

**MINUTES OF THE PLAN NANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 2007-JUN-26 AT 5:00 PM  
BEBAN PARK SOCIAL CENTRE LOUNGE, 2300 BOWEN ROAD**

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**Present:**

Brian Anderson	Councillor Bill Holdom
Carey Avender	Shirley Lance
Jolyon Brown	Darwin Mahlum
Stu Donaldson	Ralph Meyerhoff
Bill Forbes	Gord Turgeon
Michael Geselbracht	Michael Schellinck
Jane Gregory	

**Staff:**

Andrew Tucker, Director, Planning and Development  
Bruce Anderson, Manager, Community Planning  
Deborah Jensen, Planner, Community Planning  
Fran Grant (Recording Secretary)

**Regrets:**

Gail Adrienne	Chris Erb
Edwin Deas	David Hill-Turner

Approximately 60 members of the public were in attendance.

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**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order by Chair B. Holdom at 5:16 pm.

Chair B. Holdom welcomed the public and gave a brief overview of the purpose of the meeting. He advised he would be leaving the meeting at 6:30 p.m. to attend a Regional Board meeting.

**2. Presentations:**

OCP Amendment Applications:

D. Jensen gave a brief outline of each application as they came up for discussion.

**1. 1865 Bowen Road (Riocan) (OCP 00042)**

Andre Mihelic, representing Riocan gave, a presentation and noted:

- Half the site has a Service Industrial designation and the other half is Town Centre.
  - Not all of the Service Industrial zoned land is usable (southern portion of site is quite narrow).
  - Proposing a neighbourhood commercial centre.
  - New road alignment would bring Boxwood through and connect to Bowen Road.
  - Site has some landscape characteristics we are hoping to retain, a Gary Oak in the centre and some exposed bedrock.
  - This area is underserved for commercial use.
  - Manage urban growth – this is an infill site.
  - Will be working with the local community.
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- Focus on pedestrian friendly access for village concept, with walkways throughout the site.
- 180,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. of shopping area with a human scale west coast design
- Also own the property to west of Parkway but would like to propose that portion as potential for parkland that would be accessible from Parkway trail.
- Parking areas are broken down to smaller scale.
- Will maintain areas of existing trees along the edges of the property to create a buffer.

Representatives of Riocan gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- There is no housing component, only commercial use.
- Town Centre is a broad category and we see this site as a compliment to the existing community. There is a lot of housing in the area but we feel it is lacking in services (e.g. banks, restaurants, grocery).
- We are speaking to national retailers; would be premature to name potential tenants but are specifically looking for a grocery retailer. Scale of this site is more community type centre than big box.
- If a big box tenant does come forward, we would look to a design that does not look like big box.
- 180,000 ft<sup>2</sup>. of commercial space but cannot predetermine what type of retail tenants it will attract.
- People in the community need better retail services. Will not be replacing Service Industrial land that is lost with property elsewhere and know this is the contentious part of this proposal. Not all of the Service Industrial land is usable.
- Not considering a residential component as there is already enough residential in the node to support this development. Don't see this as a lifestyle centre with residential.
- There will be 4.5 parking spaces per 1000 ft<sup>2</sup>. of commercial area. Trying to incorporate landscape elements to minimize look of parking; islands and trees in the parking area, walkway system with connections to residential development across the street. Creating smaller nodes of parking with more landscaping.

Comment from PNAC:

- Concerned about taking up already scarce light industrial land – how are you addressing this problem? Doesn't seem to follow the concept of a town centre. How does it benefit the City?

Representatives of Riocan gave the following answer to a question from the public:

- At this point, can't speak to who the tenants will be and if they will duplicate existing area businesses. We have found in market research that there is a need for more commercial in the area. Usually up to the commercial tenants who wish to locate there if they feel there is enough of a market for their type of business.

Comments from public:

- Am the owner of Cyber City and there were a number of fires set in this bush area last year.
- Would be a welcome addition to the neighbourhood, and support this application.

