representative on PNAC.

O. Sirri also stated that he was unaware that he could speak at the meeting. He commented that the neighbourhood plan process has been very long. They started at a very different place from where they are today, which isn't perfect. SAWSA worked hard at looking at the entire neighbourhood because the waterfront belongs to all of the city. The Neighbourhood Plan steering committee worked hard and had the best intentions for the neighbourhood and the city at large.

B. Holdom concluded the meeting by stating the work of the steering committee was very much appreciated, and that staff have done the best they could in bringing forward a good planning document. He thanked all who spoke at the meeting. It will now be the job of PNAC, including the representatives from the three respective neighbourhoods, to consider the information presented and determine whether there is any merit to considering revisions to the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 pm.

9. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of PNAC is scheduled for 2011-FEB-15.

10. Adjournment

Newcastle + Brechin Draft Neighbourhood Plan

December 15, 2010

To: Mayor and Council; and Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee Members:

Re: Proposed Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan

The proposed Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan is being given to the members of the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee on December 15, 2010. This document is the culmination of more than a year and a half's worth of effort on behalf of the plan's Steering Committee, the City's Planning Department, and numerous residents of both Brechin Hill and Newcastle neighbourhoods.

We want to advise you, however, that there are severe concerns among both Brechin Hill and Newcastle residents about the content of this plan. The most contentious issue is the proposed height of development along the waterfront from Cypress Avenue to Pimbury Point which is a radical departure from the goals and objectives of the Official Community Plan.

Over 250 residents attended the plan's public open house on November 3, 2010 and 84% of the comments submitted specifically rejected the proposed height of 8+ storeys on the waterfront.

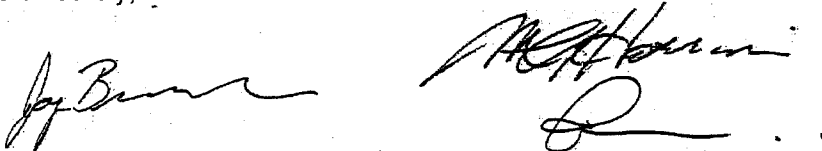
In addition to concerns about height, there are a number of other issues in the plan which have neither been requested by the community nor identified at the various workshops. These include increased height and density in designated "Neighbourhood Residential" areas; commercial and mixed uses scattered throughout both neighbourhoods; and laneways behind residential properties.

At the same time, real concerns expressed by residents such as the protection of views; garbage cans at bus stops; and greenway connections have been either ignored or given minimal attention in the plan.

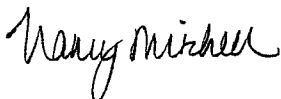
In conclusion, this proposed plan is not a plan for the Brechin Hill and Newcastle neighbourhoods. Rather, it represents some consultant's dream of transplanting Vancouver's Yaletown in Nanaimo. We strongly believe that this is a vision neither representative of the residents of the neighborhood nor of the vast majority of Nanaimo citizens at large.

We would ask that you review this plan with care and with caution. We look forward to discussing it further with you in the new year.

Yours sincerely,



Mike Harrison, Joy Bremner, Ingvar Vikan, Ted Aussem
(members of Plan Steering Committee from Brechin Hill)



Nancy Mitchell (Alternate Plan Steering Committee member from Newcastle)

TO: Mayor and Council Members

Members, PNAC

DATE: January 10, 2011

RE: Newcastle + Brechin Hill Neighbourhood Plan

We are writing this letter to voice our support for the Newcastle + Brechin Hill Neighbourhood Plan, and would like to provide you with our perspective and the reasoning behind our support.

Part of the appeal of living in this area is its semi-urban nature — having a pleasant living space close to, and within easy walking distance, of the waterfront and the services and amenities of the downtown core. Given our proximity to downtown, we recognize that it's reasonable, logical, and practical for the City to encourage densification of this area to maximize infrastructure maintenance costs, and to encourage sustainable development. As well, Nanaimo needs thriving businesses along the waterfront. Further densification of the Newcastle neighbourhood can support that. Our densified neighbourhoods can also improve access to local services and improve transit systems, which in turn will benefit all of Nanaimo.

Anyone who has walked through the Newcastle* neighbourhood can attest to seeing highly mixed residential forms: 4, 5, & 8-storey condos on the waterfront; multiple heritage houses; many affordable 3-storey rentals; numerous commercial enterprises; and home-based businesses. Newcastle has been very accepting of different styles of built form in the past, and this diversity of housing choices attracts a wide range of new residents from apartment dwellers to owners of high end condos — a necessary mix for a sustainable community. (*Newcastle neighbourhood: East off the Pearson Bridge, along the waterfront to the Nanaimo Shipyards, turn left up St. George Street, left on Terminal and back to the Pearson bridge.)

Much has been made of how high rises will destroy our waterfront landscape. In fact, there are few waterfront properties that are freehold and available for development for high rises. Specifically these are: Waterfront Suites and Marina; Nanaimo Shipyards; Stones Marina, and Pimbury Point (Ocean Cement property). A few well-placed buildings with heights of Base 8 on these properties can help increase the densification necessary to sustain waterfront commercial activity and neighbourhood viability without interfering significantly with the neighbourhood's enjoyment of the waterfront.

It should be noted that the Waterfront Suites and Marina, as well as the Nanaimo Shipyards, are located directly across the street from the Garden Memorial to Chinese Pioneers, with Walnut Street and the St. George Ravine running directly above all the way to Terminal. Development in this particular location would affect the least number of residents as far as impaired views are concerned. (Protection of view corridors are already addressed in the Plan.)

Regarding Stones Marina, it is a sizable enough property to allow for a number of choices in the location of a development, which would then have little impact on neighbourhood views.

Although Pimbury Point is also a possible development site, we do not expect it to happen soon.

We spent a great deal of time during the planning process being educated, and considered a number of factors in reaching our decision. We did what we thought was best for our neighbourhood. Did we get everything we wanted in this Plan? No, we did not. However, we have a Plan that holds promise and

ideas that we can work together with the City to achieve. We believe this Plan to be fluid and subject to adjustments as new conditions arise. It's a beginning and we look forward to the implementation stages for our neighbourhood.

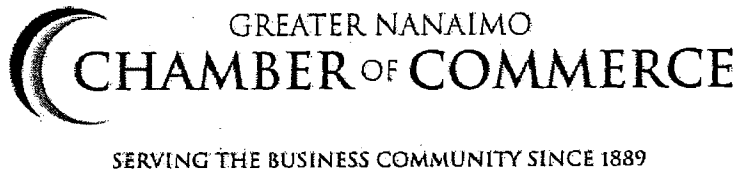
Although the planning process was often stressful, considering competing interests, it has been our privilege to participate in it. For your kind consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Three handwritten signatures in cursive script, arranged horizontally. The first signature is 'W. Jaques', the second is 'L. Hildebrand', and the third is 'A. Stark'.

Warren Jaques, Linda Hildebrand, Lee-Anne Stark

Members, Newcastle Steering Committee & Newcastle Neighbourhood Association Executive



January 10, 2011

Mayor and Council
City of Nanaimo

Dear Mr. Ruttan & Members of Council:

I am writing you on behalf of the Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce to support the proposed Neighbourhood Plan of Newcastle/Brechin Hill.

We believe this neighborhood plan represents positive growth for both the residential and business community. In many respects it highlights the importance of residents, businesses, professionals and community groups to all work collectively to ensure a healthy economic base and positive socio-economic structure that benefits all of Nanaimo.

Many Chamber members live and work in the Newcastle/Brechin Hill neighbourhood - the gateway to Downtown Nanaimo - and are keen to build and expand their business. For that to happen however, this plan needs your approval as it creates the conditions to permit growth.

We support the need to increase residential density, as it is the environmentally responsible method to grow a community while maintaining a low carbon footprint. Equally as important however, is the fact that increased residential density translates into greater economic growth and opportunity, as residents would be encouraged to work closer to where they live rather than commute.

The proposed plan does an effective job of providing a healthy cross section of single-family dwellings, condominium living, as well as mixed-use commercial and residential developments. This is a proven formula for success and further characterises the needs of growing communities.

This holistic, master-plan approach to community planning is reasonable, responsible and vital. It showcases the significance of addressing the residential and economic needs of the entire city for decades to come. We appreciate that all these factors are connected and believe that this neighbourhood plan represents these issues.

This plan inspires positive growth as well as local and private investment in the community. Our beautiful city is growing, and we are adapting to the ever-changing needs and requirements that progressive cities and communities desire to provide.

The Chamber trusts that you are as inspired by this plan as we are and hope that it receives your approval.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'AR' or 'C.R.T.'.

Andrea Rosato-Taylor
Chair

Greater Nanaimo Chamber of Commerce



VANCOUVER ISLAND
CONFERENCE CENTRE

101 Gordon Street
Nanaimo, BC V9R 5J8
Tel: 250.244.4050
Fax: 250.244.4055
1.866.430.MEET (6338)
www.viconference.com

January 11, 2011

Dear Members of PNAC, Mayor and City Council,

I am writing to you as I have come to understand there is a proposed Neighbourhood Plan of Newcastle/Brechin Hill and feel it important to speak to this plan that could facilitate potential and positive growth for this region.

