

**MINUTES OF THE PLAN NANAIMO ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON TUESDAY, 2007-JUN-19 AT 5:00 PM  
BOARD ROOM, CITY HALL, 455 WALLACE STREET**

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**Present:**

Brian Anderson	David Hill-Turner
Jolyon Brown	Councillor Bill Holdom
Edwin Deas	Shirley Lance
Bill Forbes	Darwin Mahlum
Michael Geselbracht	Ralph Meyerhoff
Jane Gregory	Gord Turgeon

**Staff:**

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

**Regrets:**

Carey Avender	Chris Erb
Gail Adrienne	Michael Schellinck
Stu Donaldson	

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**1. Call to Order:**

The meeting was called to order at 5:10 pm by Chair B. Holdom.

**2. Adoption of Minutes for 2007-May-08:**

MOVED by S. Lance, SECONDED by R. Meyerhoff, that the minutes of 2007-May-08 be adopted as presented.

CARRIED

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

- Correspondence from S. Clarke – distributed for information.
- Update on Park Zoning (Brian Anderson).

MOVED by B. Forbes, SECONDED by B. Anderson, that the Agenda be approved with the addition of the above noted late items.

CARRIED

**4. Correspondence:**

a) Woodlands Secondary School Student Letters:

M. Geselbracht noted:

- Gave presentation to Woodlands Secondary Grade 10 class about urban revitalization, as a way of engaging youth in planning issues.
- Took students on a tour of Beaufort Park project that he is working on with the Parks Dept.
- Students wrote letters regarding their ideas on how to improve the quality of life in Nanaimo.

- Willing to do more presentations to students to get ideas and feedback from Nanaimo's youth.

A. Tucker noted the majority of the letters discussed how to improve opportunities for youth in the City.

PNAC comment:

- Thank you to M. Geselbracht for looking to youth as a source of feedback. This is something we need to do more of.

MOVED by G. Turgeon, SECONDED by D. Hill-Turner, that the report be received.  
CARRIED

## 5. **Outstanding Business:**

### a) Report on OCP Review - Working Paper

A. Tucker introduced Kathleen Callow and Pam Shaw from UMA Consulting.

K. Callow and P. Shaw noted:

- Presentation is a guide for discussion meant to generate ideas, and to provide direction from PNAC to the consultants in preparing policies for the revised OCP.

K. Callow and P. Shaw gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- Do not know the percentage of the population that has provided feedback from the various OCP events or via e-mail, but it is a very small percentage.
- Looking at other ways to gather input (e.g. questionnaires, phone surveys).

A. Tucker gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- PNAC members are chosen to represent a cross-section of Nanaimo. The low turn out at events means PNAC's role in setting policy is that much more important.
- Will go back out in the fall to get more public feedback (e.g. with survey or questionnaire).

PNAC comments:

- Would like to see at least 20% of residents giving input.
- Seem to have the same individuals attending each event.

PNAC comments on the name of the revised plan – "sustainNanaimo":

- Perhaps "Regenerate Nanaimo".
- "Sustainability" is almost becoming a cliché as it has been around for a long time – does it mean sustain status quo?
- Seems to mean status quo. Need a kick start to regenerate parts of the City – especially the Downtown.
- No problem with "sustain" part of the name but what are we looking at sustaining? What is the City's footprint and what is the long term plan and the carrying capacity of the present footprint? Everyone is focused on what to do with the UCB, but let's set the City footprint at where the City boundary is.
- The City needs to protect its tax base with industrial land, which is part of protecting our quality of life. People have to be part of the solution.
- "Sustainability" means something that continues a long time into the future, but it can still be changing. We want to say we are planning a community that will last. Still does have some kind of meaning to the public.

- Like the name – sustainable doesn't mean you are static. Sustain means correcting some of the problems.

PNAC commented on each of the proposed Goals as follows:

#### Goal 1 - Refine to Build a More Sustainable Community (Maps 1 and 2)

- Aging population and changing demographics, will this bring the type of economic activity we want to attract?
- Concerned about Woodgrove and Rutherford being grouped into one large Town Centre – one is regional and one is not. Don't think they should be grouped together.
- Hospital area – change some of the zoning to seniors care or medical services so those developments are directed to the area.
- Don't mind reduction of town centres, but need to consider Malaspina area as a town centre.
- There is nothing in south end except neighbourhood village; that area is growing and warrants a town centre. This is a plan for the future, not sustain the status quo; where do we want the City to grow?
- Malaspina University-College attracts more traffic every day and will get developed. Need to look at it as a growth centre.
- Woodgrove is not the way it was supposed to be; was supposed to include residential, but it is just shopping. Need to look at how a town centre is defined.
- The definition of 'Town Centre' is there, but it hasn't happened.
- Woodgrove should grow upwards, not out.
- Walkable community – what features are needed in subdivisions that will allow people to walk more in their community?
- Encourage people instead of cars. Decrease the number of parking spaces; make people get out of their cars.
- Make nodes attraction centres and not so much complete communities; seems more realistic. How we link the nodes is important, be it the hospital or shopping centre.
- What we are looking for is density, be it in nodes or along corridors. Agree with corridor concept; think it is important.
- If we have written into the Plan that increased density can go on corridors, some of the recent OCP amendment applications wouldn't need an amendment and would fit the Plan.
- Is it possible to build a large high density area that is not related to a specific attraction/function?
- Problem is transportation in those areas to get to shopping and services, which brings us back to cars.
- Don't like plan for an oasis like Hammond Bay.
- Why is Estevan chosen as corridor over Terminal or Island Hwy? Put high-rise at Terminal mall.
- Corridor designation should go further along Hammond Bay Road.
- Still have some parts of the City downloading onto other neighbourhoods to provide the services so they can drive there. Time that Hammond Bay area carried its weight with services for their own community.
- What sort of density are we talking about for Northfield and Bowen Roads? The old Island Hwy should be considered a corridor, more so than Estevan Road. Put housing along the road and make it 50 kph.
- Would like to see the town centre concept in conjunction with corridor concept which is necessary for public transportation.

- Should be more specific about the type of densities we are looking for so people have an idea. Footprint – we know that we have sufficient land for housing but don't have sufficient lands for industrial. Should we pick an area for that?
- Instead of protecting routes for cars, there would be a mix of activity/development and attraction centres.
- If we are going to have development on corridors, will that mean traffic lights that will slow traffic down?
- Council made three decisions in the last year regarding roads favouring pedestrians over cars. Have been trying to become more pedestrian friendly – roads aren't just for cars. Now making decisions to calm traffic.
- Should have areas pre-zoned to stop piece-meal rezoning.
- One of most important things is for OCP to let people know what is going to be in their back yard.

K. Callow and P. Shaw gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- To promote walkable communities, we could have a hierarchy of types of development. Transit is also an important component of a walkable community.

A. Tucker gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- The projected life of the OCP is to 2031.
- A potential node in the south end is shown on Map 2.
- The current OCP directs high density to town centres, but these areas are shopping centres and land owners are not interested in residential right now. The suggestion is to have mid-rise development along corridors between town centres. From the workshops, we heard people want an idea of where density is going to occur so they know what to expect.
- Part of the lack of density along Hammond Bay is due to the lack of traffic capacity.
- Estevan was designated as a Main Street Area.
- Area where Northfield meets the Parkway is currently zoned heavy industrial. One recommendation is to change it to light industrial. Too close to residential for heavy industrial use. Currently same designation as Duke Point. Would need to be brought inside UCB.

Goal 2 – Manage Urban Growth – Options for UCB:

Options are to: 1) maintain current boundary; 2) move out to City boundary; or 3) keep current boundary with some adjustments.

PNAC comment:

- City boundary could extend and move across Duke Point, Harewood Mines Road and to Extension Road. Set it for 100 years from now and set up a green belt around it. Get nice mile wide green belt that couldn't be developed.

B. Holdom noted that extending the City boundary is outside PNAC's mandate. Could have green boundary outside the UCB.

- We have linear development pattern because the City doesn't have any width.
- What is wrong with what we have now? Some merit for amendments for industrial and south Nanaimo lands. The UCB has worked well for us; moving UCB to City boundary defeats the purpose.
- Agree with moving to exclude those lands designated on Map 3 (ALR, Buttertubs Marsh, Harewood Plains). Do not expand, defeats the whole purpose of the UCB.
- Extending the UCB to the City boundary would increase opportunity for low density and piece meal development. That is not sustainable.

- Other municipalities require developments to proceed as per an area structure plan. Should be done for the Linley Valley.
- Concern about extending UCB. Suggests to developers that UCB will be expanded if they provide a good plan, making the UCB meaningless. Why not put a green belt around what we have now, and no more expansion of UCB.
- Have to look at South Nanaimo Lands proposal. Chase River has come out in favour of this development as there is not enough commercial business in the south to serve people. Need more compact neighbourhoods. Don't think this proposal will hurt the Downtown area.
- Think the UCB should be maintained. With the exception of South Nanaimo Lands, Buttertubs and Harewood Plains, don't see any good reason to move it. If we are to be sustainable, changing the UCB doesn't lend itself to that. Don't use name 'sustain' and then expand the City. We have lots of room to densify.

