

CITY OF NANAIMO

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE SAFER NANAIMO WORKING GROUP HELD
2010-OCT-21

PRESENT:

Councillor Fred Pattje, Co-chair
Councillor Merv Unger, Co-chair
John Horn, Community Planning
Dr. Lorna Medd, VIHA
Sheryl Armstrong, RCMP
Tom Hickey, Public Works
Tim Davidson, Bylaw Services
Gord Nixon, Community Policing
Bill Kiselbach, Bylaw Services
Gail Pasaluko, Parks
Andrew Tucker, Planning
Randy Churchill, Bylaw Services
Kevan Shaw, DNBIA
Deborah Jensen, Community Planning
Dave LaBerge, RCMP
Brian Park, RCMP
Marg Fraser, VIHA
Gail Honeyman, Recording Secretary

Delegates:

Rod Eklund, Ecklundson Construction
Jim Sigurdson, Coastal Community Insurance Services

Home Builders Association – Vandalism Task Force

Mr. Eklund spoke about rising construction costs as a result of vandalism, thefts and arson at construction sites. Building contractors are taking extra measures on their sites such as fencing, container storage, and site security. The escalating costs affect everyone as they are passed on to the consumer. The high costs reduce net earnings and could result in fewer jobs. The construction industry contributes significant income in the city. He asked that the Safer support the industry in any way possible.

Mr. Sigurdson said that the costs of criminal activity at construction sites is contributing to a rise in insurance of 15%. Everyone pays this increase. The Vandalism Task Force has been successful in engaging contractors to report crimes. The task force is looking for support in communicating with the community at large. Assistance could be Block Watch, COPS, etc. Support is also requested to seek increased sentences for those convicted of the crimes.

There was a discussion about strategies that could assist the industry in combating criminal activity. Suggestions included greater education of the community and especially of the young people who may be responsible for a lot of the damage. Some of the strategies that were used

downtown may be useful if applied to the problem. Block Watch and Citizens on Patrol could also be useful. Media strategies were also discussed.

It was Moved and Seconded that the Safer Nanaimo Working Group support the Home Builders Association in their efforts to combat the vandalism, theft and arson problems at construction sites.

The Motion carried unanimously.

Hospital Area Presentation

The plan is moving forward for a 35 bed unit in the hospital area. Representatives from the working group have been invited to a Hospital Area Neighbourhood Association (HANA) meeting to make a presentation and to answer questions. There has generally been a negative reaction to the proposal.

The meeting will be attended by representatives from Community Planning, Bylaw Services, the RCMP, VIHA and the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). CMHA operates a facility at the Balmoral and may be able to address some of HANA's concerns. The Balmoral facility has not generated an increase in complaints in the area and has actually been a benefit. It will be pointed out that the supportive housing will have 24 hour management and that the residents will be held accountable for their actions. Supportive housing does not cause an increase in crime in an area.

It was suggested that HANA be given a list of names and numbers to call when there are problems. A good neighbour agreement could be negotiated with a neighbourhood representative on the management committee.

NARSF Conference

A conference on harm reduction will be held in the Port of Nanaimo Conference Centre on 2010-Dec-09. There will be keynote speakers.

Housing Initiative

The Nanaimo First Nations Housing on Tenth Street is 80% complete. It will be opening within the next several months. There are 18 units; 10 for elders and 8 for youths. The house on the property will continue to be operated as an emergency shelter.

Construction is scheduled to commence on the Wesley Street housing in March. There will be an open house on the site on 2010-Oct-28 from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm.

No architect or operators have been chosen for the Dufferin and Bowen projects. It will probably be 18 months before either project is commenced. The Bowen Road project may be further delayed because of the road work. There will be a call for expressions of interest within the next few weeks.

The Hillside project is currently on hold.

Ms Fraser stated that housing subsidies from BC Housing have not come through. There are a lot of people who need assistance. Pressure should be put on BC Housing. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Mr. Hickey offered to make a presentation at the next meeting on the upgrades to Bowen Road.

The meeting terminated at 10:52 am.