Apart from the concept that this plan will encourage local investment and compliment public amenities and services, it is a direct link to a main thoroughfare of the central island, more specifically downtown Nanaimo, from the mainland.

This plan promotes the economic viability and environmental sustainability of the community and highlights how neighbourhoods can, will and do contribute to the overall success of a city.

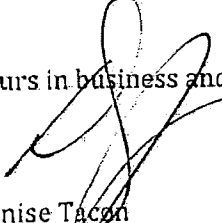
In addition it depicts the need for continued discussions of a 150-room hotel to be constructed on the waterfront.

This particular component is of great importance as it addresses the ever-increasing need of the Vancouver Island Conference Centre to have additional high-quality accommodation options in the Harbour City.

With direct pedestrian and shuttle links to the conference centre, the discussed 150-room waterfront hotel will help the Vancouver Island Conference Centre sell to a larger market, and attract those clients still interested in accommodation inventory within short travel distances.

In summary, this neighbourhood plan represents concrete solutions that enhance services and amenities for the Newcastle/Brechin Hill neighbourhood, strengthen, connect and define the downtown core and offer possibilities not yet seen for the Vancouver Island Conference Centre. This is beneficial plan that will further stimulate positive economic growth for the city of Nanaimo and its people.

Yours in business and hospitality,


Denise Tacon
General Manager
Vancouver Island Conference Centre

Dt/dt



STEWART AVENUE WATERFRONT STAKEHOLDERS ASSOCIATION

1690 Stewart Avenue, Nanaimo, B.C. V9S 4E1

Tel: 250-753-4232 Fax: 250-753-4204 Email: mstones@stonesmarina.com

The Stewart Avenue Waterfront Stakeholders Association represents the common interests of stakeholders along Stewart Avenue's waterfront from Rosehill Street to Zorkin Road, including landowners, Port lessees, and businesses. It represents a collective voice in the planning process for the Newcastle Planning Area. The association is one of three active community association members making up the Neighbourhood Planning Committee working with City staff in the planning process.

January 11, 2011

Office of the Mayor and City Council
Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee
City of Nanaimo
238 Franklyn Street
Nanaimo, B.C. V9R 5J6

Dear Mr. Mayor, Members of City Council, and Members of PNAC:

Re: Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Draft Plan (Draft 2010-OCT-26)

We wish to express our support for the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Draft Plan. The Plan presents an impressive community vision that addresses how to work towards creating a sustainable and liveable neighbourhood in a changing environment. The two-year long planning process has been a testament to the interest and desire of residents, businesses and City staff to work together to create a comprehensive plan for the area's future. The process has involved the contribution of consultants and land-use planners. It has included numerous meetings, public open houses, design charettes and workshops. Throughout, members of the Planning Committee have each had repeated opportunity to grow with the process and to contribute their visions of the planning area's future. The resultant Plan effectively balances "wants" and "needs" in consideration of the differences in those visions.

There has been much discussion among the members of the Planning Committee over land use policies in the Plan for the waterfront component of the planning area. The importance of all land area components in the planning area and their contribution to the success of the Plan notwithstanding, it is the waterfront component that our association primarily represents. This letter describes the events leading to a majority agreement among Planning Committee members over the land use policies adopted in the Plan for that component.

For cities and neighbourhoods that are fortunate to have them, waterfronts are an important amenity for residents and benefit cities through their contribution as economic drivers. Our current waterfront, however, lacks a master vision that capitalizes on that importance. The "Waterfront" designation as it relates to the Stewart Avenue corridor in our newly adopted Official Community Plan remains unchanged from the original 1996 OCP, which gives little recognition to its unique nature and potential. Lack of a master vision can result in site-specific construction that falls short of making meaningful contribution to the area's overall sustainability. Our new Plan alternatively recognizes the potential of the Stewart Avenue waterfront, suggests supporting higher density with a more intensive mix of uses, and adopts a master vision that embraces the goals and objectives underlying what will make it a sustainable entity.

Residential densification underlies the OCP's overarching principle of "sustainability". Densification generates a population base that will motivate a demand for public amenities and support commercial and public services. The approach encourages diversity in housing to attract a cross-section of the population and to promote environmental initiatives. The approach also requires support for mixed-use development so that varieties of uses are found within a convenient distance and so that there is motivation for an investment in

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alternative modes of transportation, including pedestrian and cycling trails that connect one place to another. The creation of such amenities and services enriches our community socially, culturally, environmentally and economically.

The Plan recognizes that the realities of our particular waterfront prescribe a trade-off between “wants” and “needs” when planning for residential densification. This is especially true in its consideration of building height. The Plan recognizes the importance of this variable, but submits that building design should be considered relative to other important factors. The Plan, then, takes on the challenge of how to minimize the effect of building heights on wanted upland views while, at the same time, encouraging needed densification in the interest of sustainability.

There are only two property areas left along the 1.6 kilometres of Stewart Avenue that, for reasons of land tenure and configuration, are suitable for residences. These two areas, positioned as “book-ends” on the waterfront shelf from Cypress Street to Brechin Road and designated “Medium High Density Waterfront” (MHDW) in the Plan, are active development zones. The areas comprise the only properties on that shelf that feature majority freehold tenure and that are physically large enough to support residential densification objectives. In recognition of this, the Plan provides density incentives for those areas, including mid-rise buildings with a base height of eight storeys. The balance of properties between St. George Street and Maple Street are primarily narrow leaseholds that are, by that nature, not particularly suitable for residences. As such, this one kilometre stretch has been designated “Medium Density Waterfront” in the Plan, which provides for reduced density and low-rise buildings in the two to four storey height range. The properties lying north of Brechin Road are also included in the Plan as MHDW and represent future potential development zones that can contribute to planned densification.

A special workshop for the Planning Committee was scheduled to facilitate continued debate on the land use policies of the MHDW zones. City staff invited urban planning consultants to participate. The workshop specifically focused on the impact of buildings on sight lines and on view corridors. In subsequent meetings, City staff presented visual displays that provided examples of various building forms and density options. In the end, the Planning Committee came to consensus on identified view corridors and on street-end “cone-angle” view provisions. The City has incorporated these into the Plan on page 55.

The workshop and subsequent meetings, however, did not resolve the lack of Planning Committee member consensus over height provisions for the MHDW zones. The Newcastle Neighbourhood Association recommended acceptance of an eight-storey base height as a compromise to the disparate positions of the three members and proposed that their recommendation be put to a vote. Our association had originally suggested a twelve storey base height to the Planning Committee. We agreed to the compromise proposed in consideration of the arguments underlying the positions of our Planning Committee colleagues. We also weighed the advice and information provided by the urban consultants and by the City planners. Our concern was that, with few other development area options on the waterfront to provide a meaningful scale of residential density, a lower base height in the MHDW zones would jeopardize sustainability objectives. With the majority of the Planning Committee in favour, the City incorporated the eight-storey base height into the Plan.

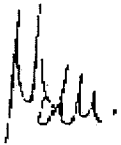
The Planning Committee also discussed potential maximum building heights applicable in the MHDW zones. Confusion over maximum heights was evident during the November 3rd, 2010 open house. In the interest in promoting sustainability objectives, the Plan does provide support for height above the specified base height of eight-storeys where a proposed development provides additional amenities that implement neighbourhood plan policies. However, benefits provided to the community from construction proposed above base height must prove out by passing the intense scrutiny of the re-zoning and development permit approvals processes, including public involvement throughout by way of public hearings. In this way, the Plan speaks to a process that effectively weighs the costs and benefits of proposals in the best interest of the community.

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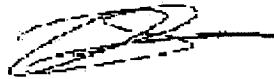
The Plan is comprehensive in that it balances the interests of all parties. A diverse number of parties with different priorities have been involved in the Plan. All have been interested, however, in establishing an appropriate level of density, contextual fit, and to experiment with design standards and in creating an innovative public open space network. While suggesting a level of densification, the Plan remains very sensitive to the maintenance of key views and unique vistas. It also encourages the availability of suitable well-connected open spaces that focus on public access, the pedestrian experience, and the connecting of the waterfront to its upland residential areas. By applying broader goals and objectives to the OCP, including those related to sustainability and land use, the Plan offers a long-range master vision for a growing neighbourhood that guides future site-specific development and improves the quality of life for both neighbourhood and city residents.



Marc Stones



Ron VanWachem



Odai Sirri

SAWSA Neighbourhood Planning Committee



To Mayor and Council and members of PNAC

On behalf of many of the residents who live in Brechin Hill, we wish to express that there are concerns about the draft Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhood Plan. The Brechin representatives on the Steering Committee, the Brechin Hill Community Association and residents of the community began the neighbourhood planning process with optimism. The residents had looked forward to this undertaking and believed their input was to be an essential component to the development of the plan since "local community involvement is the cornerstone of neighbourhood plans".

Throughout the development of the Plan, the Brechin members of the Committee and residents have struggled to understand the direction of the planning department in regards to the Brechin and Waterfront portions of the planning area. Against very strong public opposition, City Planning staff, continued to promote heights and densities along the waterfront and throughout the neighbourhood that are unacceptable to the residents.