A. Tucker noted that residents from the Jingle Pot neighbourhood have been coming out to workshops proposing to get Jingle Pot area inside the UCB. Although they don't have a formal application, their request needs to be considered by PNAC as part of the OCP review. What does PNAC think about Jingle Pot? There is City water in the Jingle Pot neighbourhood but no sewer service. The residents of Jingle Pot want sewer service extended to the area.

- Some suggest that growth is what sustains the economy, which is okay as long as we find ways to sustain without unnecessary growth. Don't want to extend subdivisions out to Mt. Benson and Chemainus just to sustain the economy. Need to grow in the most sustainable way we can. Should try and get it right and have comprehensive plans in place before we accept developments. Look at making whole community sustainable.
- Don't think we should include Jingle Pot area. Large parcel properties have very high servicing costs and little tax base to pay for it. Agree with Option 3, including the three noted parcels. Keep those areas outside UCB that shouldn't be developed and bring in those that are beneficial to the City.
- If Jingle Pot came in with a good plan for the community and not just more sprawl, maybe it could be looked at.
- Concern that when there are proposed changes to the UCB that the RDN plays such a significant role. City should be able to designate it the way they want. In the past, rezoning has been so piece meal.
- As City grows, need area structure plans and then allow rezoning inside the area.
- At first agreed with status quo (option 1) but now think refining of the UCB (Option 3) best for long term.
- Should have UCB at City limits, but with designated restrictions on areas now outside UCB. Would need good plan before coming inside UCB. Suggest Option 2 with definition or restrictions.
- Suggest keeping UCB as is, with option to expand instead of throwing everything open. People are already able to come in with a good comprehensive plan proposed and have the UCB moved.
- Have a process in place to change the UCB when warranted.
- Need to have a little more organized development instead of bits and pieces.
- If the City wants to densify, needs to relax development restrictions. For example, tried proposing putting three units on a lot, cost of servicing and doing everything was \$130,000 per lot. Not worth it. Need five or six units per lot at least to make it economical. Current zoning is a maximum of three units in some areas.
- Rezoning takes too long as is too much of a gamble for developers.
- City needs to make it easier to densify. We are a fantastic town with potential but we have to reduce our reliance on cars.

- Need to specify not only maximum density but also the minimum density. Currently allowing our footprint to be eroded with low density development. Won't get to higher density if we allow underdevelopment.

K. Callow and P. Shaw gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- Land Capacity study does show there is enough area available for growth to 2031. Public input was to build to that capacity first before expanding. There is a lot of under developed land.
- Current target density in neighbourhoods is 15 units per hectare (uph). Standard could be to 45 uph along corridors to support transit. Some corridors could be designated to have higher density than others. Proposal would be mostly in the mid-rise area of four to five storeys with higher buildings in some areas.
- Could specify that along corridors there is a set minimum density.

A. Tucker gave the following answers to questions from PNAC:

- We are currently at 3 or 4 uph and target in existing plan is 15 uph. To be viable, transit needs 30-40 uph. As housing stock gets older, higher density redevelopment can take place.
- City doesn't have the capital budget to service outside the UCB. Would need designation for land now outside the UCB (e.g. urban reserve) so the public doesn't get the impression that they would have sewer service extended soon.
- There are variance permit requests coming before Council now to subdivide larger lots that have an existing home. These are the underdeveloped properties that have been discussed. This is what we will need to see to get desired increase in density.
- Option 2 with qualifiers will raise people's expectations.
- The roads were built to Harewood Plains before the ESA inventory had been completed. The inventory gave the plains a high ESA value as it contains a number of rare plant species, including one that is not found anywhere else in Canada.

The Committee held a vote regarding UCB options, with the majority favouring Option 3 – a refinement of the existing boundary to include the South Nanaimo Lands and Northfield Industrial Park and to exclude ALR lands, Buttertubs, and Harewood Plains areas.

Comments from PNAC members not in favour:

- Like idea of creating more capacity but refining it so that it's clear services aren't extended until an area structure plan is completed (option 2 refined).
- Maintain UCB (option 1).
- Go with UCB to City boundary, with no build zones. (option 2 refined).

Bruce Anderson noted that Option 2 was intended to place a reserve designation, with criteria attached, on lands currently outside UCB.

### Goal 3 – Social Responsibility:

PNAC comments:

- Have draft written and then PNAC can respond to that.
- There was a social master plan adopted by the City. There was also an arts and culture strategic plan that was "received" by City Council but not "adopted". Quality of life is just as important as the other goals.
- Culture plan is currently being updated. Draft is potentially coming forward to next meeting of Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission (PRCC).
- Not sure if the OCP can help solve social problems in the downtown.

- Nanaimo is one of the lowest ranked cities in the province for having children prepared for elementary school.
- Also has lowest average income in province. Economic side of the plan is very important.