## **2. 2124 / 2126 Northfield Road (*Hazelwood Holdings Ltd.*) (OCP 00039)**

Jack Whittaker of Hazelwood Holdings Ltd. gave a presentation and noted:

- Locally owned.
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- Believe it meets with intent of OCP which calls for residential density in Neighbourhood Village Centres.
- Feel that residential density is desirable in this location.
- Modest height of six storeys.
- Intent is to have one parking stall per unit underground, with additional parking on surface.
- One of the drawbacks is the traffic but the City is currently conducting a traffic study for Northfield Road.
- Trying to work with shopping centre on traffic flow.
- Building along Northfield is 100% commercial, building on park side is residential.

The applicant gave the following answer to a question from PNAC:

- Commercial component would be three or four storeys along Northfield Road frontage.

Comments from public:

- Access to this place will be a huge problem, already has problems.
- Traffic increase with 70 units is substantial.
- There are lots of kids using the park facilities as well as the new ball fields.
- Need better pedestrian access.
- Have school right there, huge traffic issue for kids.
- Concerned about the domino effect in the area if other properties go the same route.
- With all the construction, the disruption is very taxing on area residents.
- Environmental issue – wildlife in the trees with migrating birds nests; deer as well.

### **3. 5220 Metral Drive (Keith Brown) (OCP 00041)**

Keith Brown, agent for the applicant gave a presentation, attached hereto as Appendix A.

Comments from public:

- Live across the street and have a list of signatures and two letters from area residents that do not like the proposal. Only one resident said they are not against it.
  - Last night at a public meeting held by the applicant, they said that the development will be either multi-family or twenty lots for houses. Have a problem with the high density but don't have a problem with twenty houses.
  - Only three days notice for the developers meeting which is not enough. Also hard for most people to come to this meeting at 5:00 p.m. When we purchased our house, the area was zoned as single family.
  - Proposed road is not going to alleviate traffic problems. Will just make a corridor for traffic from Superstore. Mostar is already too busy.
  - Have pictures of cars parked all along the street for the Remax office.
  - Don't feel that this road will alleviate traffic problem; will bring more traffic.
  - Don't want four storey buildings. Proposal has changed from last night to tonight. What other changes will take place?
  - Sixty apartments with 1.5 cars per unit is ninety more cars in that small area.
  - Won't benefit our neighbourhood.
  - Most people who buy into these developments don't take transit and Nanaimo doesn't have a good transit system anyway.
  - Will only have negative impact on the area.
  - Already hard for kids to walk to school along Metral.
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- If it doesn't matter to developer if they build houses or high density, build houses.
- This speaker identified themselves as owning a 3.5 ac property immediately north of the subject property.
- Property is currently covered by trees. If they take all the trees down, then our trees might blow down.
- Parking on Metral Drive is already a problem with twenty cars parked on the road by Remax all the time.
- Processes are very complex with the City's development process. Three days notice to say a meeting on Monday and Tuesday is not enough.
- Drainage problem with property that will need to be addressed.
- Have wildlife in the area with deer living along the creek; beaver in the creek, as well as fish. Development will impact this environment.
- Don't have enough information to make an informed decision.
- Don't understand why staff support this.
- There are major problems with parking and traffic.
- When Remax Centre was put in there, they said they wouldn't need much parking and now they are all parking on the road.
- Will the parking this development puts in today be sufficient for the future?

#### **4. 1905 / 1913 / 1917 Northfield Road (Nanaimo Travelers Lodge) (OCP 00040)**

Greg Gaudaur, Administrator for Nanaimo Travelers Lodge gave a presentation and noted:

- Had community meeting 2007-Jun-20 with 105 invitations sent out.
- Eighteen residents attended and voiced some concerns about a decrease in property values and loss of their views. Also issues with traffic, loss of walking path and parking from staff and visitors.
- The current Travellers Lodge building on Nelson does not meet required space standards or building code.
- Current facility cannot be renovated and the site does not allow for re-development.
- Recognized local leader in dementia providers.
- Northfield Road is centrally located on transportation route, close to hospital, and is accessible with minimum impact on area.
- Quiet area for residents enjoyment.
- Desire to remain in same neighbourhood as the current facility.
- Looking for designation for 130 – 150 bed multi-care facility with auxiliary services.
- Proposal is consistent with OCP goals.
- Trees would be preserved with additional landscaping to blend in with neighbourhood.
- Ample on-site parking will be provided.
- Preserves a community institution.
- Some question of viability of current operation if this proposal is not approved.
- Having preliminary discussion with owner of 1921 Northfield to purchase the property, which would mean four lots would form the subject properties.
- If unable to acquire 1921, building could be moved closer to Northfield Road.