There are things we like about the plan, such as: the proposed median down Stewart Avenue; on street parking on Terminal Avenue; development of Terminal Park as a higher density mixed use commercial centre; Estevan and Princess Royal as "high streets"; and pedestrian crossings on Terminal and Stewart Avenues.

Then there are the items that raise strong concerns; height on the waterfront; no protection of existing views; drastically increased densities across the Brechin hillside with commercial centres inserted into the established single family residential neighbourhood; and the opportunity that three waterfront property owners seeking drastic changes outside of the current OCP, were given to influence the plan.

The Brechin representatives believe, as expressed in the OCP, that "Neighbourhood planning is critical to achieving the objectives of the City's Official Community Plan" and that "Neighbourhood Plans speak to the specific needs and desires of the communities."

The waterfront is an integral part of our neighbourhood. We began this process with the firm belief that the current OCP definitions would be reflected in the plan. We recognized the value of change on some industrial sites in order to allow residential land uses consistent with the MA3 zoning on the other properties along the channel. It immediately became apparent that the waterfront property owners who were on the Steering Committee had different ideas and these ideas appeared to be supported by City staff.

Many issues within the Plan that should have received attention were neglected as Steering Committee meetings focused on the waterfront. After more than a year, when there was no movement regarding height on some waterfront properties, City staff presented what they call a compromise. There has been no compromise. The Brechin members of the committee have not been in support of the city drafts in regard to the waterfront at any time during the process.

The Brechin Hill representatives on the Steering Committee, along with Nancy Mitchell, an alternate member of the Steering Committee from the Newcastle neighbourhood, proposed a more balanced approach to the development of the waterfront properties, suggesting a range of heights and density depending on the proximity of the developable area to the adjacent single family residential neighbourhood.

HISTORY OF THE PROCESS

Presentation to PNAC

Bill Forbes, January 18, 2011

My Name is Bill Forbes I am past Chair of the Brechin Hill Community Association (BHCA), and past member of the Plan Nanaimo Advisory Committee (PNAC), Rezoning Advisory Committee (RAC), Parking Advisory Committee (PAC) and the Neighbourhood Friendly Home Committee. I believe my 10 plus years of community involvement and committee work have provided me with an excellent working knowledge of the Official Community Plan (OCP) - including the revised and adopted version of 2008 – the Port Master Plan (PMP) and the planning function at City Hall.

As a member of PNAC, I was one of several proponents who recommend to Council that the Neighbourhood Plans be completed and that the City adopt -as it has- the Neighbourhood Planning process as a Budget Line item. The intention was to ensure that Neighbourhood Plans were completed and incorporated into the OCP ASAP. The idea was that these plans would be a Neighbourhood led construct with City Staff acting in an advisory capacity. I have – as a PNAC member – reviewed the Chase River, Hammond Bay-Stevenson Point-Rocky Point and Departure Bay Community Plans and watched the process evolve. Now as a bystander I've observed that the process has morphed into a City run operation where Community groups appear to be window dressing.

Originally the Newcastle and Brechin Neighbourhood Plan was going to centre on the Newcastle area, with some aspects of Brechin being incorporated into the plan thus requiring the BHCA be included. The original working title for the plan was the Newcastle Neighbourhood Plan. It took months for City Staff to even include "Brechin" in the title - the point being that the focus was originally on Newcastle. The reason was that the Stewart Avenue and Terminal Ave. Corridors are in the Newcastle area and these were originally to be the key locations that the plan was to focus on.

There are 4 parties involved-Brechin, Newcastle, Stewart Avenue Stakeholders Association (SASA) and the City. SASA only surfaced when a community plan for the area was about to commence. It is the creation of a portion of the property owners on Stewart Ave and all of the parties representing SASA on the Plan Steering Committee have vested interests in the redevelopment of the waterfront. Their contribution to the Neighbourhood Plan process has been to promote their dream projects (all of which consist of high-rise towers) on Stewart Ave. The influence the 3 key people in SAS were given on the neighbourhood plan seems rather generous and unrepresentative of the demographics considering the more than 1500 households in the area.

The OCP indicates clearly that densification would occur along the Stewart Avenue Corridor which is defined as the south end of Stewart starting at Cypress Street and ending at the Pearson Bridge. In the most recent rendition of the Draft Plan this corridor has been ignored and pushed north to basically start at Cypress and end at Brechin. The entire single family residential portion of the Brechin area

(excluding Beach Estates) has been relabeled medium density residential allowing 2 – 4 story infill with commercial nodes in a predominately 1-2 story residential neighbourhood.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee members from Brechin have been adamant with City Staff that the current and past versions of the plan are unacceptable. The Plan is in complete contradiction of the OCP and PMP. At a minimum Goals 2 and 7 are not met in the OCP where Sections 2.1, 2.3, 2.9, 7.1 and 7.4 are ignored. It is a plan that will destroy the “form and character” of Brechin Hill and contradicts the OCP which clearly indicates these aspects should be retained. We all understand the need for density, but this is misdirected and certainly not coming from the residents or the Community Association in this area. The community survey from the last open house indicates 84% of the 179 respondents comments regarding this final draft were negative.

We all understand that neighborhood planning is complex, time consuming and usually doesn't meet all area wishes, but the bones of it should –and typically do – incorporate a constructive compromise suiting all parties generally. The Brechin area has been at the top of the list for such a plan since the original OCP was developed and is a priority for completion in the revised OCP. Sadly there have been major flaws in the process to complete the Brechin/Newcastle Plan and a huge divergence from compliance with the OCP as the Draft Plan for this area today indicates.

I'd like to ask the members of PNAC to listen to and consider the constructive alternatives the Newcastle and Brechin area residents are presenting. Their suggestions attempt to salvage the plan so we have a satisfactory document that is acceptable to the majority of the area communities and stakeholders.

PREPONDERANCE OF SMALL SCALE COMMERCIAL AND MIXED USE

Presentation to PNAC

Kate Webber, January 18, 2011

I am a resident of one of the houses on the three blocks east of Princess Royal. I became concerned about the direction that the community plan was taking. Development is a good thing as long as the development reflects the views of the community. I want to be part of a city that demonstrates vision and leadership by staying true to what matters – a quality of life provided to all that is respectful of established residents and of the natural beauty that surrounds us here on the island.

Residents who invested in this area did so with the understanding that it was an established neighbourhood. With these new plans for development our concept of community is in question. Clearly, we see it as a plan for development and not for community. As development occurs residents will sell and leave what is no longer a community but urban neighbourhood.

Our community does not support “small scale commercial use developments on street corners” and we find it problematic that residential corridors can have commercial developments within them.. We would like to return to the simple designation of neighbourhood embodied in the Official Community Plan.

The residents on the three blocks east of Princess Royal would like a better defined transition into single family residents which would mitigate an incursion of commercialism and prevent the neighborhood from being ruined. Height lowers property values. We would like to see a more stepped approach with two storeys at the lower end of the slope transitioning upward.

The redefining of Vancouver Avenue as a “Residential Corridor” is a small recognition of the heritage nature of that street but under this draft plan, it still could have mixed use developments on the street. This is not appropriate when we are trying to encourage the redevelopment of a historic residential area. 40 – 100 units per hectare in 3 – 4 story buildings does not respect the heritage character along Vancouver Avenue or along Belford Ave.

The OCP residential corridor designation was modified by the plan to act as a “buffer” or provide transition into the family neighbourhoods, but the benefit of the modification has been lost by the reintroduction of commercial.

We are concerned about what kind of corner developments will be introduced in our neighbourhood. The introduction of the gas station with rental apartments above, and the check cashing business on Princess Royal, has created parking issues and disturbances including violent crimes, derelict cars, and a transient element.

We are also very concerned that commercial developments within our neighbourhood will generate more traffic. An example of this problem exists now. The established mixed use corridor along Princess Royal has caused a traffic outflow problem. Presently consumers are exiting into and through the neighborhood to avoid a difficult exit onto Princess Royal from Juniper. Successful businesses on street corners would require people to travel into the neighbourhood.

We question the sense or benefit of having commercial properties on street corners and intersections inside the neighbourhood. In the proposed neighbourhood plan, there are a whopping 19 possible locations for commercial corner developments within the community of Brechin. This area can be crossed on foot in 5 to 10 minutes. In addition to this, there are three more corner locations available for corner stores on the upslope of Hemlock St. and Juniper St. This makes a total of 22 corner shop locations for a very small area that is surrounded by shops and services or commercial and mixed use zoning.

How many mixed use developments can this small neighbourhood possibly sustain? The plan wants to “encourage economic activity along Terminal, Estevan, Princess Royal and Stewart as well as the Commercial Centre and some kind of market at Pimbury point”. And, at the same time, it wants Mixed Use Corridors along Newcastle, Vancouver, Belford and Willow in addition to corner stores and street markets. There is no possible way this neighbourhood could support this level of commercial activity in addition to the shopping centre at Terminal and whatever is included on Stewart Avenue. Is this good economic planning?

Good evening and thank you for this opportunity; my name is Jay Stewart and I live in Brechin Hill.