#### Goal 4 – Economy

PNAC comment:

- Agree that we incorporate the economic strategy.

In answer to a question, A. Tucker advised that the Cable Bay proponents have now submitted an economic impact study which has been posted on the City's website.

#### Goal 5 – Environment

K. Callow and P. Shaw gave the following answer to a question from PNAC:

- There has been widespread support for the City's environmental policies.
- Servicing functions (solid waste, liquid waste and water) are not under the environment section as it has usually been classified as built infrastructure; however, all the goals are inter-related.

A. Tucker noted:

- Under improved mobility, most existing trails in Nanaimo are recreation trails instead of commuter trails, except for the E&N trail.

#### Goal 6 – Mobility and Servicing

PNAC comments:

- What strategies can be used to encourage integration of engineering and the mobility goal? Engineers see different answers to mobility problems than planners.
- PRCC is extending E&N trailway as they can afford it. Trying to bring trails from neighbourhoods and connect to E&N trail.
- Need same status for trailway system as we have for road network.

A. Tucker noted:

- Part of problem recognizing mobility issues is because of all the information contained on the existing OCP's Schedule A map. There is so much information on the map that becomes difficult to decipher.
- Need to make maps more user-friendly; considering a separate mobility map.

#### Goal 7 – Toward Sustainability

A. Tucker noted that a concurrent OCP and rezoning process would give public more information on proposed developments when applications are made.

PNAC comments:

- Streamlining the process – don't have issue with that. There was an attempt to have the OCP amendment process changed to have applications accepted on an ongoing basis, but PNAC didn't support at the time.
- Most of these people volunteer their time to work as neighbourhood representatives and it would be almost impossible for them to keep track of every application coming forward on an ongoing basis. Neighbourhood reps don't have enough resources, expertise or

time to do that. Don't see any reason to change the current six month process. Not that many applications are coming in.

- Is there any appetite to a one year process? Agree with keeping OCP and rezoning separate. Don't see why they should come along together.
- If doing two things at same time, is confusing for public and more costly for developer as more information needed for applications.
- Need rezoning applications that are consistent with the OCP. Those that meet the goals of the OCP should be easier to process.
- Need to take a closer look at some land use designations during this review and see if there is a better use for the land.
- When rezoning applications come forward they are usually passed, so don't see the need for rezoning and OCP amendment applications to run concurrently.

Next Steps:

K. Callow and P. Shaw advised:

- Refinements will be made to the Working Paper to reflect PNAC's input and will be brought back to PNAC before it is taken to the public.

A. Tucker noted:

- Revised Working Paper will be put on City website.
- Asking for public input and will have this information for September meeting of PNAC.
- Will also be producing newspaper inserts asking for public response. Encourage as much community involvement as we can.
- Hope to have first draft of the OCP ready for the October meeting of PNAC.
- Looked into doing a phone poll, but OCP questions are complex and will not get a response on phone. Have to survey by mail out or web based survey. Need education piece before getting response.
- Need to expand our response base.

PNAC comment:

- Need a way to get all the information to public, perhaps in newspaper.

B. Holdom noted:

- A full city questionnaire was done for the original OCP and that should be done again.
- If the existing OCP review budget won't cover it, should make a request to Council for more funding.

b) OCP Amendment Applications (2006-Nov) – Update

Put over to next meeting.

## 6. **OCP Amendment Application Update:**

a) New OCP Applications:

- 1) 2124 and 2126 Northfield Road (OCP 039)
- 2) 1905, 1913, 1917 Northfield Road (OCP 040)
- 3) 5220 Metral Drive (OCP 041)
- 4) 1865 Bowen Road (OCP 042)

D. Jensen noted:

- Staff review reports on all applications were distributed to PNAC members.

- The next PNAC meeting is 5:00 pm, 2007-Jun-26 at Beban Park lounge; will hear presentations from the applicants and receive input from the public.
- Expecting some public interest on the Northfield care facility application.
- The Committee may wish to make recommendations on the same night. (The Committee agreed.)

b) PNAC Membership Renewal

D. Jensen noted:

- Received written confirmation from Vancouver Island Real Estate Board for D. Mahlum.
- Waiting for confirmation of M. Schellinck's reappointment as an Environment Community representative.
- Have two applications for Neighbourhood representative vacancy. Closing date is 2007-Jun-25. Council will make the appointment.

**7. Late Item:**

- Update on Park Zoning (Brian Anderson)

This item was put over to the next meeting.

**8. Next Meeting:**

The next PNAC meeting is a public meeting to hear submissions on the four OCP amendment applications, scheduled for 2007-Jun-26, 5:00 pm, Beban Park Social Centre Lounge.

**9. Adjournment:**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 pm.