Chair B. Holdom turned the meeting over to Vice-Chair R. Meyerhoff.

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## Comments from public:

- Live on Lancashire and was at meeting on Wednesday and don't question need for this facility.
  - Don't agree with this location and feel it would gut the neighbourhood.
  - Traffic issues along Northfield – 154 signatures collected opposed to this application.
  - No reason for them to place it in residential zone when there are other more appropriate zones.
  - Northfield very busy road and the intersection with Boundary Road is one of the least safe intersections in the City. A lot of trucks on the road. This facility would add more traffic.
  - Major concern that there would not be enough parking for staff and visitors and concerned that parking would overflow onto residential streets (which has happened at their current location).
  - A lot of pathways for kids walking to Woodlands and Forest Park schools and this would block those.
  
  - Live on Begonia Way and have gone around the Neighbourhood getting names on petition. Only found one person in favour, everyone else is against.
  - Always has been residential. Don't think there should be any commercial on south side of Northfield Road.
  
  - Live on Lancashire. Already have parking on Northfield for visitors and staff of existing commercial businesses.
  - Staff parking already takes up more of the parking than allowed and they move into visitor parking areas which forces visitors onto Northfield.
  - Am a nurse and know this type of facility is required.
  - Don't think all 150 residents will be dementia. Some will have different problems and will be allowed out in the neighbourhood. Already have adult centres and three group homes in the area.
  - We have done more than our share in our neighbourhood with these types of facilities.
  - New facility will have close to 300 staff members. Have a small parking lot and loading bay. Looks like it has 40 parking spaces for staff and visitors. This is our number one concern. Want this increased so that they take care of all their parking needs and it doesn't spill into our area.
  - Don't need any more commercial on Northfield.
  - Impact on environment; trees on back of this property have nesting owls, and other species of birds; a bike path to Beban Park and pitch and putt. Some of property is slightly marshy with a regular family of ducks that go there.
  - We only canvassed residents and businesses in our area and received 154 signatures.
  - We feel betrayed by Lodge for not addressing our concerns. Don't want any access off Lancashire or Begonia.
  - Told at meeting it was 130 beds, not 150 beds.
  - Access off Northfield is fine but do not want access coming from their facility through our neighbourhood.
  - Facility and property should have same height fencing as other facility. Problem is that they will be able to see into our homes from the second storey. Did not get answers from the Society on this problem.
  - Current facility has problem of staff parking on neighbouring streets. Their answer was that their people can park anywhere they like.
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- Hope that PNAC takes our concerns seriously. We want to stay single family home area.
- Don't see the need for this facility to be close to the hospital. I talked to Fire Dept. and they say they get very few medical calls to current facility. Staff are well trained to handle medical problems.
- My back yard is going to be at their parking lot. Concerned about health issues caused by exhaust from cars in the parking lot.
- Concerned that I will no longer be able to enjoy my back yard.
- Live on Begonia way and it was not clear that our road would go through. We have lots of kids in the neighbourhood and this would put them at risk.

The applicant responded:

- Number for staff will increase along lines of other facility. Don't believe that health authority allows other illnesses aside from dementia – is specialized residential care.
- If we acquire 1921 Northfield, would not need access on Begonia. Still negotiating.
- If we move building ahead, could keep marsh and Gary Oak trees.
- Facility will have various security measures to keep residents from wandering outside unattended.
- Parking on Nelson Street around our other location is also from other facilities in the area.

The applicant gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- We currently have 90 residents (who don't drive cars) with 131 staff; peak daytime staff at 37; weekend days is 23, 15 on the evenings and 5 on night shift. Some staff walk or come by transit. Add approximately another ten to fifteen staff with 150 residents.
- Looking at residential or commercial along Northfield Road, but have realized that if we don't acquire 1921 Northfield for access, that residential and commercial space would have to be removed.

The Vice-Chair R. Meyerhoff thanked the public for attending. He noted that the Committee will take a break and may continue tonight to make recommendations or schedule another meeting.