In early 2008 my husband, Peter Macnair, and I decided to move up Island from Victoria. We spent several months looking at many properties that were for sale between Maple Bay and Parksville. We looked at small acreages and large lots, with and without dwellings. We visited City Halls, planning departments, spoke with friends living in the communities and hung out in restaurants and coffee shops to get a sense of "community".

We chose Nanaimo! We visited City Hall many times with many questions—the answers supported our decision to relocate to Nanaimo. We reviewed the 2008 Official Community Plan and we were very pleased to find it so compatible with our values and plans.

Then we looked at dozens of properties throughout most neighbourhoods in the City. Eventually we found our home in Brechin Hill. There were several reasons why we chose this neighbourhood, the three most important were

- o the ambience of a well-established neighbourhood
- o the visionary Nanaimo Official Community Plan and
- o the location, which is walking distance to Downtown, Terminal Park and the ferries to Vancouver and Gabriola.

We bought our home in 2008 and moved from Victoria last May. It was our intention to rebuild the 1950 house to L.E.E.D. standards and to include a secondary suite.

A year after we bought, we were astonished and very concerned to discover the direction the City of Nanaimo Planning Department suggested for our neighbourhood; their draft proposal varies significantly from the values and directions in the OCP, which had so recently been adopted. Since these drastic changes came to our attention, we participated in the planning process at the charrette last January and the subsequent Open Houses and questionnaires.

We believe that our comments, regarding the Draft Plan and the planning process, and those of friends and acquaintances in Brechin Hill, have fallen on deaf ears at City Hall. At each of the Open Houses in discussion with Planners, we felt that they were arguing with us, trying to change our minds, rather than listening to our questions and comments and addressing them.

Our plans to rebuild our home are jeopardized by the radical changes that are being proposed in the Draft Plan. We strongly object to the introduction of mixed use and higher densities as a result of the new "neighbourhood" zones. Brechin Hill is identified as "Neighbourhood" a "Mix of housing types including single family homes and ground-oriented multiple family units; residential density of 10-50 UPH" with an existing "Corridor" along Terminal Avenue and Estevan Road. Residents of our neighbourhood are actively increasing density by following the opportunities that are offered under the OCP and current zoning.

The waterfront¹ along Newcastle Channel is an important economic generator for the City, providing maritime and marine services that are essential for commercial and recreational users.

On July 15th last, I wrote to the Planning Department in response to the previous Open House. "I agree with all of the guiding principles that have been established by the City, however I strongly disagree with the interpretation in the Draft Plan of some of them, specifically under "Policies respecting building form and design. . . ."

- o "Encourage the relocation of industrial uses to designated industrial areas located outside the neighbourhood"

¹ Waterfront—Applied to ocean and foreshore areas and providing for marinas, ocean-focused industrial uses, as well as commercial, residential, recreation, open space, and pedestrian activity.

Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair

This is contradicted by another guiding principle:

- o "Waterfront character and history should be respected in all future waterfront developments"

The character and history of Newcastle Channel and the adjacent neighbourhoods includes the industrial nature of the waterfront. We love the marine traffic both industrial and recreational—the tugs and barges, the ferries, the floatplanes, the sailboats and powerboats, the kayaks and dragon boats, the shipyards and chandlers, the marinas—all are integral to the neighbourhood and to the character and history of the city of Nanaimo.

So we strongly disagree with the relocation of industrial uses to other "designated" industrial areas—the waterfront along Newcastle Channel on the Stewart Avenue side has been designated industrial for a very long time. This is Nanaimo!

Regarding respecting the character and history in all future developments: the character and history must be respected by encouraging successful enterprises within the existing zoning and use categories—industry is good don't move it away!"

We were planning to begin rebuilding our home in March but we are unwilling to do so with such radical changes to our neighbourhood being proposed by the City. We are not the only people for whom the spectre of 8+ storey high-rise towers on Newcastle Channel dampens any intent to invest or reinvest in properties on the Brechin Hill.

What kind of neighbourhood will we be left with if the proposed changes to the OCP (via the Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhood Plan) are implemented? Does the City want our vibrant, constantly changing and upgrading community in Brechin Hill or does the City want to destroy a healthy, functioning neighbourhood while they wait for another development to fail? Our neighbourhood will gradually fall apart as we wait for Cable Bay, Downtown and Sandstone to be developed—Nanaimoites do not need nor do we want high-rise towers on the Newcastle Channel waterfront. As long as there is the threat of high-rises on the waterfront, people like us, will not want to invest in the neighbourhood.

Under the Official Community Plan and the goal of "building a more sustainable community", the concept was to create Urban Nodes (with residential densities of 50-150+) connected by Corridors (with residential densities of 50-150 and heights of 2-6 storeys). The east side of Stewart Avenue north of Townsite with its proposed density of 50 – 150+ units per hectare is neither an Urban Node nor a Corridor. So where is the sustainability in giving the waterfront lands on Stewart Avenue the same density and height as the Urban Nodes which, according to the OCP, are supposed to be "defined areas of concentrated urban use in the city". (OCP, page, 28)

This Draft Neighbourhood Plan dismisses many basic tenets of the OCP, which are meant to be guiding principles for the development of Neighbourhood Plans.

We are passionate users of Nanaimo's extraordinary parks; we would rather spend our time raising funds to acquire waterfront and other lands, where available, for City park public spaces—parks and recreational areas that could be interspersed with and enhanced by the active, working waterfront. We do not want to spend our time fighting City Hall.

Please stand with us as we support and protect the Official Community Plan that PNAC and the citizens of Nanaimo so recently created.

Respectfully submitted,



Jay Stewart and Peter Macnair



January 18, 2011

Good Evening

I am Jane Saxton. I own a home on Eplett Place in the Brechin Hill neighbourhood and have lived here for 9 years. As a director on the Brechin Hill Community Association I represent the association tonight.

Membership in our non-profit community association is 300 strong. As an association, we take seriously our responsibility to the members. We have an Annual General Meeting to elect officers, prepare the financial report to account for revenue from membership dues and expenses paid, review minutes and bring forward items for discussion. Our association website is up to date with links to City documents on the Neighbourhood Plan. We are a member of Nanaimo Neighbourhood Network. As confirmed by City staff, the boundaries of the Brechin Hill Community Association are from Ste. George Ravine to the East side of Terminal Avenue, to the South side of Beach Estates Park to the waterfront in Departure Bay and along Newcastle Channel.

The mandate of Brechin Hill Community Association is, "to preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents in our community".

Since the start of the neighbourhood planning process, Brechin Hill Community Association has been active in providing information and updates to our community and in soliciting feedback on the proposed Plan.

To this end we have:

- Published and distributed four newsletters and several information sheets to the entire community, not just to the paid members
- Hosted eight street information gatherings over the last six months
- Conducted several telephone and email campaigns to update our community and encourage feed-back
- Distributed posters on public venues to notify the community of up-coming open houses and workshops dealing with the Neighbourhood Plan
- Hosted a beverage and burger evening at Miller's Pub in March 2009 and in June 2009 hosted a community picnic at Barney Moriez Park

These initiatives and events have helped inform both the Brechin steering committee members on the concerns of the community as they worked through the planning process and helped keep the residents up to date with current information on the Plan.

Elected directors of Brechin Hill Community Association have been active contributors and/or steering committees members of:

- Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan
- Plan Nanaimo
- Imagine Nanaimo
- Port Master Plan

Issues we have been effective participants on include:

- Contribution to recent improvements on Brechin Road and sidewalks
- City of Nanaimo Traffic Engineering and Public Works Departments for traffic flow reviews and subsequent traffic quieting measures taken and on the water-main upgrades in Brechin Hill.
- Consultation on Development Permit Applications with the City of Nanaimo Development Services Department
- Revitalization of Barney Moriez Park
- Negotiated fuel transfer facility development at BC Ferry Terminal
- Helped develop guidelines with Nanaimo Port Authority for boat shed development on Newcastle Channel
- Promoted development of the waterfront walkway

We have an ongoing good relationship with BC Ferries, sea plane operators in Newcastle Channel and businesses in our neighbourhood.

Brechin Hill Community Association is an active association that responds to concerns from both members and the community at large.

We fully support the opinions presented to you tonight by our Brechin neighbours.

I speak on behalf of Brechin Hill Community Association to tell you the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan draft, you have before you, is not acceptable to our neighbourhood.

Jane Saxton, BHCA Membership Director
bhca@shaw.ca

Impact on Downtown Development

Presentation to PNAC

Fred MacDonald, January 18, 2011

Good evening. My name is Fred MacDonald and I have lived in the Newcastle area on Stewart Avenue for the past seven years. As a former two-term Alderman for the city of Terrace, I am familiar with community planning and the value of citizen involvement in that process.

I work as Dean of Trades and Applied Technology at VIU and I walk from home to the campus. These daily walks through our city allow me to be very up close and personal with the neighborhoods and tell me a lot about the pace of development in the city. I would like to comment on a couple of aspects of the Newcastle-Brechin Neighborhood plan that I find troubling, based on my daily walks through the city.

As I walk home now in the early evening I have been noticing the number of new living spaces in the downtown area that are vacant. The back side of the Pacifica tower is in almost total darkness at night. The Rimini townhome development on the Millstone River has very few lights on. The Marine Vista units on Vancouver Avenue are finally beginning to show signs of life with lots of Xmas lights this season. Studio NA has a number of units for sale.

The fact is that the downtown core has lots of unsold residential units waiting for new owners. The developers of these units invested millions, played by the development rules, and they deserve a chance to get a return on their investment. Insight has a million dollars in the ground in a hole on Front Street waiting for the market to firm up enough to support the construction of a beautiful new tower.

I am very troubled when I review the proposed plan for Newcastle and Brechin-that allows for the construction of new high-rise towers. The OCP outlines where towers should be constructed and this does not include our neighborhood. There is lots of space in the areas downtown where towers are permissible and developers have been working in these areas to infill and strengthen the city core. In 2007 a large number of citizens opposed the development of towers on the Nanaimo Shipyard site. PNAC, City staff, and the Council of the day, responded appropriately to massive public opposition and in respect for the OCP, they denied the application for towers. What bothers me tonight is that a few property owners appear to have influenced not our politicians, but our City Planning staff who are recommending height and density limits in contravention of the OCP for this area.

I don't want to leave the impression that I am opposed to development in Newcastle and Brechin. We have lots of room for new development that is sensible and reasonable for our area and for the city as a whole. We do not need to create new spaces for towers and traffic. Let us protect the integrity of this beautiful seaside community, support the developers who have put their money up in the right places and grow our downtown core in a sensible, sustainable fashion.

Thank you.

Daniel Appell
Date: January 17, 2011

NEWCASTLE + BRECHIN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING

I have closely followed the development of both the South End and the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood plans. This is, in part, because I have had a lifelong interest in urban planning, and because I care about Nanaimo.

A comparison of both planning projects has been very worthwhile. I've gained some valuable insight into some of the strengths and weaknesses of the planning process in Nanaimo.

The South End Plan demonstrates that the planning department can do fairly good job of planning.

The planning team illustrated how this is done.

They exhibited a very good understanding of the structures in that neighbourhood, and they seemed to recognize the value of the urban form that exists there now.

They showed respect for the views of the people who live in that neighbourhood.

Finally, the city worked with the community to propose a plan that builds on the strengths of that neighbourhood.

I think most would agree, that planning effort was successful.

There were challenges, wrinkles, as I like to call them, but the planners, displaying both competent professionalism and personal integrity, managed to smooth most of the wrinkles out.

Newcastle + Brechin was a very different experience, even though the two areas have a number of similarities.

I believe, the pressures from the inherent weakness associated with planning in Nanaimo are far, far greater here, than in the South End. This increases the degree of difficulty, but it doesn't make the problems insurmountable.

This is not a complicated or particularly difficult design brief.

We are talking about well established neighbourhoods of a little over 3500 people which may or may not double in population sometime towards the end of century.

There are challenges and complexities that have to be addressed, but really, if urban planners can't manage the challenges in this area, then there is very little planning these planners can manage.

Compared to the South End, planners here took a very different tack.

Instead of valuing the inventory of urban form in the area, there seems to have been a very severe devaluation.

Instead of respecting the point of views expressed by our neighbours, there was displayed an arrogant disregard for the people who presently live here.

The wrinkles that inevitably occur, instead of smoothed over, were exploited to create divisions that furthered the cities' unstated objectives.

And instead of building on the strengths of these communities, the so called "plan" expresses irrelevant ambitions and shallow stereotypes with values more appropriate to larger communities in larger cities.

This so called "plan" expresses a hillbilly's cartoon image of what a city should **look** like. It doesn't address the functions of neighbourhoods, or the purpose of a neighbourhood. It doesn't **work** if you regard this area as an integral, important "building block" of this city.

This plan is a fail. Its not just flawed, as most of city plans are, it is a fail.

In a very real sense, this is not a plan; it is most certainly not a neighbourhood plan. And that is evidenced by the almost complete lack of support from the neighbourhood.

What is a neighbourhood plan that is not supported by the neighbourhood?

Previously, my fellow citizens outlined a number of points where the plan fails. These are pretty much all the points where a plan could fail: zoning, organization, relevance and sustainability.

I agree with their views, but because I don't live in this neighbourhood, I tend to be more alarmed by the bigger picture and the broader implications.

This is a very poor way to do urban planning, and it has to stop, NOW.

This does not serve the argument for planning in this city; rather it weakens this cities' ability to organize itself. By providing an extreme abundance of unnecessary residential zoning, a few developers are granted unlimited discretion, to develop what they want, when they want.

It doesn't serve the development industry, as a whole, because, it grants a very huge competitive advantage to a very small part of the industry located in a very specific part of the city. As was pointed out by Fred MacDonald, development of our downtown becomes stymied by, what amounts to, a lack of planning.

And it doesn't serve the community at all; as was argued by Ted Aussem. We are requiring these neighbourhoods to assume the risk associated with water front development. Essentially, we are taking wealth from one part of the community and giving it to another part of the community. This is a form of subsidy. Once we start subsidizing development, it is very hard to get anymore development that doesn't require even more subsidies. The local economy is weakened by this; not strengthened.

The planning department has produced a document designed to benefit three or four property owners at the expense of every other property owner in the neighbourhood. I have never seen a neighbourhood plan so unbalanced in favour of such a small minority.

I believe the planning department is doing this to encourage development that is well beyond the capacity of this city to support. It appears they are more interested in the development fees, then they are in assuring we get appropriate neighbourhood development.

And the city is using deceptive and otherwise manipulative practices to deflect their responsibilities, minimize the contribution they are required to provide as professionals in public employ, so as to achieve their own objectives; which are for the most part hidden.

Let's take the example of the Medium High Density Waterfront Zone designation.

I believe part of the reason this document was delayed was to make some determinations regarding this new zoning.

This is brand new zoning; a major city initiative, and it will have a considerable impact on these neighbourhoods, and maybe the whole city. And it will have a negative impact on these neighbourhoods even before any development in this area occurs.

In this document, it is only briefly mentioned as a description and then located on a map.

There is nothing else in this document to support this very contentious assertion from the city.

I believe the city is trying to down play the significance of this new zoning.

Pretty much all the zoning in this document needs further analysis, but the lack of intelligent support for this zone designation is particularly acute.

The cities' position has to be explained; argued for; justified. The city has to back this up with real, statistically verifiable economic projections; real, statistically verifiable demographic projections and lots and lots of case study.

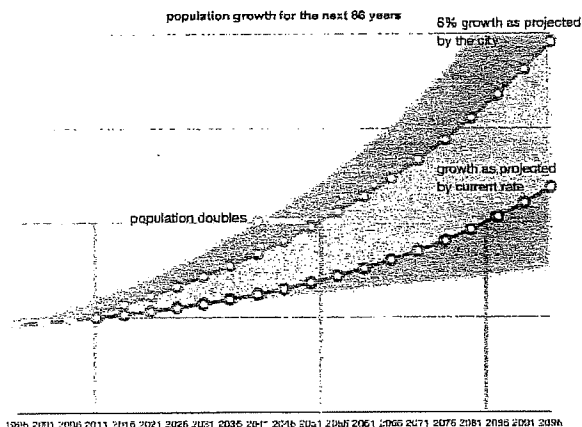
If they can't persuade us with a logical, coherent argument backed up with real research, then they are not doing their job as planners.

In ordinary circumstances, the bulk of this document would be dedicated to that particular zoning initiative. And all the arguments to support this position would have to be as airtight as they can possibly be.

Yet, there is nothing here. That is a serious loss?

And by passing this off as a determination made by a steering committee, these planners are not taking responsibility for their position either. When I hear statements such as: "A base height approach of up to 8 stories was developed through discussions between City staff and the Steering Committee",* I am concerned. I know, this is not the type of decision to be delegated to a steering committee. Making a steering committee responsible for this, is an abuse of this system.

Projected population for the Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhoods



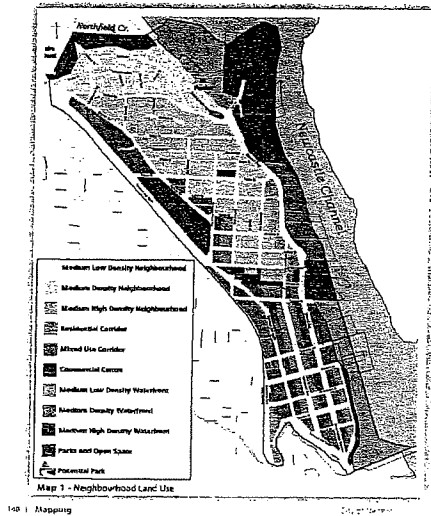
As I said before all aspects of the zoning in this document require review.

I believe there is enough evidence to support the position that these neighbourhoods are zoned well beyond the capacity of the city. On previous occasions, I've called this "over-zoning."

Here we have a graph projecting population growth in these neighbourhoods. Keep in mind that I have only used numbers provided by the city on its website. The area in red represents a margin of error. The blue curve at the bottom represents the current rate of growth for this community, and the green curve represents a rate of growth to match the cities' rate of growth.