A. Tucker advised

- These are OCP applications and Council makes the final decision.
- If the applications are approved to proceed to Public Hearing by Council, there will then be further opportunity to speak to Council.
- As summer schedule is in effect, these items will unlikely appear at public hearing until September.
- If approved, the bylaw changes the OCP. Applicant would then have to apply for rezoning, with more opportunity for public input.
- All applications are on the City's website under OCP 10 Year review.
- Minutes with recommendations will be posted once they have been adopted by the Committee.
- Council agendas are also on website.

The meeting recessed at 7:25 p.m.

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The meeting was reconvened by Vice-Chair R. Meyerhoff at 7:45 p.m.

**3. Adoption of Minutes for 2007-Jun-19:**

MOVED by G. Turgeon, SECONDED by J. Gregory, that the minutes of 2007-Jun-19 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

**4. Approval of Agenda and Late Items:**

S. Lance advised that:

- Next Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission meeting will review the proposed Park zoning, including a list of parks, designation of each park, and explanations of each park zone being presented.
- Will be referred to Development Services Department for review and comments; then proceed to a parks zoning bylaw.

The Committee approved the agenda.

**5. OCP Amendment Application Discussion:**

Discussion:

**1. 1865 Bowen Road (Riocan)**

A. Tucker noted:

- Applicant has not included the property on west side of Parkway as part of this application. Tonight is the first time we have heard about using that portion of the property as proposed park.
- Plan calls for extension of Boxwood as a public road right-of-way; extension would be a criteria from the City, not something the developer could disregard.
- City waits for a development proposal to be submitted and then acquires road right-of-way as part of development.
- Staff position is to recommend that the application be denied and to stick with what we have in the existing Plan.

M Schellinck advised he will not participate in the discussion or vote on this application as he owns a piece of property in close proximity.

PNAC comments:

- Not in favour. Proponent says that market demands this but we are just getting another mall and losing a Neighbourhood Village with mixed use.
  - Preserving one Gary Oak and the rest is parking; doesn't sound like a good deal.
  - Has not consulted with the community; losing much needed light industrial land.
  - Applicant is largest owner of commercial malls in Canada. Think they will do their research before locating any businesses. Neighbourhood and housing is already there. Don't know industrial land is important to that area.
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- Live in the area and there are no great amenities in this neighbourhood. The neighbourhood has multi-family already; think this a better use than light industrial. In favour of not developing west side of Parkway.
- One of biggest problems is lack of light industrial and this is one of the prime locations.
- We don't need more commercial but need light industrial. Hardest rezoning would be to get light industrial. Can't keep relying on shopping centres to drive economy.
- Nice development but in wrong place.
- Westhill development site still has enough property for 1200 units of multi-family. Think it is fitting use to have this type of service area. There are better places for industrial.
- Been zoned light industrial for 10 years, but nothing seems to have come forward for development.
- Maybe light industrial users don't think it is right place.
- Light industrial abuts this property. Very concerned about lack of light industrial land and we need to preserve this. Some of the area is zoned for commercial; should keep light industrial portion but still have some commercial on Bowen Road.
- Proposal is not pedestrian friendly; people don't like walking across parking lots. Looks like 70% is parking.
- Should remain light industrial as it backs onto existing light industrial businesses that are just starting to develop; would be natural progression. With the lack of light industrial land, would have to recover light industrial somewhere else.
- Concern about lack of streetscape, just another parking lot like other malls. No commercial density. Should be left with current designation. Only in last month that commercial space across from Westhill Mall has been leased out. Has been vacant for years. Don't see the need for more commercial in this area.
- Don't see it being locally owned businesses, just more big chain stores.

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by S. Donaldson, that PNAC recommend Council approve this amendment application as presented.

DEFEATED (1 in favour)

MOVED by B. Forbes, SECONDED by G. Turgeon, that PNAC recommend Council deny this amendment application as presented.