You will notice that the population for this area is projected to double in approximately thirty to eighty years or never. The most likely scenario is that the population will double between 2051 and 2081. That's forty to seventy years from now.

Let me tell you, growth management at this rate will not be a particularly strenuous activity.



The zoning that is already in the existing OCP could easily accommodate this kind of growth.

Yet, here we have a zoning map produced for this so called "plan" that could accommodate a population triple or quadruple our present population.

There is no way any of this will ever be relevant.

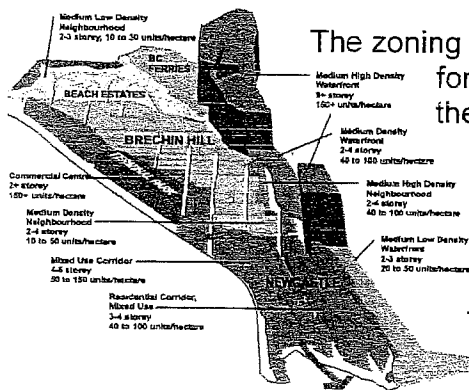
It is notable, that of the many inconsistencies inherent to this document this represents one of the most significant:

One of the priorities stated earlier in the document is to "manage growth," yet this "over-zoning" gives away one of the most powerful tools for growth management. With this

document the city is giving away the management of growth to developers. I'm presuming this means the city can continue collecting development fees without doing the work of planners, because that is about all it does.

Newcastle/Brechin Hill Draft Neighbourhood Plan Proposed Land Use, Heights and Densities

Here's a little 3d to give you a better idea of the extreme extent of this.



The zoning proposed by the city is so far off the mark it is ludicrous, yet it forms the base for all the vague and empty promises that take up the bulk of this document. We know that almost nothing in this document can be realized until we have a tax base that this map represents, but none of us will live to see a tax base this size. So the bulk of this so called "plan" is fantasy. A dreadful, destructive fantasy.

This community needs and deserves a lot better than this. I can't help thinking that if those involved had employed the same approach taken by the team to do the South End Plan,

Newcastle + Brechin would have, already, by now, a neighbourhood plan that it could be proud of.

Previously, Nancy Mitchell, on behalf of the neighbourhoods proposed a "bandaid" or a "patch" for this plan. This is, I think, a reasonable way out of this mess.

The patch is simple and direct. It alleviates most of the grievous errors associated with this so called, "plan." It also has a broad base of community support.

I think our fellow citizens have provided a way to save the day. I think it ought to be considered and recommended to council.

Perhaps someday, another attempt at a real plan for this neighbourhood can be made. If so, I would have four recommendations (based on my observations):

- 1) Value the place. This is a very special place.
- 2) Respect the people. There are very good people who live here who deserve every consideration.
- 3) Build on the particular strengths of this place - and celebrate the lives that are sheltered here.
- 4) Employ experienced and committed planning professionals who have the skills and personal integrity worthy of the task.

My closing is entirely directed to the planning department: Your work as planners for this city is a privilege. Your responsibility, and the very best you can do, is to make the lives you effect easier. I suggest, from now on, consideration for **all** your fellow citizens guide your professional conduct.

Thank-you.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAFT NEWCASTLE+BRECHIN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Presentation to PNAC

Nancy Mitchell, January 18, 2011

My name is Nancy Mitchell and I live in the Newcastle neighbourhood at 225 Cypress Street. As some of you know, I've been involved in community planning and development in this City since I arrived here in 1997. I was a President of the Nanaimo City Centre Association when I owned a business downtown; and was one of the early founders of the first Downtown Nanaimo Partnership. And, I was actually an alternate member of this Neighbourhood Plan's Steering Committee, representing the Newcastle neighbourhood, until September 2010.

As a resident of Newcastle, I do not support the draft Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhood Plan that you have before you. It is neither a consensus nor a compromise for either the Newcastle or Brechin neighbourhoods. After 1½ years of effort, we should be at this PNAC meeting, celebrating the completion of our Neighbourhood Plan, just like the South End Community did a few months ago.

Instead, we come to you with severe concerns about this plan. It has been a long and difficult process for us and the result is not in the best interests of the Brechin Hill and Newcastle neighbourhoods, nor the City of Nanaimo. There were 250 residents from Brechin Hill and Newcastle who attended the final Open House on November 3, 2010 to view this draft plan. Of those attending, 179 made comments either at the Open House or online. Of the 179 submissions, there were only 14 that were supportive of the proposed Plan. This is not good news.

But, we want to be positive about it. We want to move forward and make the best of what we consider a less than suitable Neighbourhood Plan. **As residents of Newcastle and Brechin Hill, we are suggesting some remedies for the document, albeit bandaid in approach.** We hope you will seriously consider these amendments to the Plan. They will alleviate some of the concerns of the residents and help to ensure that the Official Community Plan is upheld. We will end up with a patch job but it will make this Neighbourhood Plan more acceptable to the community than the version that is before you today.

We have a Motion for your consideration which incorporates our proposed amendments to the Plan. You should have received a copy as part of your Agenda package. **My purpose is to briefly explain the rationale behind the Motion so that you can consider these proposed amendments as you listen to other speakers and review the document.**

The first item in the Motion deals with the issue of protection of views:

Nanaimo is a city of views and vistas. It's what sets us apart from other communities. Although we take pride in having the best view of the mainland mountains of anyone in the world, the overlooks of the inner harbour and Newcastle Island are equally as important.

These overlooks are so important that the 2008 Nanaimo Official Community Plan states, (OCP, page 59), that we must: *"protect the character and extent of existing views of the inner Harbour and Newcastle Channel during development of harbour front lands."* And, even more significantly, one of the guiding principles of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood plan (page 19, #6) states that: *"The*

Newcastle and Brechin neighbourhood strongly supports maintaining the views that make this neighbourhood unique to the City, including the views to the waterfront and to Mount Benson."

Maintaining views is the foundation of development in the Brechin Hill and Newcastle neighbourhoods. Maintaining views is a guiding principle to be cherished and accommodated; it is not an amenity to be bargained away during the development process. Brechin Hill and Newcastle residents expect and deserve the same level of view protection that is embodied in the Departure Bay Neighbourhood Plan and recently approved South End Neighbourhood Plans.

Therefore, we propose that the Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhood Plan use the term "existing views" throughout the document rather than phrases like "public views" or "key views" or "panorama views" or "high level views." In addition, we also propose that it be clearly specified in the plan that the entire upland areas of Newcastle and Brechin Hill from Townsite to Brechin Road and west of Vancouver have these existing views.

The second item in the motion deals with the new land use designation of Medium High Density Waterfront.

Arguably, the most contentious aspect of this plan is the decision by the City Planning Staff to allow for 8+storeys on the Waterfront. The Brechin Hill representatives on the Steering Committee, along with myself, had proposed a more balanced approach to the development of these properties which allowed for the kind of view protection that the residents who live in the uplands of both Brechin Hill and Newcastle assume would have been afforded them in their neighbourhood plan. This proposed approach was ignored by City Planning staff; and, despite our request, we were not allowed to present this option to the community. As a result, we have no feedback from the neighbourhood on this particular approach. We only know that our residents are vociferous in their dislike of the 8+ storeys which is the draft plan.

We propose, therefore, that the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan maintain the height and amenity guidelines for Stewart Avenue which are already enshrined in the Official Community Plan. These guidelines include a three storey height limitation along Stewart Avenue and an additional consideration that the "*height of buildings should not interfere with the view of the residents living above the Stewart Avenue corridor*".

The third item of the motion concerns the preponderance of mixed use and commercial throughout the predominantly residential areas of the neighbourhoods.

The Newcastle + Brechin neighbourhood is not very big. It is bordered on both sides by two very active and potentially growing commercial streets either of which is just a block or two walk away. In addition, the neighbourhood is served by a large shopping centre at Terminal Park which is proposed to be enhanced under the plan with a "high street" concept along Estevan. All of these proposals, we welcome in the neighbourhood plan.

It is a mystery to us, therefore, as to why there is such an emphasis in the plan on commercial activity on almost every street corner in the neighbourhood. On page 33, under Community Economic Development Policies, the plan wants to, quite rightly, "*encourage economic activity along Terminal, Estevan, Princess Royal and Stewart as well as the Commercial Centre and some kind of market at Pimbury point*".

But, at the same time, the Plan calls for mixed uses in the Residential Corridor Land Use designation along Newcastle, Vancouver, Belford and Willow and even Caledonia Avenue as well as "local service centres" (ie small scale commercial, see page 59) and street markets (see page 53) scattered throughout

the rest of the neighbourhood. How many corner stores and open air markets do we need in this neighbourhood? We can't even support one fully functioning vegetable market in all of Nanaimo. What is the potential to successfully develop Sealand or Pimbury Point as a kind of "Nanaimo Granville Island" if there was a market every Saturday on local neighbourhood streets? It just doesn't make sense.

Unlike some neighbourhoods in the City of Nanaimo, the Newcastle + Brechin neighbourhood is fully equipped with enough commercial zones, outside of the residential areas, to last us for the next 100 years. Therefore, we propose to delete all those references to small scale commercial or local service centres that are scattered throughout the Brechin Hill and Newcastle *Neighbourhood* and *Residential Corridor* land use designations.

The fourth item in the motion deals with density on the Brechin Hill.

This plan has created so many shades of pink and blue that it is not clear what this neighbourhood is and what it will become in the future. What used to be a simple *Neighbourhood* Land Use designation in the Official Community Plan throughout Brechin Hill has now been chopped up into *Medium Low Density*, *Medium Density* and *Medium High Density Neighbourhoods*.

Brechin Hill is a community of less than one square kilometre. It can't deal with so many different neighbourhood land use designations. And why should it? The existing *Neighbourhood* Land Use Designation in Brechin Hill contained in the Official Community Plan already includes provisions for densification of the neighbourhood from 10 – 50 units per hectare and heights from 2-4 storeys. Any increase in density above this could be allowed under this designation through specific spot developments as long as there is no impact on existing views.

Therefore, we propose deleting the three neighbourhood designations in the draft Newcastle+Brechin Hill *Neighbourhood* plan and replacing them with the *Neighbourhood* Designation already in the Official Community Plan.

And finally, the fifth item in the motion concerns what is being proposed for Newcastle Avenue.

On one of our numerous walkabouts through the community during the "issue gathering" phase of the neighbourhood planning process, we identified the need to better connect Newcastle Avenue with the walkway along the waterfront. We suggested that to improve access to the waterfront between Pearson Bridge and the Yacht Club, it would be nice to have a stairwell from Newcastle to the waterfront. It was also noted, at the same time, that the entrance to Newcastle Avenue at the Pearson Bridge end was a very dangerous situation for pedestrians and perhaps the street should be closed off at that end.

Now, I'm sure you know that Newcastle Avenue, in most places, is a very tiny, very narrow street. The Newcastle + Brechin *Neighbourhood* Plan, however, proposes that it become the "Coney Island" of Nanaimo with corner stores, outdoor seating, a stage for neighbourhood events; a water fountain; public washrooms and kiosks. And, to top it off, the *Neighbourhood* Plan also recommends that the street be changed to a one way going north which would be a disaster for pedestrians at the Pearson Bridge end.

We like that the draft Plan includes our suggestions for stairwells connecting Newcastle Avenue to the waterfront walkway. But the concept of a "gathering place" just does not make sense. We propose, therefore, that all references to the designation of Newcastle Avenue as a "gathering space" and a one way street north be deleted from the Newcastle + Brechin *Neighbourhood* Plan.

There are many other changes we could propose or other proposals that we could question in the plan. We have, however, focused only on those that are most critical to the residents of Newcastle and Brechin Hill.

What can PNAC do now? From our perspective, it would seem that there are the following options when considering the fate of this draft Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan:

- PNAC could disregard public opinion as expressed by Newcastle and Brechin residents and approve the plan as is;
- PNAC could recommend changes to the plan as per this proposed Motion of amendments submitted by Brechin Hill and Newcastle residents;
- PNAC could discard the plan and start over but recommend a moratorium on development until another plan is prepared; or
- PNAC could table the plan and take our proposed Motion of amendments back to the neighbourhoods for review and discussion with a moratorium on development in the interim.

We would ask that you please consider our concerns and our solutions. We only wish to create a Neighbourhood Plan that is acceptable to our residents. A copy of the proposed amendments to the Plan is attached. Thank you for your time and your efforts.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO NEWCASTLE+BRECHIN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Residents of the Newcastle and Brechin Hill neighbourhoods have prepared the following amendments to the Plan for PNAC's consideration in recommending the Plan to City Council. These amendments reflect the changes that the residents feel are necessary to move towards a Plan that is acceptable to the neighbourhoods. [Note: Throughout we refer to the October 26, 2010 version of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan, as this is the most current version available online; and where noted, we refer to the Official Community Plan BYLAW 2008 NO.6500 Consolidated Version 2009-August-10.]

MOTION: That the draft Newcastle+Brechin Neighbourhood Plan be amended as follows:

1. Maintain the Official Community Plan policy on views in the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan so the Plan is consistent with the OCP for the waterfront which is: "to protect the character and extent of existing views of the Inner Harbour and Newcastle Channel during development of harbour front lands" through the following changes:
 - Use the term "existing views" throughout the Plan instead of phrases like "public views" (e.g.: on pages 22, 23, 24 and 47); "key views", "high level views" or "panorama views"; and
 - Modify Figure X on page 55 to show that the entire upland areas of Newcastle and Brechin Hill from Townsite to Brechin Road and west of Vancouver Avenue have existing views.
2. Replace point #38, (page 27-28) in the Medium High Density Waterfront Land Use designation which includes a "*base height of up to 8 storeys above Stewart Avenue*" plus additional height for considered amenities with the height guidelines and amenities in Development Permit Area 6 for the Stewart Avenue Corridor of the Official Community Plan and which are as follows:
 - *The height of buildings should not interfere with the view of the residents living above the Stewart Avenue corridor. A three storey height limitation should be observed along Stewart Avenue.* (point #1, page 146, OCP)
 - *Pedestrian and vehicular access shall be provided by means of a walkway from Brechin Point to the Nanaimo Yacht Club.* (point #5, page 147, OCP)
3. Delete "*local service centres*" and "*small scale commercial developments*" within the residential areas of the neighbourhood plan through the following changes:
 - In the Medium Density Neighbourhood Designation, delete the references to "local service centres" in point #14 (page 25)
 - In the Residential Corridor Land Use designation, delete point #20 (page 25) concerning the inclusion of small scale commercial uses at street corners.
 - Under Commercial Development, delete point #4 (page 58) concerning consideration of small scale commercial developments at intersections within the Neighbourhood designation.
4. Delete the concepts of *Medium Density Neighbourhood* and *Medium High Density Neighbourhood* in the draft plan and maintain these areas as the Neighbourhood Designation currently in the Official Community Plan through the following changes:
 - Delete the term Medium Density Neighbourhood throughout the document (e.g. page 25) and on Map 1: Neighbourhood Land Use and replace it with the "Neighbourhood Designation" found in the Official Community Plan (OCP, page 45)
 - Delete the term Medium High Density Neighbourhood Land Use designation along Stewart Avenue between Poplar Street and Walnut Street (see page 25) and on Map 1: Neighbourhood Land Use and replace it with the following sentence to be included in the new "Neighbourhood Designation" (see first point): *Specific sites along Stewart Avenue may accommodate stepped residential and/ or mixed uses providing they respect slope conditions and maximize views of Newcastle Channel and the harbour from the upland properties.*
5. Delete references to the designation of Newcastle Avenue as a "gathering space"; a walkway; and a one way street north (e.g. page 38, point #8; and pages 87, 88 and 89) with the exception of Point #6, page 88 which states : *Develop public lookout platforms at the ends of the west-east streets (Rosehill, Mt. Benson, Bryden and Dawes Streets) with stairways connecting the sidewalk along Newcastle Avenue down to the waterfront walkway.*

My name is Ted Aussem. As a resident and owner in Brechin Hill, I have been very interested in the neighbourhood plan process from the beginning. I am here before you to express my lack of support for the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood draft plan as presented.

While I have many areas of concern including, but not limited to, the proposed densities and the unprecedented commercial incursion into the Brechin neighbourhood, I will speak primarily to the issue of high-rises on the Stewart Avenue waterfront from Cypress Street to Pimbury Point. *It is important to note that Brechin Hill has a substantially different built form than Newcastle.*

Time and again, residents of the planning area have spoken against waterfront high-rises.

On 03 November, 2010, 84% of the responses received from a City-sponsored Open House were against the proposal of tall buildings for the waterfront. This should come as no surprise to some of you, because on 13 March, 2007, after having listened to the general public opposition and reviewing the OCP, PNAC recommended to deny an application to **amend the OCP** to allow two 25+ storey towers on the Nanaimo Shipyard site. Again, on 03 April, 2007 a report¹ prepared by Andrew Tucker, Director, Planning and Development for the City of Nanaimo, recommended that the same application for an amendment be denied - citing public opposition and a lack of conformity with the OCP.

To ensure that City Council understood that towers were not welcome along the waterfront, such an overwhelming number of residents, both from the current plan area and from Greater Nanaimo, attended the Council meeting in regard to the Shipyard proposal, that people were forced to stand in the lobby.

Here we are, just a few years later, once again facing the prospect of waterfront towers. This time however, it is not just on one site, but on **many**.

The wording in the neighbourhood draft plan calls for "a base height of up to 8 (storeys) plus". Plus what? - one asks. **HEIGHT!** In other words, there is no cap on the maximum number of storeys that may be built on the "medium high density waterfront" area of the plan.

Brechin Hill representatives, with support from Newcastle residents, have tried to work within the planning process to create a waterfront that reflects the general wishes of the area residents. Contrary to some reports, the Steering Committee was unable to achieve a consensus. Certain City staff members have presented the waterfront as a compromise². What compromise? Unlimited height and density?

I am not speaking against development on the Stewart Avenue waterfront. I, and many residents, support 3 storey development along the east side of Stewart Avenue providing that, in accordance with the OCP, any residential development does not conflict with or compromise the long term viability of marine activity or impact on existing upland views.