CARRIED (1 opposed)

## **2. 2124 / 2126 Northfield Road (*Hazelwood Holdings Ltd.*)**

A. Tucker noted:

- Proponent has indicated potential changes to height of buildings tonight from original application. This evening the applicant has suggested a 3 or 4 storey building along Northfield Road.
  - Now solely commercial in the front instead of mixed use.
  - Trail access to Beban Park was not mentioned tonight but was a concern from public.
  - Traffic study would be done at rezoning. Not enough information available as part of OCP application. Traffic in the area is subject of City traffic study.
  - Northfield and Bowen intersection has very high level of accidents. Looking at possibility of changing the alignment of Northfield and creating another signalized intersection.
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- Is designated a Neighbourhood Village and identified as one of the growth centres; staff supports the application as it has all the services and can be a walkable community.

A. Tucker gave the following answer to a question from PNAC:

- In discussions regarding density along corridors, staff have used the term mid-rise but did not specify how many storeys. Wood frame construction yields up to four storey structures.
- Current zoning is I1 so would require a rezoning.
- Staff would like to see urban street edge along Northfield Road.

G. Turgeon indicated that a six storey building would need concrete to meet building code.

PNAC comments:

- No community consultation; OCP says that you have to consult with community. Contradicts OCP and ignores Neighbourhood Village concept and the community was not consulted. Developer should have approached community.
- Whenever there is density, people are worried about traffic. If we don't get density, we don't get good public transit use.
- Bus route that goes right by this area.
- Would like to recommend commercial on front be two storeys, not four. Commercial height should be consistent with others in the area.

MOVED by B. Anderson, SECONDED by S. Lance, that PNAC recommend Council approve this amendment application with the provision that commercial use on Northfield Road fit with the surrounding commercial and that the applicant be strongly encouraged to hold appropriate community consultation.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

In response to a comment from PNAC, A. Tucker noted:

- OCP is a vision and guiding document, and although we would like applicants to talk to community, failure to do so doesn't mean that PNAC should reject proposal out of hand. PNAC needs to consider land use and whether, on balance, the proposal meets the goals and objectives of the OCP.
- Applicants are advised to host neighbourhood meeting but we cannot force the issue.
- Information on applications has been on City website for two months

B. Anderson noted that the OCP subsection (6.3.2) states that it is at rezoning stage that the neighbourhood has to be consulted.

PNAC comments:

- Community was invited tonight and they could have voiced their objections but did not.
  - This type of meeting was unfair to public. Used to have two meetings, one with applicant and one for public. This process gave public very little time to prepare themselves to address issues. Don't think it is fair for volunteer public. Sign does not do anything to inform public. Think public needs more opportunity.
  - Tonight's format has been used for the last several times. Still requirement that applicant has to have signs up for certain length of time to give residents plenty of time to look at the proposal. Two applicants did have public meetings. Could discuss process at next meeting.
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**3. 5220 Metral Drive (Keith Brown)**

PNAC comments:

- Should we table this application if the applicant is going back to revisit their proposal as a result of last night's public meeting?
- Changed from three buildings last night to four buildings tonight.
- Agree it should be tabled; also changed from when submission was read to when the agent presented it.

In response to a question about the possibility of eliminating the right in / right out connection to the Island Highway North, A. Tucker advised that the road configuration discussions took place a number of years ago. Would have to get more information to respond properly to the question.

MOVED by G. Turgeon, SECONDED by B. Anderson, that the application be tabled.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**4. 1905 / 1913 / 1917 Northfield Road (Nanaimo Travellers Lodge)**

PNAC comments:

- Although the applicant's presentation was interesting, don't know what the need for dementia facilities has to do with application.
- Do think it is something we have to anticipate, the need for this type of facility, in the context of an aging population.
- Not about need, about the process. If they can't resolve their acquisition of 1921 Northfield, there is a problem with the road network.
- Falls under same realm as last application. If they don't acquire 1921 Northfield, it will require a completely different proposal.
- If Northfield is to be designated for higher density, this will fit. Northfield will change and this is part of transition.
- Does follow plan in creating density.

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by S. Donaldson, that the application be tabled until the disposition of 1921 Northfield is finalized.  
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

**6. Next Meeting:**

- The Committee agreed to cancel the regularly scheduled meeting for 2007-Jul-19.
- The next regular meeting of PNAC is scheduled for 2007-Sep-18, Board Room, City Hall.

**7. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:41 pm.