I would like to point out a few of the issues that have been raised by the public in regard to waterfront high-rises.

Traffic

A study by the City of Nanaimo traffic department confirmed the results of informal traffic counts made by Brechin Hill residents; namely that the majority of the "cut - thru" traffic on the streets in the single family residential area of Brechin Hill is generated by the residents of Stewart and Vancouver Avenues.

Congestion and difficult left turns off Terminal Avenue (when southbound) have forced Newcastle neighbourhood residents to use Brechin Hill streets as access.

A concentrated, significant population increase along the waterfront will substantially affect traffic on Stewart Avenue and the adjacent neighbourhood. Coupled with the present levels of BC Ferry traffic, an increase in major traffic problems is inevitable.

The draft Plan does not adequately address **current** traffic issues let alone prepare for the impact of increased residential density.

View

View is a basic principle of the OCP. Not KEY view, STREET END view, VIEW corridor, or any other "quantified or qualified" view - simply VIEW.

According to the plan, a high-rise is a building, "greater than 6 storeys"³.

Whether a building is 6 storeys or base 8 plus, EXISTING views will be impacted. This Plan asks hillside property owners to give up an important and valuable asset- *that they have already paid for* - so that waterfront land owners may reap greater profit.

Quality of life will be negatively impacted for existing residents by the loss of privacy created by the building "shadows" from towers.

Official Community Plan

A neighbourhood plan is meant to refine the OCP, not rewrite it! The OCP has designated several areas for high-rises. The Stewart Avenue waterfront is not one of them⁴.

Brechin Hill is an ESTABLISHED single-family neighbourhood; people purchased their homes here because of its stability and existing built form character. The plan sends a message to the residents of our city that the **expressed opinions** about how we want our neighbourhoods to develop are less important than the demands of a few commercial property owners.


This plan arbitrarily reformats the Brechin Hill neighbourhood against the expressed voices of the residents.

Residents of the planning area have shown a willingness to allow significant **residential and mixed use development** along Stewart Avenue, including areas (MA2 zones) where residences are not currently allowed—as long as height is kept to a reasonable three storeys. This is not enough for some vested interest stakeholders, who, instead of working with the existing character of the neighbourhood and respecting both the OCP guidelines (DPA6)⁵ and the majority voice of residents, continue to demand height.

I quote from the City of Nanaimo website: *"While planNanaimo sets out the overarching objectives and policies for the city, neighbourhood plans speak to the specific needs and desires of the communities within the city ..."*

Since there is such DISPARITY between the resident's input and the written word of the Draft Plan, this whole planning process has seriously failed, therefore, I strongly request that you do NOT accept the neighbourhood draft plan as proposed.

Regards,



References

- 1 - Staff Report 2007 April 03
p:\OCP\OCP36\2007 04 16 Council Report.doc

Further to point 1 - from MINUTES OF THE PLAN NANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
2007-FEB-27

9. Nanaimo Shipyard Ltd.

(Randy Regier, Newcastle Quay Developments)

1020 Stewart Ave

1040 Stewart Ave

1100 Stewart Ave

1110 Stewart Ave

≈ 0.5 ha (1.3 acres)

Proposal for comprehensive development to incorporate walkway, marina, seniors independent living, commercial, pedestrian plaza, underground parking, and hotel and residential suites (these within two high-rise towers)....

A. Tucker noted the OCP directs high-rises to be built in Town Centres. This project is outside of the Town Centre.

- 2 - Draft Plan boards, 2010 Nov 03, Open House, page 13
- 3 - Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Draft Plan (Draft 2010 OCT 26), page 143
- 4 - planNanaimo, official community plan, page 30, Table 1
- 5 - planNanaimo, official community plan, page 146, 7.4 Development Permit Areas, Area 6

Deletion of Medium and Medium High Density Neighbourhood Designation

Presentation to PNAC

Ingvar Vikan, January 18, 2011

My name is Ingvar Vikan. My wife and I own three properties on Drake Street, including the Pine and Picket Bed and Breakfast. I am employed in the legal industry as a litigation paralegal. I was a member of the Newcastle + Brechin Neighbourhood Plan Steering Committee and have lived in Brechin for 20 years.

Some of the letters you have received from other committee members make it appear that some form of consensus or compromise was reached by the committee. That did not occur at all. I will speak to one facet of the significant discord that remains.

The City started the neighbourhood plan process by telling us that the Plan must meet the future density and sustainability needs of the City. Our goal as members was to develop and promote a plan that would meet those needs within our neighbourhood.

We were told that the status quo was not an option and we were chastised repeatedly when any of us suggested that density targets were considerably higher than population growth projections considered in the OCP and could be met with modest increases in residential development rather than radical and widespread changes in building form. Dan Appell will provide you with the specifics of actual growth projections and you will see that they are actually quite modest.

In this context, several of us on the committee came to believe that such future growth projections could easily be accommodated by:

- increased heights and densities in the Estevan corridor area;
- increased density by in-fill such as low-scale multiplex, at suitable scale;
- carriage houses on the hillside; and
- residential development, at restricted heights, on the waterfront

We believed that these guiding principles would meet realistic density targets without unduly changing our neighbourhood's character as a single family residential area perched on the hillside above, and very much part of, a vibrant and beautiful working waterfront with splendid views for all. In fact, when one reviews the OCP, that guiding sentiment is exactly what it had concluded as well.

I believed my role on the steering committee was to help further fine tune such OCP vision statements to meet the specific needs and concerns of the neighbourhood residents as they expressed them – not to step radically beyond the OCP to promote or endorse a Plan with a significantly different vision – one driven by staff and vested interest property owners without public support. I have failed in that quest given the wording of the Plan as it sits before you.

Take a drive through our hillside. You will see that it is alive with new construction and renovations - and bear in mind that this enthusiasm for increased density is being generated by the zoning changes that evolved from the OCP, such as the creation of the Estevan and other Corridor designations, the bylaws that now allow construction of in-law suites and carriage houses, and the more-recent history of multiplex approvals, on a site-specific basis. These developments are occurring now under the Neighbourhood Land Use designation contained within the OCP, page 45.

The Draft Plan purports to divide and separate this existing and perfectly suitable Neighbourhood Land Use designation and create three.

Let's look at the proposed Medium High Density designation lying directly above Stewart Avenue. It seeks movement from the 50 units per acre, currently within the OCP, to 100 and a relaxation of height limitations.

Here is some history as to why this Medium High designation found its way into the Plan at all. It was considered by one team during the January 2010 design charrette as a way to manage the steep slope at the end of Vancouver Avenue, down to Stewart Avenue. At this location there are significant barriers to residential construction. One of the architects suggested use of a stepped, multiplex-building form, similar to that detailed in the sketches done for the Port Master Plan.

We saw this suggestion as a good way to increase density potential, keep heights within acceptable limits, and allow developers increased flexibility on this particular steep-slope property. An additional factor, considered as favourable to this specific area, was the potential for a public-viewing area on property owned by the City at the crest of the development.

Only this one narrow strip of property was ever discussed as having potential for such special treatment within the Draft Plan yet Staff created a far more extensive "swath of colour" in the Land Use Plan that was presented in the meeting after the design charrette. We challenged that swath then and repeatedly afterward. Staff ultimately admitted that the extension of the Medium High Density area to a much larger area was "staff generated". Nevertheless, staff has steadfastly refused to alter the designation or its extent.

Reasons for our opposition included the fact that such high densities would mean higher traffic volumes on streets such as Vancouver, Discovery, Juniper, Hemlock and St. George. Residents currently experience serious noise and safety problems as a result of traffic cutting through the neighbourhood from Estevan down to Stewart.

Certain of the properties drawn in as Medium High Density designation could only exit onto Stewart Avenue. In this regard, you would appreciate that Stewart Avenue is a Provincial Highway serving the needs of BC Ferries, including rapid off- load times with sudden heavy volumes of fast moving traffic. There are a number of tight curves in this area of Stewart Avenue that create barriers to visibility; hence there is an increased risk of accidents if driveways to multiplex parking are to be located there.

We also had concerns over the height of multiplex buildings allowed on properties that border Discovery and Vancouver Avenues and other streets in this proposed new designation. The Draft Plan proposes up to 4 storeys in height situated in the midst of a single-family residential area. These heights would obscure the views of those established residences with little ability for those residents to object to such development, as would be afforded them under current variance procedures.

We also had concerns over the application of this Medium High Density zone to properties at the base of Poplar and Larch Streets - now occupied by the Petro Canada tank farm, the used-car lot, the Buccaneer Motel, and the BC Ferries union office. These properties were not reviewed by the committee in the context of residential development at all as they are currently under commercial zoning.

Despite our sustained objections to the division of the OCP neighbourhood designation into three different designations, you have a Plan before you that seeks that division for reasons that remain unclear to many of us on the committee and they are not at all supported by the majority of residents.

I ask you not to approve this aspect of the Plan but rather to support the OCP vision of a cohesive Neighbourhood Designation throughout the entire Brechin hillside with a willingness to accept site-specific increases in density, consistent with the principles of view preservation and traffic safety embodied in the OCP.

Thank you.